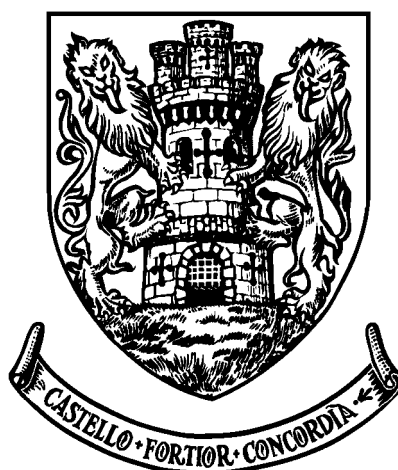


NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



COUNCIL

Monday, 19 June 2017

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, 19 JUNE 2017 AT 6:30 PM WHEN THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS IS PROPOSED TO BE TRANSACTED

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES.

To approve the minutes of the proceedings of the Meetings of the Council held on 24th April 2017 and the 18th May 2017.

3. APOLOGIES.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

(Copy herewith)

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

(Copy herewith)

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Stone to make a statement on "Democracy and Good Governance".

9. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

(Copy herewith)

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

i) Councillor Davenport to propose and Councillor Ashraf to second:

“This Council welcomes the 30th Anniversary of the Call Care Service which was set up in 1987.

The Call Care system is operated 365 days a year and 24 hours a day and responds to hundreds of daily alarm calls from sheltered housing tenants. It allows vulnerable people to live life independently but can obtain assistance when needed.

This Council asks the Chief Executive to write to the Call Care staff to pass on our congratulations for their work and our acknowledgement of this important milestone.

This Council hopes to see the Call Care System to be in place for another 30 years”.

ii) Councillor Birch to propose and Councillor Russell to second:

“This Council notes Refugee Week on 19 - 25 June 2017.

Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities.

This Council hopes refugee week is a great success across the UK.

This Council asks the relevant Cabinet Member to look at how Northampton can play a part in refugee week next year”.

11. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

The Guildhall
Northampton

D. Kennedy Chief Executive

Public Participation

1. Comments and Petitions

- 1.1 A member of the public (or an accredited representative of a business ratepayer of the Borough) may make a comment or present a petition on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers. A comment or presentation of a petition shall be for no more than three minutes. No notice of the nature of the comment to be made or of the petition is required except for the need to register to speak by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

(Public comments and petitions will not be taken and the Annual Council Meeting or other civic or ceremonial meetings.)

NOTES

- i. *Comments may be on one or more subjects but each person has no longer than three minutes to have their say.*
- ii. *The same person may make a comment and present a petition on different subjects. In such instances that person will have three minutes to make their comment and a separate three minutes to present a petition.*

2. Member and Public Questions

- 2.1 A member of the public (or business ratepayer of the Borough) may ask a maximum of two written questions at each meeting, each limited to a maximum of 50 words, on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers. Each question shall:

- be submitted in writing and delivered, faxed or e-mailed to Democratic Services no later than 10.00am seven calendar days before the day of the meeting; and
- include the name and address of the questioner and the name of the Cabinet member/Committee Chair to whom the question is put.

- 2.2 At the meeting, copies of all questions and the responses to them from the public and Members will be made available to the public and press. The Mayor may allow one supplementary question, without notice, that arises directly from the original question or response.

(Questions will not be taken at the Annual Council Meeting or at civic or ceremonial meetings or meetings called to deal with specific items of business.)

NOTES

In respect of paragraph 2.1 above, questions may be rejected on certain grounds that are set out on page 4-12 of the Council's Constitution and which may be viewed at www.northampton.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=1919 or by seeking advice using the contact details below.

3. Motions

- 3.1 A member of the public may register to speak to a motion under the 'Notices of Motion' item on the agenda. Registration to speak must be made to Democratic Services by 12 noon on the day to the meeting. Speaking to a motion is restricted to three minutes per person.

(The 'Notices of Motion' item will not be taken at the Annual Council meeting or meetings called for civic or ceremonial purposes.)

4. General

A member of the public may make a comment, present a petition, ask a question or speak to a motion at the same meeting subject to the restrictions set out above.

5. Contacts

Democratic Services: e-mail democraticservices@northampton.gov.uk

Tel 01604 837722

Mail Democratic Services
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton NN1 1DE

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Thursday, 18 May 2017 AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

PRESENT: HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR Councillor G Eales (in the Chair).

COUNCILLORS: Malpas, Ansell, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Caswell, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Gowen, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, M Hill, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, M Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith, Nunn, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Kilby-Shaw, Smith, Stone and Walker

1. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR

Councillor Russell proposed and Councillor M Markham seconded "That Councillor Gareth Matthew Eales be elected Mayor of the Borough of Northampton for the ensuing year".

The motion was carried and Councillor G Eales was appointed Mayor and accepted office by making and delivering to the Chief Executive, the Declaration of Acceptance to Office.

The Mayor then took the Chair.

2. VOTE OF THANKS TO THE OUTGOING MAYOR AND MAYORESS

Councillor M Hill proposed and Councillor Stone seconded; "That the thanks of the Council be given to Councillor Malpas and Mrs Lynne Malpas for the able and courteous manner in which they have discharged their duties as Mayor and Mayoress".

The motion was carried.

3. ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor Lane proposed and Councillor Meredith seconded "That Councillor Anthony John Gerald Patrick Ansell be appointed to the office of Deputy Mayor".

The motion was carried and Councillor Ansell was appointed Deputy Mayor and accepted office by making and delivering to the Chief Executive, the Declaration of Acceptance to Office.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Choudary, Chunga, Oldham, Parekh and Walker.

An apology for absence was also received from Councillor Cali; Council congratulated Councillor Cali on the arrival her baby boy.

6. LONG SERVICE

The long service of the employee Angela Lawrence was noted with appreciation.

7. LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP

Councillor Lane announced that Councillor Nunn had been appointed Leader of the Conservative Group and that Councillor Larratt had been appointed deputy Leader of the Conservative Group.

8. LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION GROUP

Councillor Russell announced that Councillor Stone had been appointed Leader of the Labour Group and that Councillor Birch had been appointed deputy Leader of the Labour Group.

9. LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

Councillor B Markham announced that Councillor Beardsworth had been appointed Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and that Councillor Meredith had been appointed deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

10. COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Mayor announced that the Annual Meeting of the Council would take place on 17th May 2018 and that other meetings of the Council would take place 19th June, 10th July, 18th September, 6th November, 11th December 2017, 22nd January, 26th February, 12th March, 23rd April, 4th June and 9th July 2018.

11. COMMITTEE PROPORTIONALITY

Councillor Nunn submitted a report which sought Council's approval of the group proportionality of seats of each Committee.

Councillor Larratt seconded adoption of the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the number of seats on each Committee as set out in the report be approved.
2. That the representation of the political groups be as set out in this report

12. CABINET

Councillor Nunn announced the appointments made to Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet for 2017/18 as set out in the report.

13. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought approval for the appointment to Committees for the ensuing year. An amendment had been included that Councillor T Eales be replaced by Councillor Russell on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report and the amendment.

RESOLVED:

That the appointments to Committees for 2017/18 set out in the report with the above amendment, was confirmed.

14. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought approval for the appointment to Charities and Outside Bodies for 2017/18. An amendment had been included that Councillor Lane be appointed to the Sir Thomas Whites Charity.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report and the amendment.

RESOLVED:

That the appointments to Charities and Outside Bodies, including the amendment, was approved.

15. CONSULTATION APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Nunn proposed the Consultation Appointments as set out at Item 15 of the agenda

Councillor Larratt seconded the adoption of the Consultation Appointments.

RESOLVED:

That the Consultation Appointments, as set out in the report, was agreed.

The meeting concluded at 12.16pm

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 24 April 2017 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

PRESENT: HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR Councillor MALPAS (in the Chair).

COUNCILLORS: Ansell, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Cali, Caswell, Choudary, Chunga, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Eldred, Golby, Gowen, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, M Hill, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, M Markham, McCutcheon, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Kilby-Shaw, Smith, Stone and Walker

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Caswell declared a personal non pecuniary interest in Motion i) by virtue of being the Chair of Duston Parish Council.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the Council meetings held on the 13th March and the 3rd April 2017 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Flavell and Marriott.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor announced that as the General Election had been announced for the 8th June, it would be proposed at the Annual Council meeting that the Council meeting scheduled for the 8th June would be postponed until the 19th June 2017.

The Mayor thanked Councillors who had attended Charity Curry Night at the Saffron on the 10th April 2017 and noted that raised almost £900 almost £900 had been raised for Guide Dogs.

The Mayor announced that he and the Mayoress had supported a number of events for St David's Week of Action which commenced on the 1st April. Amongst the activities were opportunities for budding young detectives to help Northamptonshire Police solve a case as part of a crime mystery workshop and the RSPCA were also present, offering reduced-price dog microchipping.

The Mayor congratulated his chaplain, Mr Haydon Spenceley Assistant Curate, Northampton Emmanuel, as he has was to be appointed Team Rector and would be licensed by Bishop John on 8th May 2017.

Finally the Mayor thanked all of those who have supported him over his year in

Mayoralty. He informed the Council that he would be attending his 500th engagement as Mayor and had so far raised £21,000 for Guide Dogs Northampton.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Mr Robert Jones addressed Council and commented that he had a number of concerns about the current levels of pollution that he believed had increased since the erection of the Northgate Bus Station.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that 6 questions had been received from Councillors and that the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions and answers were given as tabled (included in an update agenda on the Council's website) unless where stated, supplementary questions were asked as detailed below.

In response to a supplementary question asked relating to question 5, Councillor Hadland stated that he did not have figures about the length businesses had lasted or job turnover but noted that there were 13 new businesses with 300 new jobs having been created.

In response to a supplementary question asked relating to question 6, Councillor Hadland stated that the food outlets in the town centre would allow the Council to clawback some capital as opposed to empty units.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

Councillor Nunn, the Leader of the Council, submitted a report and elaborated thereon. He noted that the contract for the work in commissioning the assessment for a possible future Unitary Council model for Northamptonshire, had been awarded to Deloitte. He further reported that the administration of relieving traffic flow in the Town Centre, specifically the Drapery had led to a number of improvements being made with the County Council. The Leader informed Council that a Governance and Risk Manager had been employed on an interim basis as part of the Governance improvements. He further reported that he had recently visited the Nightshelter and spoke of the inspirational place it had become and encouraged other Members to visit.

In response to questions asked, the Leader confirmed that a briefing session would be organised for cross party updates on Unitary discussions. He further explained that with regards to new contracts, there was limited consideration that could be given to the potential impact of Unitary status as there were no definitive timescales. Responding to further questions, Councillor Nunn explained that he had attended a breakfast meeting with BID members, including shop owners on the Drapery, and that the administration continued to work with the County Council to resolve traffic issues and that Councillors should await the outcome of the Scrutiny Panel in their examination of the Emission Strategy. In response to a further question, Councillor Nunn explained that work with Network Rail was still ongoing and that progress of the St James Mill Link would be reported when significant advancement had been made.

Councillor Larratt submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon. He thanked Councillor Duffy for her work with Thorplands Club 81. He noted that the next Markets Advisory Group meeting would be held in June 2017. In response to questions asked, Councillor Larratt explained that the majority of the light bulbs in the Town were owned by the County Council and he was not aware of any substandard Borough owned lights but any that were reported he would look into. Responding to a further question, Councillor Larratt stated that although a meeting would be set up with several agencies to discuss Match Day Parking, a specific date had yet to be set.

Councillor Eldred submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated further, noting that the Revenue and Benefits Service at Northampton were in the process of procuring new technology which would speed up the processing of new claims. In response to questions asked, Councillor Eldred explained that it was anticipated that the final accounts would be signed off as all recommendations that had been made, had been considered and that they have achieved value for money.

Councillor Hadland submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon. In response to questions asked, he explained that the Queen Eleanor's Cross was a County Council responsibility but that some repairs and works had been undertaken by the Borough Council. Responding to further questions, he informed Council the Delapre Abbey had received many reviews on 'Trip Advisor' and had included extremely positive feedback which he considered an endorsement of the hard work that had gone into the project.

Councillor Hibbert submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon. He explained that in the first two months of the opening of the Nightshelter, 61 referrals had been made and emergency shelter had been provided for 50 homeless men and that assistance had been given to 22 people, moving into suitable accommodation. He further reported that a Private Sector Housing Civil Penalties Policy would be submitted to Cabinet for consideration at a meeting to be held in July 2017. In response to questions asked, Councillor Hibbert informed Council that there had been 2 successful prosecutions of rogue landlords and another 5 that were proceeding. It was also noted that the delay to the opening of the Social Lettings Agency had been attributed to a systems error, but that the issues were being resolved with expediency. In response to a further question asked, Councillor Hibbert commented that with regards to the 100 new Council homes, some had already been built and completed and that planning permission had been sought for further homes. It was further explained that NPH had conducted a garage review which had identified a number of garages that were no longer in use and therefore not needed and a number of repairs that needed to be undertaken in order for them to be put back into use.

Councillor King submitted her Cabinet Member report and noted that funding had been allocated and would support 32 projects (not 33 as written in the report) and elaborated on the numerous events that had been held, including a tea dance, forum events and IDAHO conference that was to take place on the 17th May 2017. In response to questions asked, Councillor King explained that there had been increased crime figures and that she was aware of shoplifting 'gangs' that had resulted in a shop closure. She further noted that she would liaise with the Police,

having received a suggestion from a Councillor that mental health workers assist with some Policing matters.

At this juncture of the meeting, the Mayor informed Council that the allocated time had been met and no further Cabinet Member reports would be heard.

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor McCutcheon stated that the amount of job losses in the retail industry within the town centre could potentially have a domino effect. He commented that everyone was aware of the stores and chains that were present in the Town Centre but suggested that there had been a growth in the number of retail jobs that were unseen and out of sight, primarily in warehouses. He stated that much of the warehouse work undertaken came with zero hour contracts and a number of workers were being paid less than the national minimum wage. He further asked why there was such disparity between the reported increased footfall in the Town Centre and the decrease in the numbers of shops. He suggested that executive powers were needed to address the issue and commented that he considered a Local Economy All Purpose Working Group an option in addressing those concerns.

Councillor Hadland, in response commented that the retail industry was a reactive not dictating industry and noted that there had been many changes to the retail sector due to changing demands and shopping habits. He stated that Town Centres were becoming more leisure focused due to a change in internet shopping as well as other contributing factors. He further explained that by increasing the number of leisure based activities, residents were still being encouraged into the Town Centre.

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr Brian Hoare addressed Council on Motion i) and stated that he wanted fairness, transparency and legality in the increased levy on Parished areas of Northampton. He commented that the increase in Parish precepts had resulted in year on year increases in tax paid by residents and questioned the fairness of it since it affected a third of residents. He further questioned what consultation had been undertaken as he could find little evidence of any having been completed.

- i) Councillor Beardsworth proposed and Councillor B Markham seconded:

“This Council calls on the Administration to review the 2017/18 Council Tax increase levied on the Parished areas of Northampton”.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was lost.

Mr Martin Sawyer addressed Council on motion ii) and questioned why the Council had stopped monitoring Air Quality around the Bus Station in 2016 and stated that this was a legal responsibility under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985. He further questioned why Air Quality monitoring had commenced again in 2017

despite half of the population living in an area that was damaging to health.

ii) Councillor B Markham proposed and Councillor Meredith seconded:

“Given the clear public interest and concern expressed at the last council meeting regarding the inadequacy of the Northgate Bus Station and the congestion caused in the Drapery the Council is concerned that no Air Quality monitoring was undertaken in the vicinity of the Bus station during 2016.

To reassure the public that this Council is taking the traffic congestion and resultant air quality problems seriously we call on the Administration to bring a report to this Council twice a year detailing the trend in air quality readings and details of actions that are being taken to protect the public”.

Councillor Nunn proposed and Councillor Hallam seconded and amendment:

Amended motion read:

“Given the clear public interest expressed at the last council meeting regarding the Northgate Bus Station and the congestion caused in the Drapery this Council resolves to implement any recommendations from the current Scrutiny Review concerning Air Quality in this area of the Town Centre and receive any monitoring reports that Scrutiny considers should be reported.

To reassure the public that this Council is taking the traffic congestion seriously this Council notes that the Administration is working with partners to address the abuse by motorists of the Traffic Regulation Orders applying to The Drapery, and are pursuing other measures to enable improved vehicle flows.”

Council debated the amendment.

Upon a vote, the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion.

Council debated the substantive motion

Upon a vote he motion was carried.

iii) Councillor Beardsworth proposed and Councillor B Markham seconded:

“This Council notes that the Administration has included in the 2017 / 18 financial plan capital expenditure of £7 million to redevelop the Central Museum. This money will increase the council's borrowing at a time when interest rates are predicted to rise.

Council is extremely concerned that the administration has once again embarked on

a major investment project without first having considered the business or financial case for such a large investment.

The Council therefore calls on the administration to bring a halt to this project until Scrutiny and all councillors have had an opportunity to consider a business plan”.

Council debated the motion

Upon a vote, the motion was lost.

Ms Morcea Walker addressed Council on motion iv) and commented that she had been in education for over 40 years and that she supported the motion. She stated that there was a need to raise the standards of education and that if Councils were given the opportunity to intervene in failing schools by means of sponsoring academies.

Mr Alan Hackett addressed Council on motion iv) and explained that he was currently employed as a teacher and that the school academy structures were not always well understood and considered that multi-academy trust to be unaccountable to their communities. He further noted his concerns with regards to the ‘academisation’ of Universities and the impact that this could have on the terms and conditions affecting teaching professionals and emphasised the need for control of academies be taken back.

iv) Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded:

“That this council notes and supports the House of Commons Education Select Committee Report's conclusion that local councils should be allowed to sponsor academies.

This goes even further than the Local Government Association's recent call for councils to be permitted once again "to play a direct role in raising education standards and improving life chances" by setting up and running academy schools and, where necessary, taking on the running of failing academies.

Consequently, this council should:

- Press the Secretary of State for Education to amend the legal ruling which currently prevents local authorities sponsoring academy chains and setting up free schools
- Use its influence to remove unnecessary red tape that currently prevents high performing maintained schools from becoming academy sponsors
- Once this has been done, build this Borough Council’s capacity to take on these responsibilities”

Council debated the motion

Upon a vote, the motion was lost.

v) Councillor Smith as the proposer of Motion v) accepted the amended motion.

Councillor McCutcheon seconded the acceptance of the amendment:

Amended motion read:

“This Council believes it needs to be as open and as transparent to the public as much as possible.

“This Council notes that Northamptonshire County Council does successful webcasting of its official meetings, including full Council and Cabinet. This Council resolves to introduce the webcasting of official Borough Council meetings, including Council, Cabinet, Committee and Scrutiny meetings that are open to the public, at the earliest opportunity”.

Council debated the motion amended motion which had become the substantive motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

10. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 9.21PM

Question for Full Council Monday 19th June, 2017

Question 1

Question to Cllr Hadland from Cllr Beardsworth:

Could the Cabinet Member tell me what the final cost was of the Northgate Bus Station?

Response

The capital expenditure on the Northgate Bus station was £7.592m.

Councillor Tim Hadland

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Question for Full Council Monday 19th June, 2017

Question 2

Question to Cllr King from Cllr Beardsworth:

When does the Cabinet Member expect the Central Museum to re-open to the public following the current work and does this include the extension into the Jail Block?

Response

We have taken control of the Gaol block and test so far are up to date.

Final design work is being completed and will be available for the public to view soon with a range of exhibitions and activities going on tour.

A final date will be known once all initial tests are completed. Our top priority is giving our town and visitors the best possible museum we can, not racing to get it open.

Councillor Anna King

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety

Question for Full Council Monday 19th June, 2017

Question 3

Question to Cllr King from Cllr Beardsworth:

What is the current estimated total cost of both phase 1 and phase 2 of the Museum project?

Response

Phase 1 remains on budget and it is estimated that it will cost £6.7m in total, once all works are completed. Although there is no commitment whatsoever beyond phase 1, there is scope for significant further development and refurbishment if we wish our museum to become an even greater international attraction in the future. Such future phases could involve additional expenditure of up to a further £14m, which would be funded from external funding pots, sponsorship and fund raising, **and not from the council's own resources.**

Councillor Anna King

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety

Question for Full Council Monday 19th June, 2017

Question 4

Question to Cllr Hallam from Cllr Meredith:

Six months ago I was told that Talavera Ward was next in the programme for tree maintenance and that I would get a copy of the planned programme for my ward. Since then I have heard nothing and no works are taking place. Can the portfolio tell me when residents of this area can expect to see some improvement?

Response

Talavera Ward is included in the second phase of the enhanced tree work, (Zone 2) which is due to be completed by the end of March 2018. We are at the moment reviewing how the first phase of work went and looking at any lessons that can be learnt. The surveying of Zone 2 has yet to be carried out, but once completed, the information will be shared with you, Cllr Meredith.

Actual work on the trees would not happen until later this year/beginning of next year, at a time outside of the nesting season.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 19th June, 2017

Question 5

Question to Cllr Nunn from Cllr Meredith:

What progress has been made with the request from Cramden Nurseries, Harborough Road for their lease with the council to be extended? The previous leader of the council ensured the owners, myself and other councillors that this would be dealt with.

Response

I trust you can appreciate this is an ongoing matter. I can confirm that our team has met with the tenants on a number of occasions and we are making progress towards a mutually satisfactory conclusion.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 19th June, 2017

Question 6

Question to Cllr Hibbert from Mr Adams:

Your report makes a number of references to Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

Northampton Defend Council Housing have recently published the cost of Homeless accommodation charges which show figures (April and May) since 2013, it shows £20,463 in 2013 and rising year on year to £269,095 in 2017.

Question:

Do you concur that in the first two months of this financial year NBC have paid Homeless Accommodation Charges of £269,095.42?

Response

Cllr Hibbert to respond verbally.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert

Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

Question for Full Council Monday 19th June, 2017

Question 7

Question to Cllr Hibbert from Mr Adams:

Northampton's Rough Sleepers Count on 9th December 2016 observed a total of 9 people 'bedded down' in the borough.

Do you agree that with Homeless people reporting being kicked in the head, sexually assaulted, having bedding set on fire and being urinated on a great number would be taking steps NOT to be observed?

Response

I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is extremely dangerous for people to be sleeping rough on the streets – and this is why the Council and its partners have been working so hard to end the need for people to sleep rough in Northampton.

The Rough Sleepers Count was very well organised and all of the volunteers involved were provided with the most up to date intelligence about known 'hotspots' and the areas (including woods, cemeteries, stairwells and bin stores) that were most likely to be used by people sleeping rough. Although no-one is pretending that the Count is perfect, it does provide a useful snapshot of the situation.

Anyone finding someone sleeping rough should complete the online form on the Street Link website www.streetlink.org.uk and this information will be forwarded, automatically, to Northampton's Street Outreach Workers at Oasis House.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 24th April 2017



Unitary Status

The work by Deloitte on behalf of the District and Borough councils across the county, which NBC have been leading on, is progressing well. All of the Leaders and Chief Executives are meeting with Deloitte to hear of the progress of their work on 22nd June, at which point we anticipate confirming a date for a briefing to all NBC Councillors.

Whilst we might see a change of Government priorities following the election, my view is that we must continue to work on this important issue, and firmly establish our position.

Governance

Following the initial work done by the Interim Governance & Risk Manager, I am delighted to be able to advise that a permanent appointment has now been made to this position.

This role is an extremely important one, and a crucial part of ensuring that the Governance Action Plan is delivered throughout the council. I have met with the new Governance & Risk Manager to assure her that she has the full support of the council in undertaking all of the advisory and compliance aspects of her role.

A report will be going to the forthcoming Audit Committee for their consideration and approval regarding an independent Chair of the Audit Committee.

Economic Development

On 5th May, The Dapper Sandwich Company kindly hosted a further meeting with Wellingborough Road businesses, delivering on our commitment to work closely with the growing number of businesses keen to improve their area, and similarly a further meeting also took place with St James businesses in the Enterprise Zone, on 25th May.

I have also met with other businesses, including within the Enterprise Zone, and had further meetings with the BID.

On 11th May, I was delighted to meet, along with the Town Centre Business Improvement District, with the local management of Marks & Spencer. The meeting allowed us to identify a number of ways that the council and the BID can work with them and support them to ensure their continued success as a key retailer in the town. We are currently making arrangements to engage with other key retailers, such as Debenhams.

In order to engage with the Government's aspirations for economic and infrastructure development across the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Northampton – Oxford Corridor, we have been meeting and working with all the councils across Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire, to develop our views for the future of the sub-region, and governance arrangements for joint working to ensure our active participation and influence in this agenda. This has culminated in a joint response signed by all the councils to Government, via the National Infrastructure Commission, outlining our commitment to work collaboratively to develop the economy and infrastructure across the sub-region, to fulfil the enormous potential of the area that has been identified. We will ensure that we continue to be

actively involved and contributing to the shaping of ongoing proposals, for the benefit of the town.

Other Activity

As always, I continue to work with the Cabinet Member team on all issues across their areas, and with the Chief Executive and Directors. In particular, I am delighted to report that the two months that the new Director for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning has been in post has seen enormous progress made across major projects and other areas, and you will begin to see significant updates on many of these areas begin to come through in the near future as a result of his transformational impact on them.

Some of the various other activities that I have been involved in include:

On 8th May I was delighted to be amongst those welcoming HRH Princess Royal to the Northamptonshire Association of Youth Clubs. As well as showcasing the great work that NAYC do, the event also included a splendid trampoline demonstration by many young people.

On 29th May it was wonderful to attend the Oak Apple Day ceremony at All saints Church to commemorate the restoration of the English monarchy in May 1660.

On 12th May I hosted a further meeting with NBC colleagues and other partners to push ahead our plans to bring electric vehicle charging points to the town. This is an area in which I feel we have been behind other towns, and I am pleased to report that significant progress is being made on this.

On 11th May, the Northampton Logistics Awards, led by the University, was a great celebration of the expertise across all areas of this industry that we have in Northampton.

The latest meeting on 17th May of the Collingtree Development Stakeholders Group, an initiative led by NBC's Planning Department, continued to prove effective in ensuring that, as this development takes further shape, local residents and groups views can be considered and taken account of. I'm grateful to the Head of Planning and his team for creating and facilitating this Group, using an approach that we intend to continue using for this and similar situations.

Finally, may I thank all those of you who sent me good wishes during my brief spell in hospital, and my colleagues who ensured continuity in my absence – I am delighted to report that I have a clean bill of health, and am back to full strength!

Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Leader of the Council



Report of the Deputy Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 19th June 2016

As Deputy Leader of the Council, I have been continuing to support the Leader and Cabinet colleagues across a variety of areas within the council, and can report on some of my specific responsibilities as below.

Market

The next meeting of the Market Advisory Group is scheduled to take place on 27th June.

National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) have undertaken a health check of our market. The report has been received on the day of writing this report so it has not yet been considered. I will consider the report and its recommendations with the Market Manager.

Options to reconfigure the Market Stalls will hopefully be discussed with Traders at the forthcoming MAG. I would like to reiterate that there will then be full consultation with all Traders before any decision is made on which option to take forward for implementation.

When the new configuration is implemented, new covers will be installed throughout the market, something that has been budgeted for in the current financial year.

Councillor Training

The following is the ongoing programme of events at the time of writing:

- **29/06/17 - Safeguarding Refresher** open to all Councillors. Two identical 2 hour sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Head of Housing & Wellbeing.
- **17/07/17 - Performance Management** open to all Councillors. Two identical 1 hour sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Corporate Programme Delivery Manager.
- **12/02/18 – Data Protection Training** open to all Councillors. Two identical sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Senior Information Governance Officer.

Further details regarding these sessions can be obtained from Tracy Tiff.

Members are asked to register to attend these events with Tracy Tiff as soon as possible.

The Councillor Development Group will next meet on 28th June. Further topics for training will be discussed and pursued including:

- Audit training, when appropriate
- Further Personal Safety for Councillors
- Universal Credit
- Dementia Friendly Town
- Social Lettings Agency
- Section 106 Agreements and what they deliver

The Group will also consider suggestions put forward by members as well as those proposed by the Standards Committee.

Scrutiny

Cabinet will be receiving Scrutiny Reports on 21st June. These will be given full consideration and responded to as soon as practically possible.

The Working Group that Cabinet recommended be established in response to the Match Day Parking report is in the process of being established.

Overview and Scrutiny agreed their Work Programme on 8th May. I and my colleagues look forward to participating in and contributing to the reviews they will be undertaking during the current year – Cemeteries, Culture & Tourism, and Dementia Friendly Town – and to receiving their reports in due course.

Street Lighting

A further meeting of the Officer / Member Working Group took place on 15th May. Minutes of the meeting will soon be available.

The priority remains to establish a complete and accurate asset register of NBC / NPH owned street lights. We are approaching Balfour Beatty to assist in this, as well as investing some of our own resource in the exercise.

All Members, Parish Councils, Residents Associations and the BID's are in the process of being contacted to ask if they know of, or have any problems with street lights that are or may be NBC owned in their respective areas.

We are also looking to replace the missing ornate lights on South Bridge.

Officers are also pursuing NCC / Balfour Beatty to complete the installation, to our specification, of the heritage light columns installed around All Saints, St Giles Square, and in Fish Street.

Councillor Phil Larratt
Deputy Leader of the Council



Cabinet Member Report for Environment

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 19th June 2017

Environmental Services Re-Provision

The Council undertook extensive consultation with residents and stakeholders in preparation for the procurement process to support the design of the needs and the requirements for the next Environment Services Contract which will start in June 2018.

This consisted of face to face interviews during summer 2016 and a postal survey open to all residents during winter 2016/17.

The procurement process has now started and Cabinet is receiving quarterly updates

The selection stage of the procurement process has recently been completed and selected bidders have been invited to develop their initial proposals for the delivery of the future services. These proposals will be submitted during summer 2017.

Environmental Services (Direct Services)

- Victoria Park – The children's enclosed play area has been extended and additional play equipment installed; a climbing frame, roundabout, sit on springers, sit on mushrooms and interactive play boards.
- Abington Park – The new play train has been installed in the main play area and will soon be open for the young children's adventures to start.
- Bollards have been installed at the main entrance to White Hills Recreation Ground, Acre Lane, Kingsthorpe to prevent any further illegal encampments by passing travellers.

Environmental Health

Enforcement Service

The procurement process for a service to provide targeted enforcement to address littering and other environmental crime is progressing. A report will be presented to Cabinet later this week more information about the planned service.

Food and Safety

A prosecution of a takeaway and its operator for food hygiene offences was concluded. A total fine of £5065.00 was levied for these offences.

Park Management Committees

Love Parks week will be supported from 14-23rd July. Discussion with all the PMCs are taking place, to coordinate the activities across the parks during the week, including utilising a free App to develop trails, litter picking at Becket's, Kite Flying at Eastfield and a football festival at the Racecourse, plans continue to be developed and finalised.

Lots of activity is being developed and supported through the PMC's and Friends Groups, including, the creation of a Wildflower Meadow at Eastfield Park, the completion of a sensory garden at both Dallington and Abington Park. And at Becket's the Towns first Mela is planned

for 30th July – 12-4pm, lots of performances and stalls booked. The Buddies of Becket's have also been successful in gaining funding for a new Parks Officer post, who has started making links with organisations and businesses to improve and increase activities in the park

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment



Cabinet Member Report for Housing and Wellbeing

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 19th June 2017

Civil Penalties and Rent Repayment Orders

On 26th and 27th April 2017, the Private Sector Housing Team held three landlord focus groups to consult with landlords, managing agents and other stakeholders on the Council's plans to update its Housing Enforcement Policy and adopt a Private Sector Housing Civil Penalties Policy.

Officers explained how the use of Civil Penalties and Rent Repayment Orders – two of the key measures in the Housing & Planning Act 2016 – will support the Council's efforts to tackle criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords and managing agents, and ensure that offenders (rather than good landlords and local council taxpayers) pay for the cost of housing enforcement.

Everyone who attended the focus groups expressed support for the Council's approach to Civil Penalties and Rent Repayment Orders, and was pleased that most of the extra income that is generated from Civil Penalties and Rent Repayment Orders is likely to be used to increase the number of Officers employed to improve standards and hold landlords and agents to account.

The proposals will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 19th July 2017.

Multi Agency Rough Sleepers Workshop

In order to build on the success of the Nightshelter and focus on the achievement of the other nine objectives in 'TOGETHER we change lives' (our multi agency strategy for ending the need to sleep rough in Northampton) a half day workshop has been organised for 13th July 2017.

One of the biggest challenges we are facing at the moment is what to do with those people who are sleeping rough but are resolutely refusing to engage with local services or come off the streets. Although the Street Outreach Workers are very persistent and continue to work very well with the support of the Park Rangers and Neighbourhood Wardens, everyone has a responsibility to do everything they can to actively discourage people from sleeping rough.

Earlier this month, the Nightshelter launched a public appeal for more Volunteers, especially those who are in a position to cover night shifts (10.30pm – 7.00am) once a fortnight. Anyone wishing to support the Nightshelter (by becoming a volunteer or making a donation) should visit the Northampton Nightshelter webpage on the Council's website:

www.northampton.gov.uk/northamptonnightshelter

Housing Strategy 2018-2021

Work has started on the development of an overarching Housing Strategy that will set out Northampton's ambitions for place-based growth and regeneration, investment in new and existing housing, the provision of affordable housing and higher standards in the private rented sector.

Workshops, involving a wide range of stakeholders, are scheduled for July 2017 and, after being signed off by Cabinet, the new Housing Strategy is due to be published by December 2017.

Social Lettings Agency

Guildhall Residential Lettings (the Council's Social Lettings Agency) will support the Council's efforts to improve housing standards and management in the borough's private rented sector, bring empty homes back into use, prevent homelessness and reduce the number of homeless households living in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

Since the approval of the Business Case in January 2017, a substantial amount of work has been undertaken to develop the services, products and procedures needed to ensure that Guildhall Residential Lettings is successful, effective and sustainable.

One of our priorities has been to ensure that Guildhall Residential Lettings is successfully integrated with the other parts of the Housing and Wellbeing Service and that, where appropriate, its working practices – and the technology it uses to encourage and support self-service – are fully utilised by the whole of the Housing and Wellbeing Service.

The Social Lettings Agency's approach to empty homes, for example, mirrors the Housing Standards Team's intelligence-led, risk assessed, targeted approach to HMOs. The condition of the empty property, the nature and frequency of any complaints about anti-social behaviour, and outstanding debts to the Council are key indicators of priority and formal enforcement action will be taken, wherever possible, if the owner is unwilling to co-operate or fails to resolve the problem.

Likewise, the software that Guildhall Residential Lettings uses for inventories and inspections could be used by the Housing Standards Team (to produce reports on unlicensed HMOs and to document written and photographic evidence) and to manage temporary accommodation.

In order to reduce the Council's reliance on Bed & Breakfast accommodation, Officers have prioritised the development of the private sector leasing scheme. A comprehensive lease agreement has been developed and approved, and Officers are currently in discussions with a number of property owners, housing suppliers and investors who are interested in leasing their accommodation to the Council for up to seven years.

Regular meetings are taking place with Northampton Partnership Homes to ensure the successful and timely handover of 28 tenanted properties that NPH has been managing, for the Council, as part of an HCA-funded Empty Homes Scheme.

Consideration is also being given to the merits of making fundamental changes to the way in which the stock of council-owned temporary accommodation is managed and maintained, as this may help to reduce the Council's use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

The logo and branding of Guildhall Residential Lettings has been approved, and the interactive website (designed to support self-service) will be up and running by August 2017. By then, the Social Lettings Agency will have finalised its terms of business and be in a position to start advertising its services and seeking to attract properties that it is able to let and manage for a fee.

Northampton Partnership Homes

Excellent progress continues to be made on the regeneration of Spring Boroughs. St Katherine's Court is being refurbished, 18 family-sized council homes are being built on two former garage sites, and the flats in Little Cross Street are in the process of being demolished to make way for 18 new council flats and maisonettes.

A programme of improvements to the Council's blocks of flats (including new security doors and fencing, and the decoration of communal areas) is also well underway, with the works to blocks in Eastfield now nearing completion and the works to blocks in Kings Heath expected to be completed by the end of August 2017.

I am delighted to report that the reconfiguration and refurbishment of Eleonore House (an older persons' housing scheme) are now complete and that, as well as improving the internal layout of the existing flats, the works have enabled another six wheelchair accessible flats to be built. On 16th June 2017, I visited Eleonore House to view the improvements and attend a celebration event.

More than 175 council houses in Far Cotton are benefiting from external wall insulation. The houses have solid walls and were difficult to heat, but the insulation of the walls has improved the thermal efficiency of the homes and will help to reduce tenants' fuel bills.

With the agreement of the Council, Northampton Partnership Homes will now be tendering its own grounds maintenance contract. Tender documents are due to be sent out at the end of June 2017.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing



Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement & Community Safety

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 19th June 2017

Partnership Support

Funding has been allocated and will support 32 projects and organisations that will deliver positive outcomes for the community. These include:

Manna House Counselling Service - part of the Manna House Trust	£12,000
Spencer Contact	£15,000
Liberty Drums Corps	£6,590
Northamptonshire Rape Crisis	£15,000
Northampton Women's Aid	£20,000
Age UK Northamptonshire	£40,000
Northampton Door to Door Service	£25,410
Umbrella Fair Organisation	£15,000
The Good Loaf CIC	£10,000
The Lowdown	£17,500
Unity Leisure Northampton Leisure Trust	£8,500
Northampton Street Pastors	£8,000
Northampton Men's Sheds	£15,000
Home-Start Northampton	£18,000
Northampton Town FC Football in the Community Programme	£25,000
Community Spaces Northampton (2) Youth Project	£15,000
Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire	£10,000
Northampton Hope Centre	£10,000
Northampton Music 365	£5,000
Community Spaces Northampton (1)	£15,000
Bridge Substance Misuse Programme Ltd	£10,000
Action Support Uk Ltd on behalf of our Division Scooter 2 Go	£10,000
MHA Live at Home Northampton	£8,000
Relate Northamptonshire	£8,000
Singing4Breathing	£6,000
Community Centre joint bid Blackthorn Good Neighbours (lead)	£15,000
Care & Repair Northamptonshire	£5,000
Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council	£5,000
Tools for Self-Reliance	£8,000
Association of Northamptonshire Supplementary Schools Ltd	£10,000
Dostiyo Asian Women and Girls Organisation	£4,000
Indian Hindu Welfare Organisation	£5,000

There are four organisations that the panel has recommended be funded for three years. These include:

- Manna House Counselling Service - part of the Manna House Trust
- Northampton Women's Aid
- Age UK Northamptonshire
- Northampton Door to Door Service

Councillor Community Fund

Cllrs have just received their new allocations of £3,000, from 1st April 2017. Any underspends from the previous years have been carried forward. From 1st July 2017, the small grants fund will be administered by Northampton Borough Council.

Forums

IDAHO, conference held on 17th May, at the Royal and Derngate, more than 50 attendees from primary and secondary schools in attendance, combine the Borough Council's annual civic event for IDAHO with the conference.

An initial questionnaire developed through NBC's Youth forum, looking into the attitudes and behaviour of young people in Northampton, was well received at the Community Action for Responsible Gambling meeting in April. YGAM (National Youth Gambling Trust) identified this as an important piece of work and invited those involved to present the project at the YGAM symposium in September.

Successful in securing £1,350 from the Armed Forces Day fund to support Armed Forces Day on Saturday 24th June.

Volunteers

Volunteering work continues, gardening work established at Vernon Terrace Community Centre (ongoing upkeep and maintenance).

Events

Bands in the Park, which is held on the bandstand in Abington Park, continues to be popular with visitors and the programme will run throughout the summer.

The food festival (14th & 15th May) and Beer Festival (2nd – 4th June) on Becketts Park and the Carnival (10th June) and Speedy Cup (17th June) on the Racecourse delivered a variety of entertainment for the whole family to enjoy.

We are looking forward to Armed Forces Day events on the market square with the regimental parade on Saturday 24th June with thousands of visitors' people expected to come into the town centre. The Town Festival returns to the Racecourse on 1st – 2nd July with the RBL Honour Walk and Lewis Foundation Walk taking place on the 1st. The council continues to support community and charitable groups across its parks and open spaces.

Looking forward, the council will be supporting the annual Umbrella Fair on the Racecourse and the Half Marathon in the town centre / Delapre Park.

Culture & Heritage

The fourth series of Art History lectures take place during May and June at the Guildhall. The lectures are growing in popularity and are led by a team of art specialists from the University of Leicester.

The second series of five watercolour workshops for adults take place at Abington Park Museum in May and June. The theme for each workshop is based around structures in the park or museum.

A one woman play was performed during May at Abington Park Museum about the artist and suffragette Sylvia P Pankhurst.

A guided tour of Abington Park with archaeologist Jack Plowman sold out very quickly and customer feedback was exceptionally positive.

A Vintage & Craft Fair at the end of May attracted over 40 stallholders selling a wide range of vintage, reworked and handmade stalls selling fashion, accessories, jewellery, collectibles, homeware and more. The event attracted over 1,000 visitors.

Museum Expansion Project

Asbestos, drainage and archaeological surveys have been completed for the Museum, Old Gaol Block and Guildhall Road Block and final reports will be delivered in the next few weeks. The Pre-Design Report was received from the exhibition designers. This was the first response to the initial exhibition design briefs provided by the museum staff, so as to agree initial design ideas, before moving into the more detailed Concept Design stage.

Museum Governance Future Options

Consultants have held meetings with a number of cognate bodies, including the Arts Council, and Heritage Lottery Fund to discuss their response to potential governance options. A workshop was held with the Museum management team to consider different options and criteria against which to evaluate the options.

Customer Services

Conflict and Personal Safety training has been delivered to all Customer Services, Facilities and Call Care staff. The objectives of the course include:

- Crime prevention
- Three basic principles of awareness
- Triangle of Crime/personal Safety
- Mental preparation
- Understanding the importance of non-verbal communication
- Personal Safety devices and tactics
- Types of resistance

This half day course helped staff identify the early signs of aggression and the language and non-verbal communication that helps resolve conflict.

Community Safety

Serious Acquisitive Crime has seen an overall increase of +1,232 crimes for 2016/17. Within this, vehicle crime has risen by 1,061 crimes and domestic burglary by 54 crimes. However, domestic burglary has shown a reduction in the second half of the year, and due to the arrest of some key offenders this reduction is expected to continue into the 2017/18. Awareness raising and advice continues to be provided in priority locations and target hardening of vulnerable properties continues. The rate at which violence against the person continues to show an increase, but is considerably less than this period last year with an increase of 8.7% (+571 crimes). Anti-Social Behaviour incidents reported to Police have increased by 6%, but the last 3 months of 2016/17 have seen a reduction. Environmental ASB reports have increased by 10.5%. Personal ASB has reduced by 0.7%, and nuisance ASB has increased by 9.4%.

Weeks of Action areas for 2017/18 are St David's, Kings Heath, Briar Hill, Thorplands and Semilong. There will also be focussed pieces of work taking place throughout the year on the town centre addressing issues such as begging, street drinking, knife crime, personal safety etc.

The first week of Action in St David's took place week commencing 3 April 2017 and was extremely well supported by agencies and the local community.

Councillor Anna King
Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety



Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 19th June 2017

Planning

Development and Building Control

Planning permission for application N/2015/1454 (development of site for 235 dwellings and restoration of clock tower) at St Crispin was issued on the 8th of May, following finalisation of the S106 agreement.

Planning and Listed Building Consent applications N/2016/1428 and N/2016/1388 for the development of a creative industrial hub at Vulcan Works 34-38 Guildhall Road have been granted permission following approval by the Planning Committee in April 2017.

Planning application N/2016/1425 (new four storey building to provide shared office space and creative new small medium sized enterprises) at Linnells Motors, Fetter Street was approved by the Planning Committee in April 2017.

Planning permission for application N/2016/1091 (development of 80 specialised supported living apartments) at United Trades Club, Balmoral Road issued on 28th April 2017, following finalisation of the S106 agreement.

Planning application N/2016/1050 (construction of a Lidl Store at 9-15 Gambrel Road) was approved in principle, subject to a legal agreement, by the Planning Committee on 9th of May 2017.

Building Control is now registered with the Planning Portal therefore Building Regulation applications can now be submitted electronically via the Portal.

The following Full plan applications have been received this month:

- FP/2017/409 Alterations to existing retail unit to provide new retail, storage and staff administration areas at Unit A2B , 6 - 7 Fairground Way.
- FP/2017/597 Erection of 44 apartments with associated parking and landscaping at Victoria Business Park, St James Park Road
- FP/2017/566 Proposed 2no. 1 bedroom apartments at Land Rear Of , 122 St Georges Avenue, Northampton.

- FP/2017/543 - Redevelopment of land to provide 45no. 1 bedroom flats for the elderly with associated facilities, demolition of 10no existing garages to the north of site to create overall 31no car parking bays (inc
- . 3 acc. bays).
Creation of new access into Shap Green at Lakeview House Old Persons Home, 88 Churchill Avenue.

Planning Policy

Local Plan Part 2

The planning policy team is making good progress in assessing housing and employment sites for inclusion in the Sites Consultation, which will take place later in the summer

Enterprise

Business Incentive Scheme

In the 2016-2017 financial year the Business Incentive Scheme supported 33 businesses, creating 269 jobs and leveraging over £1.3m in private sector investment. 2017-2018 funds have already seen 9 applications committed to funding with several in the pipeline over the coming months.

Networking events

The second Wellingborough Road business breakfast was held on 5th May at Dapper Sandwich. More new business faces were present with the Police and Retail Crime Initiative on the agenda.

A second Enterprise Zone Breakfast meeting took place on 25th May at Longthorne Gunmakers, aiming to encourage collaboration and sense of identity amongst the businesses. Attendance was excellent.

Regeneration

Upton Country Park

Work is starting to take shape to deliver Phase 2 of Upton Country Park to provide better access linking new paths to existing, provide new signage and interpretations and encouraging education around biodiversity in the area. Surveys will start taking place in the coming weeks.

Street lights

Work continues on NBC Street lighting ensuring all are registered and maintained. Options will be considered later in the year.

Castle Project

The expanded Virtual reality app will be completed by end of June. The survey work on the Castle area using Ground penetrating radar has been completed and the results are awaited.

Town Centre Signage

The designs have been completed and work will begin shortly.

Assets**Recent work has included:-**

- Installation of a new insulated roof to the kitchen at Semilong Community Centre.
- New LED lighting and controls to the Mayorhold MSCP.
- Commissioned feasibility report concerning the plant room at the Guildhall.
- Repairs to the Royal Theatre roof.
- Investigations into path edge slippage into the main Abington Park Lake.
- Preparatory work for concrete repairs at the Grosvenor MSCP during June and July.

Councillor Tim Hadland**Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning**



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 19th June 2017

Finance

The Finance team have been focussed on producing the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2016/17. The draft Accounts are on course to be published by the statutory deadline of 30th June, at which time they will also be available for 6 weeks of public inspection. The draft Accounts will be presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 3rd July, with the external audit by KPMG commencing on 10th July.

The end of year position for 2016/17 is being considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 21st June and continues to show the Council is in a positive financial position. The provisional General Fund outturn position is an underspend of around £1m which is proposed to be added to reserves to provide the Council with resources to deploy in ensuring its financial sustainability over the medium term.

Revenues & Benefits

The Service has had a very positive start to the new financial and performance year. Our Revenues and Benefits call centre continues to deliver on the benefits of the improvement plan that has been in place and continues to increase our response rate to our customers. The service remains focused on achieving continuous improvements and has already made great progress against the operational improvement plans for 2017/18.

The service is continuing to review any impacts of the 2017/18 CTRS scheme to ensure there is the right balance between recovery and customer support.

Further to this the service has finished a county wide review of Single Person discount claims. The purpose of these reviews are to reduce the risk of fraud within the system and increase the collectable revenue within the tax base. The two year review has successfully raised an additional £1 million of collectable revenue across 6 of the 7 districts and borough councils in Northamptonshire, including Northampton.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance

Appendices: 1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL
19th June 2016

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Borough Secretary and
Monitoring Officer

Report Title	Updating the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Full Council to consider and approve the draft revised Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, recommended to it by Cabinet, which includes the provision of an external whistleblowing hotline.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Full Council:

- 2.1 consider the content of the 10th May 2017 Cabinet report at Appendix 1 and approve the draft Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure that is appended to the Cabinet report;
- 2.2 delegate authority to the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to include the details of the external whistleblowing hotline provider in the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure approved by Full Council once a provider has been appointed, and to make any other necessary minor amendments to the Policy and Procedure, prior to its publication; and
- 2.3 [instruct] the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to ensure that training is provided to Councillors and Council staff about the new Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, alongside a campaign to raise awareness of whistleblowing arrangements.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 On 10th May 2017, Cabinet, in summary:

- a. recommended to Full Council that the Council retain an external provider to operate an external whistleblowing hotline for the Council;
- b. recommended the draft Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure appended to the Cabinet report at Appendix 1 to Full Council for approval;
- c. approved expenditure on an external whistleblowing hotline (subject to Full Council approving a revised Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure that includes use of an external whistleblowing hotline);
- d. delegated authority to the Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to select an external whistleblowing provider; and
- e. recommended to Full Council, that upon adoption of a new Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, training on whistleblowing is provided to Councillors and Council staff, alongside a campaign to raise awareness of whistleblowing arrangements.

The Cabinet report is attached at Appendix 1.

3.2 Decision details

3.2.1 Full Council is recommended to consider the information in the Cabinet report, accept all of Cabinet's recommendations and therefore:

- a) approve the draft Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure that is appended to the Cabinet report;
- b) delegate authority to the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to include the details of the external whistleblowing hotline provider in the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure approved by Full Council once a provider has been appointed, and to make any other necessary minor amendments to the Policy and Procedure, prior to its publication; and
- c) [instruct] the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to ensure that training is provided to Councillors and Council staff about the new Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, alongside a campaign to raise awareness of whistleblowing arrangements.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 If the recommendations in this report are accepted, this will result in a policy change as detailed in the Cabinet report at Appendix 1.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Cabinet has approved the expenditure on a whistleblowing hotline.

4.2.2 The training of Members and Officers and the awareness raising campaign can be incorporated into existing training programmes and the ongoing activities associated with the implementation of the Council's Governance Action Plan.

4.2.3 The Council's Whistleblowing Policy is an important part of the Council's overall governance framework and its strategy to prevent fraud and corruption. Strengthening and improving the Policy therefore assists in identifying and managing certain types of risks that may exist in the organisation.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of the Cabinet report at Appendix 1.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 An equality impact assessment on this recommended policy change has been carried out. Having considered the equality impacts in relation to the proposed Policy changes, the view is that there are no equality or health implications arising directly from the proposed changes. There may be some indirect equality implications arising from the proposed policy changes, but these are considered to be positive in nature and apply equally to all eg. by enabling all individuals who wish to raise a whistleblowing issue, to have access to an external route to 'blow the whistle' if needed.

4.4.2 Due regard will be had to equality issues in provision of training and awareness raising, to ensure that it is accessible to all to give all staff and members the opportunity to become informed about whistleblowing policy and process.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 None.

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer
0300 330 7000

Appendices: 1



CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Updating the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	10 th May 2017
Key Decision:	YES
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	YES
Directorate:	Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Leader
Ward(s)	All

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to recommend that Full Council approve the draft revised Whistleblowing Policy which includes the provision of an external whistleblowing hotline.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 recommend to Full Council that the Council retain an external provider to operate an external whistleblowing hotline for the Council;
- 2.2 recommend the draft Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure attached at Appendix 1 to Full Council for approval;
- 2.3 approve the expenditure on an external whistleblowing hotline as detailed in paragraph 4.2.1 of this report, subject to Full Council approving a revised Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure that includes use of an external whistleblowing hotline;

- 2.4 delegate authority to the Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to select an external whistleblowing provider and determine the specific level of expenditure within the range approved by Cabinet, following a process conducted in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules; and
- 2.5 recommend to Full Council, that upon adoption of a new Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, training on whistleblowing is provided to Councillors and Council staff, alongside a campaign to raise awareness of whistleblowing arrangements.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The Council currently has a Whistleblowing Policy in place as part of its overall Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy.
- 3.1.2 Whistleblowing refers to the act of reporting or exposing wrongdoing either internally, within the organisation, or externally, for example to a regulator.
- 3.1.3 The purpose of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy is to enable those who work for the Council to disclose allegations of malpractice and be confident that the matter will be effectively investigated and that they will not be left vulnerable to any form of victimisation, or be subject to reprisal as a result of "blowing the whistle".
- 3.1.4 The following lists examples of types of malpractice that might be reported/disclosed under the Council's Whistleblowing Policy:
 - Conduct which is a criminal offence or a breach of law
 - Dangerous procedures risking the health, safety or welfare of other employees or members of the public
 - Damage to the environment
 - Unauthorised use of public funds
 - Fraud or corruption
 - Sexual or physical abuse of customers
 - Disclosures related to miscarriages of justice
 - Other unethical conduct
- 3.1.5 Whistleblowing is an important aspect of good governance within organisations. Maintaining an effective Whistleblowing Policy contributes to an organisational environment where the prevention of fraud and malpractice is encouraged and where its detection is promoted.
- 3.1.6 A full review of the Whistleblowing Policy is being undertaken as part of the implementation of the Council's Governance Action Plan (that was considered by Audit Committee on 5th December 2016).
- 3.1.7 The Council's Standards Committee has a role in promoting good governance within the organisation. Therefore, the Standards Committee has in

accordance with its Work Plan, participated in the preparation of a revised draft Whistleblowing Policy (at Appendix 1). On 2nd March 2017, a Working Group of the Standards Committee considered the broad principles of the draft Whistleblowing Policy at Appendix 1 and also considered in detail the principle of the Council having an external whistleblowing hotline. The draft Whistleblowing Policy was then considered by the Standards Committee on 20th March 2017, who resolved to recommend it to Cabinet.

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 The draft Whistleblowing Policy at Appendix 1 is based broadly on a good practice example. It is intended to be relatively short to encourage those who may need to access the Policy to use it.

Introducing an external whistleblowing hotline

3.2.2 Organisations sometimes provide the option for their staff to blow the whistle to an external provider, in addition to the ordinary routes for whistleblowing disclosures to be made within the organisation. The draft Whistleblowing Policy at Appendix 1 includes the provision of an external whistleblowing hotline. The Council's current Whistleblowing Policy does not include an external hotline.

3.2.3 The draft Whistleblowing Policy encourages staff to raise any concerns they may have through standard Line Management initially, to allow those in positions of responsibility to address the issue and seek an explanation for the behaviour or activity. The draft Policy states that if the individual with the concern does not feel that Managers within their area have addressed the concern, or they prefer not to raise it with their own managers for any reason, they can also contact either the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Executive or the confidential external whistleblowing hotline.

3.2.4 The draft Policy does not provide for the external whistleblowing hotline provider to deal with or investigate the subject of any disclosures. It is anticipated that an external provider would receive and log any disclosures made and report them back into the relevant part of the Council, taking into account any potential conflicts of interest arising from the subject matter of the disclosure. It is expected that an external whistleblowing hotline would include alternatives to making a telephone disclosure, for example the ability to report a concern to a secure online area.

3.2.5 There are a number of potential advantages of using an external whistleblowing hotline in addition to the Council's ordinary internal whistleblowing routes. For example:

- People who work for an external hotline who are trained in talking to individuals who may want to make a disclosure can build rapport with those individuals and successfully gather relevant information.
- Hotline can be covered outside of ordinary office hours.

- The existence of an external hotline can assist in allaying any suspicions that staff may have about how the organisation treats whistleblowing and can demonstrate that the organisation is completely committed to hearing any concerns that its staff may have.
- It can provide an alternative route for staff who do not wish to use internal reporting options, but does not need to replace the existence of those internal reporting options.
- Generally, being able to report to an external whistleblowing hotline may lead to a more positive perception by Council staff of whistleblowing arrangements and lead to a higher number of reports being made. (If an organisation receives a very low number of disclosures or no disclosures, this could indicate a lack of confidence in the organisation's whistleblowing arrangements rather than indicating that there are no matters of concern within the organisation).

Protection for whistleblowers

3.2.6 The law on whistleblowing is contained in the Employment Rights Act 1996 ('ERA') as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 ('PIDA'). The ERA was amended by PIDA to introduce protection for workers (including employees) who "blow the whistle" on wrongdoing at work. Workers have a right not to be dismissed or suffer detriment at work as a consequence of making a "protected disclosure". The draft Whistleblowing Policy explains that whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern. (Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern).

Whistleblowing disclosures by members of the public

3.2.7 The draft Policy explains that people who are not Council employees can still contact the Council to report any concerns or disclosures over wrongdoing. This is to ensure that those who come into contact with the Council or its services have a mechanism through which to report concerns, and to ensure that all information about suspected malpractice or wrongdoing reaches the appropriate individuals within the Council, who can then investigate further. The protections available under PIDA, in certain circumstances, to employees who have made a whistleblowing disclosure, do not extend to disclosures made by members of the public.

Training

3.2.8 The Standards Working Group discussed the importance of training to ensure that all Councillors and staff are aware of the Council's whistleblowing arrangements. When a revised Whistleblowing Policy is formally adopted by the Council, it will be important to ensure that there is a campaign to raise awareness of the Policy and Procedure and ensure that training takes place.

3.3 Choices (Options)

Option 1 (recommended)

3.3.1 That Cabinet:

- recommend to Full Council that the Council retain an external provider to operate an external whistleblowing hotline for the Council;
- recommend the draft Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure attached at Appendix 1 to Full Council for approval;
- approve the expenditure on an external whistleblowing hotline as detailed in paragraph 4.2.1 of this report, subject to Full Council approving a revised Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure that includes use of an external whistleblowing hotline;
- delegate authority to the Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to select an external whistleblowing provider and determine the specific level of expenditure within the range approved by Cabinet, following a process conducted in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules; and
- recommend to Full Council, that upon adoption of a new Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, training on whistleblowing is provided to Councillors and Council staff, alongside a campaign to raise awareness of whistleblowing arrangements.

3.3.2 Adopting the draft Whistleblowing Policy is recommended as it is based on current good practice and it is important that this Policy is reviewed and refreshed regularly to ensure it is up to date and operating effectively. The potential advantages of introducing an external whistleblowing hotline are summarised in paragraph 3.2.5.

3.3.3 A potential disadvantage of using an external hotline is that it adds another stage or layer into the process for dealing with whistleblowing concerns when they are raised. However, any contract with an external provider would include service levels to cover timescales within which reports back to the Council need to be made. Further, the Council's operational processes used to deal with whistleblowing disclosures can be easily modified to integrate the use of an external hotline.

3.3.4 The advantages of training staff and Councillors about whistleblowing are that it will ensure that staff are aware of the relevant avenues for raising concerns, that they gain an understanding of how whistleblowers are protected by legislation, and have confidence that the Council takes whistleblowing seriously.

Option 2 (not recommended)

3.3.5 That Cabinet does not recommend the draft Whistleblowing Policy to Full Council for approval, or recommends an alternative to Full Council.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 If Full Council accepts Cabinet's recommendations, this will result in a policy change as detailed in this report.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the expenditure on an external whistleblowing hotline subject to Full Council approving the draft Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure. It is estimated that costs of retaining an external whistleblowing hotline will be between £1000 and £9000 per year depending on the provider and package selected.
- 4.2.2 The Council's Whistleblowing Policy is an important part of the Council's overall governance framework and its strategy to prevent fraud and corruption. Strengthening and improving the Policy therefore assists in identifying and managing certain types of risks that may exist in the organisation.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of this Report.

4.4 Equality and Health

- 4.4.1 Full regard will be had to equality and diversity considerations in the implementation of a revised Whistleblowing Policy and any associated awareness raising campaign.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 Standards Committee have been consulted and have recommended the draft Policy to Cabinet.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.6.1 Adopting a revised Whistleblowing Policy which incorporates an external whistleblowing hotline to strengthen current arrangements contributes to the priority set out in the Council's 2017-2022 Corporate Plan to 'improve our governance' and implement the Governance Action Plan.

4.7 Other Implications

- 4.7.1 None

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 Report to Standards Committee of 20th March 2016 – *Updating the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure*

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**WHISTLEBLOWING
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

[] 2017

1. ABOUT THIS POLICY AND POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Council is committed to conducting its functions with honesty and integrity. This Policy forms part of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and is intended to provide an effective means of confidential reporting and detection.
- 1.2 It is the Council's expectation that Members and employees will lead by example, acting in a proper manner at all times and abiding by the procedures, rules and safeguards put in place to protect the interests of the Council and those it serves. This expectation extends to contractors, suppliers and other external agencies with which the Council deals, and any failures by such agencies to meet the standards required by the Council in this respect will be dealt with in a rigorous manner.
- 1.3 However, all organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring and to address them when they do occur.
- 1.4 The aims of this Policy are:
- (a) To encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
 - (b) To provide staff with guidance as to how to raise those concerns.
 - (c) To reassure staff that they should be able to raise genuine concerns without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 1.5 This Policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers.
- 1.6 This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY

- 2.1 The Monitoring Officer has day-to-day operational responsibility for this Policy.
- 2.2 The Monitoring Officer, should review this Policy from a legal and operational perspective at least once a year.
- 2.3 All staff are responsible for the success of this Policy and should ensure that they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing. Staff are invited to comment on this Policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to the Monitoring Officer.

3. WHAT IS WHISTLEBLOWING?

3.1 **Whistleblowing** is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. This may include:

- (a) criminal activity;
- (b) failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements;
- (c) miscarriages of justice;
- (d) danger to health and safety or welfare of other staff or members of the public;
- (e) damage to the environment;
- (f) bribery under the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy;
- (g) financial fraud or mismanagement;
- (h) unauthorised use of public funds
- (i) breach of the Council's internal policies and procedures including the Employees' Code of Conduct;
- (j) conduct likely to damage the Council's reputation;
- (k) unauthorised disclosure of confidential or exempt information;
- (l) negligence;
- (m) sexual or physical abuse of Council clients/customers;
- (n) other unethical behaviour
- (o) the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters.

3.2 A **whistleblower** is a person who raises a genuine concern relating to any of the above. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of the Council's activities (a **whistleblowing concern**) you should report it under this Policy.

3.3 This Policy should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances, such as the way you have been treated at work. In those cases you should use the Grievance Resolution Procedure or the Dignity at Work Framework as appropriate.

3.4 This Policy should not be used in cases where there has been a failure of service delivery, which should be dealt with using the Council's standard Complaints Procedure.

3.5 If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this Policy you should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, whose contact details are at the end of this Policy.

4. RAISING A WHISTLEBLOWING CONCERN

- 4.1 As a first step, the Council encourages you to raise concerns through standard line management with your Line Manager or your Head of Service or Director, to allow those in positions of responsibility and authority an opportunity to address the issue and seek an explanation for the behaviour or activity. You may tell them in person or put the matter in writing if you prefer. They may be able to agree a way of resolving your concern quickly and effectively. In some cases they may refer the matter to the Monitoring Officer.
- 4.2 However, where the matter is more serious, or you feel that your Line Manager or other managers within your area have not addressed your concern, or you prefer not to raise it with them for any reason, you should contact one of the following:
- (a) the Monitoring Officer, Francis Fernandes;
 - (b) the Council's Chief Executive; David Kennedy; or
 - (c) the confidential external telephone whistleblowing hotline.

Contact details are set out at the end of this Policy.

- 4.3 Concerns raised under this Policy should, where possible, be submitted in writing, setting out the background, giving names, dates and places, and the reason why you are concerned about the situation. Individuals who do not feel able to put their concerns in writing can telephone the Monitoring Officer who will take down a written summary of your concern. The Monitoring Officer can be contacted on his office extension number. Alternatively, he can be contacted on the **internal** confidential whistleblowing hotline.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 5.1 The Council hopes that staff will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this Policy. However, if you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret. If it is necessary for anyone investigating your concern to know your identity, we will discuss this with you.
- 5.2 The Council does not encourage staff to make disclosures anonymously. Proper investigation may be more difficult or impossible if we cannot obtain further information from you. It is also more difficult to establish whether any allegations are credible. Whistleblowers who are concerned about possible reprisals if their identity is revealed should come forward to the Monitoring Officer and appropriate measures can then be taken to preserve confidentiality. If you are in any doubt you can seek advice from Public Concern at Work, the independent whistleblowing charity, who offer a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this Policy.

6. COUNCIL RESPONSE TO A WHISTLEBLOWING CONCERN

- 6.1 Once you have raised a concern, we will carry out an initial assessment to determine the scope of any investigation.
- 6.2 Assuming you have not reported the matter anonymously or have not requested an external agency to withhold your name from the Borough Council, we will provide written confirmation that details of your concern have been received within ten working days of receipt. You will be advised as to:
- whether or not further information is required from you and whether you may be required to attend meetings to provide additional information;
 - how the Council proposes to deal with the matter;
 - whether any initial enquiries have been made;
 - whether further investigations will take place and, if not, why not.
- 6.3 In some cases, we may appoint an investigator or team of investigators including staff with relevant experience of investigations or specialist knowledge of the subject matter. The investigator(s) may make recommendations for change to enable us to minimise the risk of future wrongdoing.
- 6.4 The amount of contact you might expect to have with the person(s) considering the issues will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided.
- 6.5 Where you are required to attend a meeting or interview this can be arranged away from your workplace if you wish and you may be accompanied by your trade union or professional association representative, colleague or friend. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.
- 6.6 In the event that you are required to give evidence in any disciplinary or criminal proceedings you will be given advice about the procedure.
- 6.7 We will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale. However, sometimes legal constraints or the need for confidentiality may prevent us giving you specific details of the investigation or any disciplinary action taken as a result. You should treat any information about the investigation as confidential.
- 6.8 If we conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower will be subject to disciplinary action.

7. IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED

- 7.1 While we cannot always guarantee the outcome you are seeking, we will try to deal with your concern fairly and in an appropriate way. By using this Policy you can help us to achieve this.

7.2 If you are not happy with the way in which your concern has been handled, you can raise it with the Council's Chief Executive. Contact details are set out at the end of this Policy.

8. EXTERNAL DISCLOSURES

8.1 The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

8.2 The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. It will very rarely if ever be appropriate to alert the media. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. The independent whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work, operates a confidential helpline. They also have a list of prescribed regulators for reporting certain types of concern. Their contact details are at the end of this Policy.

8.3 Whistleblowing concerns usually relate to the conduct of our staff, but they may sometimes relate to the actions of a third party, such as a supplier or service provider. In some circumstances the law will protect you if you raise the matter with the third party directly. However, we encourage you to report such concerns internally first. You should contact your line manager or the Monitoring Officer for guidance.

9. PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

9.1 It is understandable that whistleblowers are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support staff who raise genuine concerns under this Policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

9.2 Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Monitoring Officer immediately. If the matter is not remedied you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.

9.3 You must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct you may be subject to disciplinary action.

10. WHISTLEBLOWING BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

If you are not a Council employee you can still contact the Council to report any concerns or disclosures over wrongdoing and the Council will follow the same or a similar process to that set out in this Policy. The protections available under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, in certain circumstances to employees who have made a

whistleblowing disclosure, do not extend to disclosures made by members of the public.

11. MONITORING

The Monitoring Officer will regularly review the effectiveness of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and engage elected Members in this process in accordance with the Council's governance framework.

12. CONTACTS

Monitoring Officer	Francis Fernandes 01604 837334 ffernandes@northampton.gov.uk
Monitoring Officer's internal confidential Whistleblowing Hotline	07900 052789
Chief Executive	David Kennedy 01604 837726 dkennedy@northampton.gov.uk
[External Whistleblowing hotline] <i>[insert hours of operation]</i>	<i>[insert Company name and contact details]</i>
Public Concern at Work (Independent whistleblowing charity)	Helpline: (020) 7404 6609 E-mail: whistle@pcaw.org.uk Website: www.pcaw.org.uk