

Northampton Borough Council - NORTHAMPTON PENSIONERS' FORUM

THURSDAY, 25 JANUARY 2018

The Jeffery Room, The Guildhall, NN1 1DE.

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

ATTENDANCE: Cllr Brian Oldham (BO, Chair), Roger Rumsey (RR, Co-Chair), Jamie Wells (JW, NBC), Michael Macleod (MM, NBC), Geoff Simms (GS, Abington Residents Association), Tony Mallard (TM, E.R.A and Veterans), Alan Wright (AW, Independent), Norman Sharp (NS, Independent), Tom Appleyard (TA, Independent), Brian Nichols (BN, Independent), Mike Hill (MH, Independent), Anna King (AK, NBC Councillor), David J Hewitt (DH, Independent).

APOLOGIES: Jaqueline Forrest-Smith, Veronica Male, Jennifer Shaw, Ann Timson.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

Forum members read through the Code of Conduct

3. JAMIE WELLS - HATE CRIME REPORTING

JW explained to the forum about how they can report hate crime.

ACTION: MM to send out details via e-mail.

BO: Can move to a Friday then invite the PCC.

ACTION: MM to invite PCC to a Friday session – leave date open.

4. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes recorded as accurate.

Matters arising – secret shopper programme discussed again. There are many problems across the town regarding the bus service.

Q: What have they done to change the bus station since 2014?

A: Looking to add bus stops to Mercers Road.

DH: There is an inevitable conflict regarding buses. Hope the secret shopper goes ahead.

5. CLLR MIKE HALLAM - ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

MH: If I cannot give you an answer for anything yet, I can provide it in 10 days when I have more information.

Went through a large consultation to see what people wanted in the contract. Done under EU procurement rules. Final 5 candidates then final 2 candidates. Cabinet has chosen Veolia.

Key things about the contract – keeping the frequency of bin collection. Moving away from open recycling bins. Keep free green waste. Food waste amongst public are 50% used 50% not – food waste collection will stay. Quality is amongst this

service, tendered on price and quality this time, not just price. Must ensure the new contractor delivers quality because the standard at the moment is not good enough.

2 million more will be spent within first year, most in first 3 months to get the standard up to where it should be. If contractor does not give a good standard, there will be service penalties.

Long term plan to clear up Northampton. New enforcement contract, already issued 100 Fixed Penalty Notices. People who think littering is acceptable will be fined.

Q: Are pensioners exempt from collection costs in sheltered housing?

A: Not at the moment £25 is there solely to cover the cost of the vehicle. Previous contract was not flexible but this one is. We will look to work and make relationships with sheltered housing better.

Q: Collecting from sheltered housing would mean you make less trips, so it should cost less.

A: Never say never about working on this.

Q: Is the meeting on the 5th closed to the public.

A: Yes, it is closed.

Q: Are vehicles the assets in the accounts.

A: Yes.

Q: We are getting an extra recycling bin instead of a box? Will it be mixed up?

A: Paper, plastic and metal will go in, glass is to be decided. It will be recycled and not dumped. Now it will be sorted out after, it is better than litter blowing out of the open bins.

Q: Not in sheltered housing though?

A: Many properties aren't necessarily suitable but we will look at other options.

Q: Will the glass be separated by colour?

A: No, all together.

Q: Will it be brown bin, black bin then recycling?

A: No bi-weekly collection for recycling.

Q: Mixed glass called is cullet.

A: Get a worse price than separated.

Q: Comingled waste is contaminated, can't recycle that. So the rate won't go up as it is the worst option.

A: 68% of the people said they want comingling.

DH: Sometimes you have to go against the public.

Q: Are the details online.

A: Yes it is all online.

Q: Citizens of Northampton are the eyes and ears of the town. How many inspectors

are there employed?

A: There is one contractor.

Q: How are we going to enforce the contract?

A: There is one contract manager, there are wardens etc. to check.

Q: Veolia are from France, who gets the money?

A: They will pay the relevant tax they need to, to operate in England.

Q: Are trees and allotments included.

A: Full service.

Q: Who will pay for maintenance of vehicles?

A: Life of the vehicles is 10 years, that is why the contract is 10 years.

DH: If we know what we are and aren't getting then we will be able to comment. 6 Councils publish all frequencies of when streets should be cleaned. Borough Council have responsibility to maintain standards of cleanliness. We should do the same and it would save a lot of trouble.

Q: Why are the Abington park gutters not being kept well? It is a listed building.

A: Just been inspected, will look into it.

A: Answer from Abington Park Museum via e-mail "An employee walked the perimeter again and had a second member of staff carry out an independent check to make sure she hadn't missed anything. Apart from some new fern growth under a rain hopper on the north side of the building, there is no other vegetation growing out of the building. The ferns have been reported to assets and I've asked the employee to get a confirmed date for when this will be removed.

As I said, we conduct a daily check of the building, inside and out, and any issues reported to Assets. There is a lag between reporting and removal for external vegetation, but Assets have been responding as quickly as possible to issues as they are identified.

Q: Will recycling boxes and wheelie bins be delivered to flats?

A: I don't think wheelie bins will go but we are looking at communal bins and recycling bags instead of boxes to drive rates forward.

MH: Carillion would not have made it through the application. Profit is not a negative word, companies need to make money and we want a service worth paying for.

TM: I was given a collection date sheet with eastern European languages on.

Q: Would there be difficulties with HMO's?

A: Lots of things we can do which falls into the enforcement contracts. We need better relationships with landlords across the town.

BO: If there is a more sensitive and emotive issue than HIMO's, I have not come across it.

MH: We are in the process of going after the landlords, we are going to hold them accountable and there are heavy fines if they are not responsible.

DH: It is knowing who the landlord is. A lot of people lease the house to another, who leases to another and so on.

AK: 2 jobs have gone out looking for intelligence officers.

Q: We are going to a foreign outfit, are you 100% sure that they will do a good job? Have you spoken to anyone else using this provider?

A: Yes, the people who we have spoken to say they are very good. If you Google it, you can see various reviews. They would not have progressed if they were not good enough.

Q: Who manages litter?

A: Kingdom manage that, they keep the profit of the FPN's,

Q: They used to keep the streets clean with wheelbarrows and sweeps, now they do not have these. What are they doing now?

A: They have the vehicles and other ways of keeping the streets clean.

Forum members discussed having an individual from the new contractor when in post.

BO: Councillors should be proactive about keeping their wards clean.

MH: With this contract, we should have to do less of this.

Q: The drains are blocked up which means the streets are flooded, who deals with this?

A: That is a county matter.

BO: There is often litter next to empty bins which is not good enough.

DH: Also there are bins which are too full which is another issue.

DH: There is a lot of litter on A-roads, we should employ the staff ourselves because we cannot control the contractors. We have always had a problem with contractors and we always will.

AK: Museums have come back, vegetation has been reported, waiting to get the paperwork sorted.

MH: April to June is the official start date – town will look better from then on.

ACTION: MM to invite Cllr Hallam to September forum.

BO: A lot of this would not be necessary if people treated the areas right.

MH: Thank you very much for the time.

Q: When will we know this is working?

A: By September. Three month period from June 1st so September visit would be

great.

DH: Three months is a big improvement from last time which was 9 months.

6. COMMUNITY NEWS EXCHANGE

AK: Chance to see museum presentation and new enforcement officers. There will also be funding training and the chance to talk to organisations that have been funded over the last year and 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Monday 29th January.

AK: Tea dance is happening again this year, supported by the pensioner's forum. 28th April at the Great Hall – 1pm-3pm.

JW: Also Vintage Catwalk – old clothes and new clothes. 7pm arrival and 7:30pm start. Free to forum members and £5 to anyone else.

TM: Headlands pub won community pub of the year. Lots of events going on there.

JW: Talked about Buddies of Becketts Memory Project.

TM: Read through his letter about Northampton, his passion for the town and the changes he has seen through the years living here.

NS: There is nothing in the town bringing people in.

DH: Retail is struggling more and more.

MM: Told forum about the Care and Repair leaflets.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

JW: Talked through the secret shopper sheets with forum.

ACTION: JW to contact Steve Burd and John Ellerby. Talk to them about the secret shopper forums and meetings.

JW: Passed round the action plan for the forum.

DH: Could John Rawlings or someone from the NHS give us an update on the current state of the health service and what is and is not possible?

BO: Letter from Ann Timson. She has matters (8 questions) concerning NPH and needs a letter passed on. BO to give to a member of the tenant's board.

DH: Could we invite Andy from NCC to May forum.

ACTION: MM to invite Andy to May forum

8. SUGGESTIONS FOR ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OR FORUM ACTIVITIES

9. DATE AND VENUES OF FUTURE FORUM MEETINGS

29th March, The Guildhall.