

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL 2 - CULTURE AND TOURISM

Monday, 4 December 2017

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair), Councillor Sam Kilby-Shaw (Deputy Chair)
Councillors Mohammed Aziz, Arthur McCutcheon, Brian Sargeant and Zoe Smith

CO-OPTED MEMBER: Martin Sutherland Royal and Deringate
Officer Theatres
Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

Member of the Public Graham Croucher

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

There were none.

3. DEPUTATIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Graham Croucher, Chair, Northampton Transport Heritage, addressed the Scrutiny Panel and highlighted the importance of vehicles and the transport heritage. He commented that the vintage buses had been used for someone's 60th birthday party. 2 had parked in the town centre and the other had picked up the man whose birthday it was. The buses had attracted a lot of attention and the Mayor of Northampton had been in attendance. A lot of interest had been generated and a number of photos taken. A collectors fayre had taken place in Abington Park and the buses had been shown here too. The footfall for the event for 2017 had increased and Mr Croucher felt this was due to the fact that the buses had been there. Mr Croucher emphasised the need to promote Northampton and its heritage. He advised that the buses had gone to a Transport Festival in Lincoln – promoting Northampton. Mr Croucher went on to report on the Collector Fayre that had taken place at Abington Church Rooms. The buses had gone along and been really well received. The buses are putting Northampton on the Map. There are lots of events planned for 2018. The buses would like to be involved in heritage days. Mr Croucher circulated a booklet that had been produced by the Residents' Association.

Mr Croucher was thanked for his informative address.

The Scrutiny Panel asked questions and heard:

- Mr Croucher confirmed that he had not been invited to the Leader of the Council's Heritage Group meetings and it was suggested that it is recommended that he is included within the distribution list.
- Mr Croucher confirmed that the Transport Heritage Group has a number of artefacts it could display

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2017 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

5. WITNESS EVIDENCE

(A) COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR - NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A response from the Communications Director - Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce was not received.

(B) TOWN CENTRE MANAGER, NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

A response from the Town Centre Manager was not received.

(C) DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS NCC

A response from the Director, Highways, NCC was not received.

The Chair suggested that he would invited Highways to the next meeting to discuss cultural heritage signage.

(D) OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, DELAPRE ABBEY

Rachael Boyd, Operations Director, Delapre Abbey provided a written response to the core questions of the Scrutiny Panel. Salient points:

AGREED: That the information provided informs the evidence base of this Scrutiny Review.

It was noted that the Panel would undertake a site visit of Delapre Abbey prior to its meeting in March 2018.

The Scrutiny Panel suggested that it would be useful to ascertain whether artifacts from the museum could be displayed in empty shop units. The Chair would contact the Leader of the Council and relevant Cabinet Member.

A potential recommendation of the final report was suggested "That a tourist information centre for Northampton is investigated." Costed examples would be investigated.

(E) DIRECTOR, NORTHAMPTON BID

A response was not received.

(F) DIRECTOR, NORTHAMPTON TOURISM ASSOCIATION

A response from the Director, Northampton Tourism Association was not received.

(G) HEAD OF HISTORY (HERITAGE) NORTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY

A response from the Head of History (Heritage) Northampton University was not received.

The Chair suggested that he contacts Dr Gray to see if the Panel could visit him at the University.

6. WRITTEN EVIDENCE

(A) DIRECTOR, VISIT BRITAIN

A response from the Director, Visit Britain was not received.

(B) DIRECTOR, ALVA

A response from the Director, ALVA, was not received.

The Co Optee advised that a representative of ALVA had visited Northampton recently and he would contact him to ascertain if the Panel could have sight of his findings.

7. BEST PRACTICE

The Scrutiny Panel considered a briefing note detailing best practice.

The Chair highlighted the key points in the report. He advised that a resident from Exeter had contacted him about the work of this Panel and had provided information regarding Exeter which he circulated. He also circulated information from Southampton. He felt that Northampton could produce a similar map to that of Southampton's that details what is going on in the town; a magazine would also be useful. The Co Optee referred to a magazine "Nenenquire" that also has a website. The content contained within was commended.

A potential recommendation of the final report was that a document, similar to the best practice guide, is produced for Northampton. There is a need for a Destination Management Plan to make the guide sustainable.

The Chair suggested that Councillor Nunn, Leader of the Council, is invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel to talk about the findings from his Heritage Group. It was further suggested that Councillor Nunn is asked if a representative of the Panel can attend the next meeting of his Heritage Group.

The Panel asked that Councillor King is asked to attend the next meeting of the Panel to give the meeting an update on the status of the Museum.

The Panel remembered the success of Delapre Live. A potential recommendation of the final report was suggested “ that licensing for concerts and events for sports grounds within the borough is investigated.

AGREED: That the information provided informs evidence base of this Scrutiny Review.

At this point the Chair advised that the Panel would undertake a site visit on 22 January 2018 to Rugby and Market Harborough. Finalised details would be circulated.