

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



COUNCIL

Monday, 4 June 2018

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, 4 JUNE 2018 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 23rd April, 14th May and 17th May 2018

3. APOLOGIES.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Ashraf to make a statement on "Housing Issues".

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

(Copy herewith)

10. INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

(Copy herewith)

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

i) Councillor Beardsworth to propose and Councillor Stone to second:

“The letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government regarding submission for unitary authorities stated that they wanted “locally led proposals for establishing unitary authorities across the county which will be right for communities and people they serve”.

This Council acknowledges these requirements and will try and fulfil them on behalf of the residents in the Borough of Northampton.

To achieve this end the Council commits to undertake consultation with local residents to explain the changes that are being proposed and to seek resident’s views on the geography of the new Unitary Council to serve Northampton residents and their views on combining with other local districts.

This is the most important decision regarding local government reorganisation since 1974 and all Councillor should make their best effort to help with the consultation so that the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Governments call for proposals is delivered”.

ii) Councillor Culbard to propose and Councillor Duffy to second:

“Obesity in Childhood is a growing problem. There are many causes of obesity. One is an issue that can be addressed by planning conditions.

Tower Hamlets and other Local Authorities are leading the way by not allowing fast food outlets within a 400 metre radius of schools. Some authorities are additionally providing healthy food awards for local retailers to encourage healthier food choices.

This council therefore commits to instituting a planning condition that there will be no new fast food outlets that fall within a 400 metre radius of schools.

We will additionally consider creating a healthy food award for local retailers to encourage healthier food choices”.

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

George Candler – Chief Executive
The Guildhall
Northampton

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 Monday, 23 April 2018 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

COUNCILLORS: Malpas, Ansell, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Caswell, Choudary, Chunga, Duffy, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Graystone, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, M Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Russell, Sargeant, Smith, Stone and Walker

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the Council meetings held on the 5th and 12th March 2018 were agreed and signed by the Mayor following a correction to the minutes (of the 12th March 2018) on Motion iii) which incorrectly stated that the motion had been carried when it had been lost.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Cali, Patel, Kilby-Shaw, Culbard and Davenport.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor announced that earlier in the day there had been a flag raising event for St George's Day with representatives from Northampton Interfaith Forum (NIFF) and noted the importance of showing solidarity and unity to send out a positive message.

The Mayor announced that on the 24th and 25th March 2018 he had attended a number of events to commemorate the life of Sir Walter Tull. He further announced that the Mayoress had attended a Tree Planting ceremony at Dallington Park and thanked the 'Friends of Dallington Park' for the donation of a bench.

The Mayor noted the Heart of the Community Awards were to be held on the 030th April 2018 and announced that on the 5th May 2018 an LGBTQ event would be held and a video link would be in place to share the event with the Mayor of Massachusetts.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Ms Dagma King addressed Council and commented that she had undertaken her own homelessness survey and questioned what facilities were available to homeless

people during the day; she noted that provisions were made for homeless people and rough sleepers at night but asked that provisions be made for people during the day and to provide them with the facilities to support them during the day.

Mr Thomas Appleyard commented that the Kingsthorpe Road system had not changed since 1874 and the current level of traffic and pollution was getting increasingly worse and would continue to do so when impacted by the Orbital Road. He stated that the relief road would funnel more traffic through Kingsthorpe especially with the relocation of the University.

Mr Brian Hoare reported that he was pleased that there was cross party support for Northampton Unitary based on extended boundaries. He questioned what plans and processes were in place to gather information to report back to the Government Minister by the deadline of 27th July 2018. He further reported that there was a real need for public support for the chosen proposal and questioned how they would engage with the public. Lastly, he requested that the private Cabinet meeting to be held on the 25th April 2018 be held in public.

Mr Tony Mallard commented that there were extensive problems with homelessness and rough sleepers and this could be attributed to many different causes. He noted that there were a number of shelters in Northampton that were run by volunteer groups but were exclusively for men. He commented that homeless people were sleeping in tents, erected on the street, and referred to it as a disease of society.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that 12 questions had been received from Councillors and members of the public and that the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

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

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 1, Councillor Hadland stated that the building were not in fact empty and that part of it was inhabited by long term commercial tenants and explained that conversion costs to turn the building into a residential building, to accommodate homeless people, was not financially viable.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 2, Councillor Hibbert commented that the impact of Unitary Authorities on Arms Lengths Management Companies was unknown and it was too early in the process to speculate.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 5, Councillor Eldred reported that the Administration would continue to work with all companies, both big and small, and noted that procedures were in place to ensure that affordable agreements were in place and noted that work was being undertaken to ensure businesses would prosper and thrive in the long term.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 12, Councillor Nunn stated that there was very limited time for campaigning and stated that there was not much scope for expanding the boundary. He reported that the Council had very limited control over the process to support the two unitary proposal and they were forced to work to the Government timelines.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

Councillor Nunn, as the Leader of the Council submitted his report and elaborated thereon. He commented that he had not received much encouragement or reassurance on debt provision following the section 114 notice served on the County Council. He explained that Leaders of District and Borough Councils and Chief Officers had been in joint discussions on future proposals regarding Unitary status and noted that a solution was needed to best serve the residents of Northampton. He noted that none of the district leaders were content with the prospect of taking on the County Council debt. He updated Council that the first round of interviews for the Independent Chair of Audit Committee had taken place and the shortlisted candidates would be interviewed in May 2018.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Nunn stated that whilst he was not against a public campaign on the matter of Unitary Councils there was a need to ensure that the best option be put together in order to submit a coherent and supported report to Government. He stated that he had some concerns about the limited time and welcomed any cross party support that was offered in order to achieve the best outcome for the residents and agreed with the suggestion that the Government steer on 2 Unitary Councils both having a minimum population of 300,000 was arbitrary. However there was a need for NBC to actively contribute to proposal being prepared which followed the Government's Inspector recommendation of a 2 unitary option and noted that the Borough Council represented 42% of the Northamptonshire County Council Social Care. Councillor Nunn commented that there would be further Councillor briefing sessions on the topic and asked that there be unity between all of the groups in support of future proposals.

Councillor Larratt submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated further and noted that a date had been set for the Constitution Working Group meeting. He reported that he had been on a site visit to Norwich Market and noted that it had been transformed following a significant public survey and referred to a proposal to have a customer-driven survey and consultation to establish what provisions the customers would want in order to improve the market square in Northampton.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Larratt explained that he would look at options with regards to having heaters outside the market food vans. He further reported that there was a need to revamp the market and commented that it would be necessary for traders and trailer owners to be on board; English Heritage would need to be consulted prior to any material changes and noted that the responsibility of each stall would be down to the market holders.

Councillor Eldred elaborated on his Cabinet Member report and explained that there was a need to ensure that the correct financial package with regards to unitary status would be provided. He explained that he had attended the LGSS Joint Revs and

Bens Committee which had gone very well and congratulated the Revs and Bens team on being a leading force.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Eldred explained there had been a few minor errors still outstanding and noted that the accounts were with the auditors and that he was waiting for their response. He further explained that staff were working hard on getting the 2017/18 accounts completed and noted that whilst the County Council financial position had affected the residents of Northampton, it had not had an adverse impact on the Borough Councils budgets. He reported that there had been ongoing work to attract and entice people to work at the Borough Council which included a 2% increase in pay.

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Joyce stated that there had been ongoing issues with trees in his area of Eastfield and that the much of the machinery and works that had been carried out had been damaging to the environment and that some of the tree cuttings had not been cleared and left to turn into mulch, which degraded the area. He further noted that there were people, including families in his Ward who were struggling financially and housing concerns further exacerbated their suffering and questioned what would happen should the local volunteer Church group not provide a food bank service.

Councillor Nunn, in response, stated that every Councillor had experienced problems with the AMEY contractors who were responsible for the environment and commented that there had been issues with small parcels of land that had been missed. He reported that housing issues could be a challenge to Members but noted that the Council did have a housing allocations policy and explained that he would be happy to have individual discussions with those concerned.

Councillor Joyce commented that he felt as though some Labour Councillors were being ignored and left behind in ward areas that were perceived to be less desirable.

9. CHANGES TO OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Stone proposed a report which sought a change to the appointment to outside bodies.

Councillor Birch seconded the recommendations:

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Joyce replace Councillor Birch as the Councils' representative on the Outside Body – Northampton Leisure Trust Board

10. HONORARY RECORDER

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought the appointment of an Honorary Recorder for the Borough of Northampton.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That Council approved the appointment of HHJ Mayo as Honorary Recorder for Northampton Borough Council

11. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought approval of the 2018/19 Pay Policy Statement.

Councillor Eldred seconded the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Russell commented that whilst the introduction of the Living Wage was beneficial, questions should be asked about the Councils agreement to move away from the National Pay Agreement.

Councillor Nunn commented that he was not familiar with the National Pay Agreement but noted that the administration were looking at ways to improve staff conditions.

RESOLVED:

That the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2018/19 attached at Appendix 1 of the report be approved.

**12. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS - HUNSBURY MEADOWS PARISH.
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Councillor Larratt proposed a report to consider the responses to the first stage of the public consultation carried out having regard to the law and guidance on such Reviews issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the local Government Boundary Commission

Cllr Oldham seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Pineham Housing Development be moved into Hunsbury Meadows Parish
- b) That the boundary between Upton Parish and Hunsbury Meadows Parish follow the River Nene include the polling district SNUP2 as outlined in at Appendix 1 of the report)

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

- i) Councillor Smith accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Russell:

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“This Council notes the success of the night shelter in tackling rough sleeping in Northampton.

We are aware that concerns remain with rough sleeping and hidden homelessness, and we are aware that women in this situation are particularly vulnerable.

This Council therefore commits to:

- Successfully implementing “TOGETHER we change lives”, the borough’s 10-point multi-agency strategy for ending the need for people to sleep rough in Northampton;
- Exploring the options for establishing a permanent emergency nightshelter that has the capacity and facilities to provide men and women with shelter and support;
- Persuading local groups and services to do everything they can to help and encourage people to engage with local services and accept the help that they need in order to come off the streets and rebuild their lives;
- Considering the role that ‘Housing First’ can play in reducing rough sleeping in the borough;
- Working with partners to establish the true extent of hidden homelessness in Northampton and the way in which people with protected characteristics, physical and mental disability, addiction, forensic history and immigration are affected by hidden homelessness; and
- Ensuring that everyone who is homeless is provided with a personal housing plan, and that the homelessness service is a two-way process with service users fully consulted and involved with the provision of the services they use.

Council discussed the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

- ii) Councillor Birch accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Haque:

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“There is national concern about keeping our communities safe and the concern is widespread in Northampton. We are seeing alarming rates of crime, with increases in violent crime, sexual crime, trafficking, vehicle thefts, burglary and drug related crime. We are particularly concerned that young children and young people are being exploited and sometimes also drawn into crime. We have a duty of care to our citizens and we must do all we can to keep them safe. This Council will therefore take the following actions:

- Continue to work with the Police to receive regular performance information from the Police that drives our activity, supports our multi-agency approach and enables this Council to have a good understanding of the crime and anti-social behaviour issues in the town.
- Actively contribute to and support the Community Safety Partnership, which includes the Police and Police Crime Commissioner's Office, and the three – year community safety strategy, including the following identified priorities:
 - Reduce Crime
 - Reduce ASB and Hate Crime
 - Support Vulnerable People
 - Build Stronger and Resilient Communities
 - Safety in the Night-Time Economy

The full strategy can be found at

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/file/10006/ncsp-2017---2020>

- Support the Government and the Home Secretary in delivering the new Serious Violence Strategy, including improving policing and visible policing, to break the deadly cycle of violence that devastates the lives of individuals, families and communities.

Council debated the altered motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

iii) Councillor Larratt proposed and Councillor Hill seconded:

Northampton Borough Council calls for the continued support of our local market and market traders. Consequently, this Council is proud that our market participates in the Love Your Local Market campaign organised by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA).

Love Your Local Market is an international initiative and the UK's largest annual celebration to promote retail and wholesale markets across the country.

To coincide with this year's initiative, and together with the Northampton Town Centre BID, the Council is organising workshops, street entertainment and other activities. This Council is delighted to be able to contribute to celebrating our town's history, innovation, experience, entrepreneurship, food and culture in a festival of market activities and events running from 17th to 31st May, and urges the public to support these events and our towns market offer".

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded an amendment:

Amended motion to read:

"Northampton Borough Council commits to the continued support of our local market and market traders. Consequently, this Council is proud that our market participates

in the Love Your Local Market campaign organised by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA).

Love Your Local Market is an international initiative and the UK's largest annual celebration to promote retail and wholesale markets across the country.

This council congratulates the Northampton Town Centre BID, the Council in organising workshops, street entertainment and other activities. This Council is delighted to be able to contribute to celebrating our town's history, innovation, experience, entrepreneurship, food and culture in a festival of market activities and events running from 17th to 31st May. We will publicise and encourage the public to support these events and our towns market offer. We commit to a longer term plan to develop the market square in consultation with the traders, retailers, the bid and the public".

The proposed amendment was lost and Council debated the substantive motion:

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

iv) Councillor King proposed and Councillor Graystone seconded:

"Northampton Borough Council welcomes the Government's Serious Violence Strategy launched this week by the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd. The strategy stresses the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes of serious violence and steer young people away from crime in the first place, while ensuring the police continue to have the tools and support they need to tackle violent crime.

This Council has recognised the great importance of engaging with our young people early to help prevent them from being drawn into crime.

This motion, therefore, calls for support of this Council's collaborative work with the Police, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Youth Offending Service, University and Free to Talk in developing a training and awareness package that will be offered to schools, during our school's event in October, youth clubs and youth groups. The package will include a video, drama production and training, as well as educational awareness packs".

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded an amendment:

Amended motion to read:

"Northampton Borough Council welcomes the Government's Serious Violence Strategy launched this week by the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd. The strategy stresses the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes of serious violence and steer young people away from crime in the first place, while ensuring the police continue to have the tools and support they need to tackle violent crime.

This Council has recognised the great importance of engaging with our young people early to help prevent them from being drawn into crime.

This motion, therefore, calls for support of this Council's collaborative work with the Police, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Youth Offending Service, University and Free to Talk in developing a training and awareness package that will be offered to schools, during our school's event in October, youth clubs and youth groups. The package will include a video, drama production and training, as well as educational awareness packs. We recognise youth work in the town needs resourcing and commit the Council to finding a budget to do this".

The proposed amendment was lost and Council debated the substantive motion:

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

v) Councillor King proposed and Councillor Hibbert seconded:

"'Cuckooing' is where gangs travel to towns and befriend vulnerable people in order to take over their home and use it to deal drugs.

Northampton Borough Council recognised the seriousness of this problem and has so far, through its Case Management Meetings for Cuckooing, arranged two training sessions for 40 frontline officers across NBC, Adult Social Care, Probation and the Police. Further two sessions have also been fully booked, which will train additional 40 officers.

This Council, working closely with the Police, calls on the public to help tackle the increasing problem of 'cuckooing' by looking for signs that their neighbours and friends are being abused. These can include the householder having new associates and increased visitors throughout the day and night, an increased number of vehicles outside the property including taxis or hire cars and bags of clothing or bedding around their property or other signs that people may be staying at the address.

The support of the community is crucial for pursuing 'cuckooing' drug dealers and those who choose to engage themselves in the illegal supply of drugs and associated antisocial behaviour".

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded an amendment:

Amended motion to read:

"'Cuckooing' is where gangs travel to towns and befriend vulnerable people in order to take over their home and use it to deal drugs.

Northampton Borough Council recognised the seriousness of this problem and has so far, through its Case Management Meetings for Cuckooing, arranged two training sessions for 40 frontline officers across NBC, Adult Social Care, Probation and the Police. Further two sessions have also been fully booked, which will train additional 40 officers.

This Council, working closely with the Police, will run an awareness campaign for the public so they can help tackle the increasing problem of 'cuckooing'.

The support of the community is crucial for pursuing 'cuckooing' drug dealers and those who choose to engage themselves in the illegal supply of drugs and associated antisocial behaviour and for this, commits to setting up a hot line for anonymous reporting of any suspicious activity".

The proposed amendment was lost and Council debated the substantive motion:

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

14. 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 9.31pm

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 14 May 2018 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

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

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Sargeant declared a personal non pecuniary interest in Item 4 – as a Freeman of Northampton.

2. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Bottwood, Cali and Caswell.

3. TO GIVE DIRECTIONS ON PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS RELATING ONLY TO THE MOTION ON THE AGENDA

Mr Steve Miller spoke as resident of Kingsthorpe and a member of the Green Party and commented that it was ludicrous that whilst the Borough Council were responsible for Air Quality, the County Council were liable for Highways which he considered should be delivered under one umbrella. He commented that the consultation would be the last opportunity for Northampton to stand up for itself and proposed the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system be piloted to enhance the democratic process.

Mr Scott Mabbutt spoke as a resident of St Crispin's and a member of the Green Party and commented that he broadly supported the motion and noted the disparity between the urban population of Northampton and those in more rural areas and stated that a one size fits all approach was not viable. He emphasised the need for robust public engagement and argued that STV would provide a more proportional voting system.

Father Oliver Coss (All Saints Church, Northampton) explained that he had some sympathy with the notion of having 2 unitary Councils, proposed by Government, and urged engagement with neighbouring authorities to ensure a joined up Northamptonshire.

Mr Martin Sawyer stated that he considered the motion to be one of the most important decisions that the Council would have to make as it would ultimately decide

the shape and future of the Town and surrounding areas. He commented that it should have cross party support and any progress or options considered should have the full support of the residents. He urged the Council to fight for a stronger Northampton to ensure that it would be fair to all.

Alderman John Dickie questioned why the Administration had originally supported and signed the motion and then conducted a political U-turn and were proposing to vote against it. He asked whether this was due to pressures from Government and urged any proposal to government be supported by residents and urged more emphasis on localism.

Mr Brian Hoare commented that the criteria set by the Government was not credible and ignored what it was intended to achieve. He stated that the Council needed to listen to the views and concerns of the residents and not the requests of the Government; this would be a decision that would affect the residents of the Town and it was necessary to do what was right by them.

Mr Arthur Newbury commented that he considered it to be necessary for the Borough Boundaries to be extended and stated that the Town was a strong place and that there was no desire for the Town to be ruled from a village 30 miles away. He reported that Northamptonians needed to vote on this and that there was a need for engagement with the public as he believed Northampton needed to be independent from the two other areas.

Ms Morcea Walker commented that she did not envy the Council with having to make a decision on the motion as it would have a significant impact on the future of Northampton. She reported that the Government proposal would provide an opportunity for change and requested that whatever decision was reached, it be fully supported and commented that the future of Northamptonshire was currently in the hands of the Borough.

Mr Thomas Appleyard referred to the criteria outlined in the Government proposal and questioned how the population boundary figure of 300,000 was arbitrary and noted that having fewer Councillors, who would potentially be further removed from their local areas would have a detrimental impact of the residents they represented. He urged the Council to give the public satisfactory information prior to any consultation and that the consultation should not be carried out exclusively online as this would restrict a number of residents from participating in the exercise.

Ms Sally Keeble commented that she had represented Northampton as an MP for 13 years and stated that the County Council had been severely impacted on by a local of Government funds and very poor financial management and stated that the people of Northampton had a right to self-determination. She stated the Government should drop the County Council debt, so that it would not have to be incorporated into Unitary budgets and commented that the public consultation should be for the residents of Northampton, and not a decision of Town Hall, County Hall of Whitehall.

Mr Daniel Soan stated that the Council should not right-off a proposed West Northamptonshire Unitary authority; the potential to have the combined incomes of

the 3 current authorities would be of benefit to residents and potentially provide enhanced value for money. He explained that the structure of local government would not detract from the heritage or history of Northampton and a West Northamptonshire unitary authority could ensure the excellent provision of a public services.

4. MOTION FOR EXAMINATION

Councillor Stone proposed the motion as set out on the agenda and reported that the Government wanted to abolish the County and Borough Council and introduce 2 unitary authorities; one option proposed being the West Northamptonshire Council which would incorporate Northampton. She questioned whether it would be a sustainable Council and suggested it would not succeed and there were few cultural or shared values and commented that the people of Northampton were lacking in clear information and there had been no mandate from the Administration. She reported that the Government was starving the County of funds and this would impact on the most vulnerable residents.

Councillor Beardsworth seconded the motion and noted that there was a need to listen and represent people and emphasised the need for consultation on the proposals. She commented that the Government should not be urging Civil Servants to decide the future of Northampton but the people of the Town. She noted the lack of local MPs present at the meeting and commented that the people of Northampton deserve to have a choice and a voice as to the future of their Council.

It was agreed that there be a suspension of standing orders under Rule 25 of the Constitution that limited the length of each speaker. Members were given a maximum of five minutes each to address Council.

Councillor Birch commented that if Northampton joined South Northants and Daventry, Northampton would comprise of 60% of the population and currently had the biggest income and expenditure and stated that the needs of the aforementioned Councils in rural areas would differ greatly from those in an urban area, such as Northampton.

Councillor Goby commented that there was a need to shape and share a vision for the future of Northampton. He reported that Adult Social Care and Social Services would be massive issues for the new unitary Councils and noted the need to protect and preserve the heritage and history of Northampton. He stated that there was a need for joined up working with other authorities and commented that the proposals should be perceived as an opportunity for change and the necessity to look outwards.

Councillor Haque commented that the general consensus in the chamber was pride and value of the Town and stated by voting against the motion, the Administration would be letting people down.

Councillor B Markham stated that he was disappointed with the motion but that there was a real need to make a case for Northampton based on evidence. He questions what the roles of the Parish Councils would be and whether there would eventually be a Northampton Town Council.

Councillor Hill reported that Unitary Councils was an emotive issue with cross boundary implications and noted that any proposal submitted would have to have county support but emphasised the need to retain a proportionate number of Councillors to represent the majority of residents and therefore be the most dominant of Councils.

Councillor T Eales questioned why there had been a sudden U-turn by the Administration and asked if they had been privy to information that had not been shared.

Councillor Hadland reported that everyone supported the concept of a unitary authority but that there continued to be disputes about the size and proportional representation of them.

Councillor McCutcheon stated that there was a need for boundaries to be re-drawn and for there to be more control over the boundary periphery and argued that people of Northampton would want a council, with sovereignty for its people.

Councillor Eldred urged Members to consider the financial implications of the various proposals and explained that 40% of adult and social care costs were in Northampton. He reported that he would theoretically support a Unitary Northampton but the increase in Council Tax to cover the costs would equate to each household paying an extra £750 per annum.

Councillor Duffy stated that the people of Northampton were disappointed with the shoddy service that had been provided by the Administration over the past few years and commented that whilst there were many heritage assets, the biggest asset of Northampton were its residents.

Councillor Hibbert noted that he was pro-unitary and there was a need for a sustainable future of the Council and should be fiscally responsible.

Councillor Joyce urged members to consider the socio- economic affects that had impacted on the Council with an increase in population of over a third since 1992 and noted the need for further investment in affordable housing.

Councillor Sargeant spoke as a Freeman of the Council and commented that the consensus of the Freeman was to support the motion. As a Councillor, he did not agree with their notion and therefore, as this juncture of the meeting, Councillor Sargeant withdrew from the meeting.

Councillor Russell stated that the MPs representing Northampton had failed in their duties to listen to the residents and they had failed to protect the people of Northampton. She reported that Labour would canvas and show residents that their views and opinions mattered and that they were being listened to.

Councillor Meredith explained that he had no confidence on the Conservative Administration and did not believe that they were doing what was best for the Town

and spoke of the problems experienced at the County Council with many of the schools funded through PFIs and believed that Daventry would be the dominant Council.

Councillor Smith noted that as a member of the Planning Committee, all the political parties could see the implications of decision making on residents. She commented that the Northampton Conservative Councillors and the MPs were not prepared to fight to the best outcome for the residents of the Town.

Councillor Oldham commented that the Council were faced with the guidelines and that there was a need for the Council to engage to ensure that the needs and wishes of the residents were heard; to go against the Government proposals would potentially close the door to the Council and considered it better to be looking in, than out.

Councillor Larratt explained that his heart wanted to support a Northampton Unitary Council but that the reality was very different. He reported that they had made requests four times to extend the boundaries and they had all been turned down and therefore there was a need for the Council to participate and agree with other neighbouring authorities to a submission and to ensure that Northampton was at the forefront of discussions and concurred that there was a need for Northampton to be a majority on any future Council to ensure fair representation of residents.

Councillor Nunn explained that it was a very fast and fluid topic hence the reason for them no longer agreeing to the motion and emphasised the need for Northampton to retain its local sovereignty. He proposed a cross party group with Councillors who would feed into the process through briefing sessions and update and involve all political groups to ensure inclusion and representation.

Councillor Marriott questioned whether the Conservatives felt betrayed and let down by their own Government who he believed were dictating the terms and further questioned whether there had been meetings with the MPs and Senior Cabinet Members as they appeared to have changed their voting position.

Councillor Stone summarised her right of reply and noted that she believed that the Government had starved the County Council of funding and taken no responsibility for the subsequent debt. She noted her concerns that there was a potential for asset-stripping and explained the Borough Council were still unable to sign off their budget, were still trying to recover debt from the loan to the football club and had sold off Sekhemka. She stated that the Administration had joined the Government in the betrayal of local residents.

The Mayor stated that a requisition for an Extraordinary Council meeting had been made in accordance with the Local Government Act and he had called this meeting in good faith. He explained that it was somewhat irregular for Councillors to call a meeting, sign up to a motion in support and then vote against it. This could be regarded as waste of tax payers' time and money.

He also reported that he considered there to be a process and constitutional issue.

The Mayor commented that the motion was a re-affirmation of the existing motion passed in January 2017 and to vote against it would not in itself create a new or change in council policy. Meaning that between now and 4th June 2018 there could be no mandate for this council to work outside the motion unanimously passed in January 2017 and policy position to seek a Unitary Northampton Council.

Upon a requisition for a recorded vote, there voted for the motion:

Councillors G Eales, Ashraf, Beardsworth, Birch, Choudary, Chunga, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, T Eales, Haque, Joyce, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith, Russell, Smith and Stone.

There voted against the motion:

Councillors Ansell, Aziz, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Graystone, Hadland, Hallam, Hibbert, Hill, Kilbride, Kilby-Shaw, King, Lane, Larratt, Malpas, M Markham, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel and Walker.

The motion was lost.

The meeting concluded at 8.32pm

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Thursday, 17 May 2018 AT SIX THIRTY O’CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

COUNCILLORS: Malpas, Ansell, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Cali, Choudary, Chunga, Culbard, Davenport, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Graystone, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Smith and Stone

1. ELECTION OF THE MAYOR

Councillor Larratt proposed and Councillor Beardsworth seconded “That Councillor Anthony John Gerald Patrick Ansell be elected Mayor of the Borough of Northampton for the ensuing year”.

The motion was carried and Councillor Ansell 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

Councillor Oldham proposed and Councillor Smith seconded; “That the thanks of the Council be given to Councillor Gareth Matthew Eales and Councillor Terrie Eales 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 Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded “That Councillor Nazim Choudary be appointed to the office of Deputy Mayor”.

The motion was carried and Councillor Choudary 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 Bottwood, Meredith, Kilby-Shaw, M Markham, Golby, Walker and Duffy.

6. LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE GROUP

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

7. LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LABOUR GROUP

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

8. LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP

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

9. COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Mayor announced that the Annual Meeting of the Council would take place on 16th May 2019 and that other meetings of the Council would take place on 4th June, 9th July, 10th September, 5th November, 10th December 2018, 14th January, 25th February, 11th March, 17th July and the 22nd July 2019.

10. COMMITTEE PROPORTIONALITY

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

Councillor Oldham 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.

11. CABINET & CABINET MEMBER SPLIT

Councillor Nunn announced the appointments made to Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet for 2018/19 and proposed split of Cabinet Member responsibility for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning as set out in the report.

12. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES

Councillor Patel proposed a report which sought approval for the appointment to Committees for the ensuing year.

Councillor Oldham seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That the appointments to Committees for 2018/19 as set out in the report be confirmed.

13. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Patel proposed a report which sought approval for the appointment to Charities and Outside Bodies for 2018/19. An amendment had been included that Councillor Lane be appointed to the Sir Thomas Whites Charity.

Councillor Oldham seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

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

14. CONSULTATION APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Nunn proposed the Consultation Appointments as set out at item 14 of the agenda.

Councillor Larratt seconded the adoption of the Consultation Appointments.

RESOLVED:

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

The meeting concluded at 12.11pm

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 1

Question to Cllr Hallam from Mr Miller

I understand that replacement bins will soon be delivered to homes across Northampton to support the new recycling contract. Could the Councillor please confirm what arrangements have been made to efficiently dispose of the recycling crates from the previous contract?"

Response

Householders of properties in the town that are going to be provided with a new wheel bin for their recycling, will be given the choice of keeping their recycling boxes for their private use or having them collected. Arrangements for the collection of unwanted boxes will be communicated in due course.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 2

Question to Cllr Nunn from Cllr Stone

When will there be an estimate of the total revenue budget requirement for a West Northants authority and what the total revenue deficit is likely to be?

Response

As Councillors are aware, on the agenda this evening is a Council paper on Local Government reorganisation in Northamptonshire and you will note within that is a request to create a budget of £100,000 to be used for the future work that will be required both in terms of developing the proposal and the consultation that will need to be undertaken but also future work as the project progresses over the next 18 months.

In terms of what the total revenue budget requirements will be for a West Northants authority and what the total revenue deficit is likely to be, this is too early to say at this stage. In terms of how any deficit will be managed, this will be part of the overall proposal that will be coming to this Council at the end of August for approval before being sent to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Councillor Nunn
Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 3

Question to Cllr Nunn from Cllr Stone

We have at last an independent Audit chair. When will there be an audit meeting?

Response

The next scheduled meeting is on 18th June. The meeting dates and other meeting information are available on the website:

<http://www.northamptonboroughcouncil.com/councillors/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=529>

Councillor Nunn
Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 4

Question to Cllr Nunn from Cllr Stone

Shops in the town and in the town centre continue to close. Why? When will we have a strategy to support small businesses and retailers?

Response

This part of a nationwide trend, and it is widely recognised that Town Centres are no longer the only option for shopping and trade. Whereas in previous times all shops and most businesses were located in the Town Centre, and Northampton had a busy town centre including a cattle market that brought the outlying farming community into town, businesses now locate out of town. This is the case in many towns and not just in Northampton, but in line with the nationwide move towards out of town shopping and online shopping, Northampton's out of town shopping locations are busy and thriving, and many Northampton businesses are also successfully trading online.

Under this administration, the council has pursued a strategy of supporting small businesses and retailers, including through its business incentive grant programme. During the past three or so years, this scheme has provided grants to small businesses, particularly those occupying otherwise empty units, to a total of over £6 million, enhancing the offer to shoppers and creating 695 jobs in the town, with a total of 144 businesses having received this support. Alongside the grants, businesses have received some business support advice and been directed to other sources of support.

With the cost of rents and business rates being outside of the council's direct influence, the key priority is to strive to maximise the number of people visiting the town, and the council does this through promoting the town centre through various media including the Town Guide.

The council has also invested in Delapre Abbey, which is already bringing people to Northampton who might not otherwise have visited, is supporting the National Leather Collection to promote itself and increase its accessibility to the public, is working to make the new-look museum as good as it possibly can be when it re-opens, and continues support for the Royal & Derngate theatres. All of these provide reasons for visitors to come to Northampton, given that they often prefer to shop elsewhere.

9,000 residents told us that as a priority they wanted to see the town cleaner, to make it more attractive to visit, and so today marks the start of a much improved service through a far greater investment in environmental maintenance, supported by the Environmental Enforcement contract that has been successfully reducing littering for some months now.

The administration believes that the Greyfriars site must deliver something that will have maximum positive impact on the town, and that we must look more holistically at that whole area, but that we cannot make decisions on what that is until we have a complete understanding of future traffic movements in that area and across the town centre, and so work is underway to give us that clearer understanding.

Through our work with the Business Improvement District we are supporting them in their promotion of the town's shops and businesses, and the events that they run to attract visitors, and this activity, as well as work with other partners, saw Northampton achieve the Purple Flag Award very recently.

Finally, a key priority for our recruitment of our new Chief Executive has been successfully achieved in employing someone with proven capability in driving forward the town and the town centre offer. He is also supported by a strong team in this area.

Councillor Nunn
Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 5

Question to Cllr Hill from Cllr Birch:

Will there be a review of the Boroughs new parking fee strategy? How is it going?

Response

There are no immediate plans to review the parking strategy but the Council will review all its Service areas as part of its annual budget management process. Throughout the year, parking performance will be monitored and reported.

The Council has figures for April (part month) and are currently collating May's figures. The Council will review the parking figures on a quarterly basis and report these to Cabinet.

Councillor Phil Larratt
Deputy Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 6

Question to Cllr Larratt from Cllr Birch:

The trial of Caseworker seems to have stalled, the Electoral register has not been loaded. Are we paying for a service? Will there be further training?

Response

Unfortunately there has been an issue with ward data. While the electronically held list of all electors was provided on 2nd May, a secondary file to link the polling districts to the correct wards had not been provided. Our Data Protection Officer sent this missing file on 30th May.

Individual licences have been budgeted for and are paid for annually.

There are still 6 Councillors who have not had the full training on Caseworker. This is rescheduled for Thursday 14th June from 4pm. Any Councillor who requires additional or refresher training, including setting up the forwarding rule from their outlook account, can attend between 6pm and 8pm on that evening.

Councillor Phil Larratt
Deputy Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 7

Question to Cllr Larratt from Cllr Birch:

We hear very little about the town's sports clubs these days. What involvement does the Borough have with the clubs?

Response

This Council recognises and values the benefit major sports clubs bring to the town. It also recognises the benefits to the community of local sports clubs. We regularly liaise with our major sports clubs in order to maintain a good relationship with them, although matters pertaining to Sixfields are dealt with by others.

This year we are supporting Fernie Fields Sports Club through capital investment. This was approved by the Council in the budget process. The purpose of this investment is to ensure that the facilities of the Club meet the new standards of the Football League in order that teams such as Sileby Rangers can continue to play in senior leagues. Fernie Fields is owned by this Council so we are investing in our own asset.

With the Interim Head of Regeneration and assets, I recently met with a representative of Thorplands 81. We are seeking to establish a long lease on some sports pitches near Round Spinney for the Club that has many children and young people's football teams. This lease of a minimum of 25 years will enable the Club to attract external funding to develop a permanent base with appropriate facilities, that will also serve the community.

We remain open to working with any Sports Clubs in the Borough where it is considered we can be of assistance.

Councillor Phil Larratt
Deputy Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 8

Question to Cllr King from Cllr Duffy

How is the impact of our community safety team measured and who evaluates the effectiveness of the community safety partnership?

Response

The Community Safety Partnership has a statutory duty to produce a strategy each year, detailing how partners are going to work together to reduce crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour. Northampton's Plan can be viewed at <https://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/file/10006/ncsp-2017---2020> Sitting underneath this strategy is an action plan, setting out what NBC and its partners are going to do to ensure the strategy is implemented.

The CSP Officers group meet bi-monthly, the action plans are the key focus for the group, they detail various projects, some examples include; knife crime project, weeks of action, taxi-marshalling scheme and our nights out campaign, all of these examples, are projects being led by our Community Safety & Engagement Team.

An annual overview of the work of the CSP is presented to the overview and scrutiny committee by the Chair. .

Councillor King

Cabinet member for Community Safety & Community Engagement

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 9

Question to Cllr King from Cllr Duffy

Please can we have the last 6 months figures and trends for serious acquisitive crime, vehicle crime, domestic abuse, sex related offenses? (Can these be broken down by wards)

Response

<https://www.police.uk/search/?next=policing%3Aforce%3Aneighbourhood%3Acrime%3Aindex>

The above link takes you to a national website, where you can search crime stats by postcode, crime type, ward and year.

Councillor King

Cabinet member for Community Safety & Community Engagement

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 10

Question to Cllr King from Cllr Duffy

Is there an issue with Country Lines- involving child exploitation, in this town?

Response

Serious Organised Crime, including Child Sexual Exploitation is a priority for the Community Safety Partnership. NBC are working with the Police and other partners including NCC, Free to Talk, Police Crime Commissioners Office and the youth offending service to raise awareness and support potential victims and also tackle the offenders. Some examples of the work we have been doing include:

- Established a case management meeting, chaired by the Community Safety & Engagement Manager, for cuckooing
- Delivered an educational session at the Deco, with partners to over 500 students (11 schools) re grooming and child sexual exploitation
- Working with Free2Talk on developing a funding application to the Home Office for early intervention to work with those on the periphery of being groomed into gangs

Councillor King

Cabinet member for Community Safety & Community Engagement

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 11

Question to Cllr Hallam from Cllr Haque

The town continues to be filthy and people in the town are really angry about it. How much has been spent since January on cleaning up?

Response

The cost of our environmental services contract January – April is approximately £2.5m. Our enforcement contract is cost neutral in that it is funded from the revenue it generates.

As you know, our new contract went live today and I am optimistic that it will quickly bring significant improvements to the overall cleanliness and maintenance of the town. Also, in January I put in place a really effective enforcement contract which is clamping down on those who choose to drop litter – over 4000 FPNs have been issued to date. I am currently considering how to further escalate enforcement activity to ensure ongoing improvement.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 12

Question to Cllr Hallam from Cllr Haque

When will the big clean up costing £2million pounds begin?

Response

The new contract started today. There will be a period of intense activity over the next three months aimed at significantly raising standards of cleanliness and maintenance in the town.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 13

Question to Cllr Hallam from Cllr Haque

Shisha bars continue to operate while breaking the conditions of their planning agreements. They have smoking areas that are completely covered in, often using combustible material. Why?

Response

The matters you raise are potentially serious. Please provide me with specific details of each of the Shisha Bars you are referring to so that I can have them investigated.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 14

Question to Cllr Hibbert from Cllr Ashraf

Everything seems to have gone quiet about the Social Lettings Agency. Can we have an update please?

Response

Establishing a successful and sustainable social lettings agency remains one of my top priorities as the Cabinet Member for Housing & Wellbeing. Along with effective housing enforcement, it is the best way to fix Northampton's broken private rented housing market.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to recruit an Empty Homes Officer and, because of the sharp rise in the number of households in temporary accommodation, we have had to devote most of the social lettings agency's staff and resources to the management and letting of Northampton's portfolio of temporary accommodation.

Although this has been extremely frustrating, the extra focus the social lettings agency has given to temporary accommodation has enabled the Council to procure a large stock of self-contained temporary accommodation in Northampton, reduce its use of Bed & Breakfast and out-of-borough accommodation and, through effective negotiations with housing suppliers, secure significant reductions in the prices it pays for nightly-purchased accommodation.

To date, private landlords and investors who are offering good quality accommodation have been very resistant to the social lettings agency's request for them to charge sub-market rents because they know that, with such high demand, they will always achieve the market rent. Many tell us that they are able to secure a much better return from letting their properties to other local authorities, including those in London.

The Head of Housing & Wellbeing has recently approved a number of changes to the operating model of the social lettings agency (including the rents that will be paid for accommodation that is managed or leased by the Council) with the intention of making the social lettings agency's 'offer' more attractive to landlords without compromising its ability to provide residents with access to good quality private rented housing at sub-market rents.

I am aware that you are meeting with the Head of Housing & Wellbeing later this week and I know that he will be happy to brief you further, and answer any questions, when you meet.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 15

Question to Cllr Hadland from Cllr Ashraf

When will we know the result of the work done by Loughborough University on HIMO's in Northampton?

Response

We envisage that the final report will be published on the Council's website early in July, and the existing policy reviewed after that.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 16

Question to Cllr Hadland from Cllr McCutcheon

This authority is suffering from staffing issues in two important departments in your portfolio. I refer to asset management and to planning and regeneration. Why does this continue to be a problem and what are you doing about it?

Response

The asset management and regeneration teams have indeed faced some staffing issues, but despite this they are driving forward on some significant regeneration and property related projects. We have recently appointed an additional surveyor on the asset management side, and we are reviewing the whole structure to see if further changes need to be made in advance of the move to unitary status. In terms of the planning service, it regularly reviews its use of resources in light of changing demand and income. Officers are currently analysing the most recent annual figures relating to the volume of applications received, performance and progress on producing statutory policy documents, and, if necessary, will look to re-assign staff resources to meet priority areas, and consider bidding for additional resource to ensure that the current level of services are maintained, and that the delivery of strategic planning documents are not delayed

Councillor Tim Hadland

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 17

Question to Cllr Eldred from Cllr T Eales

When will Cabinet and full council receive a full report on treasury management, Capital requirements and borrowing. What is the predicted revenue position for this year?

Response

Full Council received and approved the 2018/19 Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Budget, Revenue Budget and Housing Revenue Account Budgets at its meeting on 26th February 2018. This includes the revenue position for 2018/19, two months into the financial year, we anticipate the outturn being on budget.

<http://www.northamptonboroughcouncil.com/Budgets 2018-19>

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 18

Question to Cllr Eldred from Cllr T Eales

When will the budget for 2016/17 be signed off?

Response

As reported previously to Full Council, the budget for 2016/17 was signed off by Full Council on 29th February 2016.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 19

Question to Cllr Eldred from Cllr T Eales

What is the present staffing capacity in our finance teams? Do we have enough staff capacity to close down the 2017/18 budget efficiently?

Response

NBC contracts with LGSS to provide our Finance Function, we are advised that there is sufficient capacity to close down our 2017/18 budget efficiently and a Budget Outturn Report will be presented to Cabinet on 13th June 2018.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 20

Question to Cllr Hallam from Cllr Davenport

Could you please advise me of any progress that has been made on the motion Cllr Haque and I put to Council concerning a deposit/refund scheme for recycling to reduce litter, as it has now been decided by Central Government to proceed with this type of initiative? With regards to littering, could you please advise me of any response you received from Veolia concerning my question to them asking how long it will take - from being reported - to collecting flytipping?

Response

The deposit scheme being consulted on by the government, is to be a national scheme run by a single body made up of manufacturers and retailers and monitored by the government. The details of the scheme will be decided on as a result of the consultation, with set up costs for a scheme expected to be around £15million. Ongoing operating costs of a scheme would be met by a levy on producers.

The council will support any initiative to increase the amount of plastic, glass and metal containers that are recycled, in line with government recommendations.

Fly tipping will be removed within 2 working days of it being reported.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 21

Question to Cllr Hibbert from Cllr Davenport

I have increasing concerns as to what is happening with sheltered housing - reclassification. I have been made aware of one case of a young mum, with a small baby, being put in a sheltered housing bungalow even though there are no mobility issues; this takes away precious sheltered stock from the most vulnerable of society and the noise children undoubtedly generate, through no fault of their own, causes anxiety for residents within the environment.

Can we as Councillors please be updated as to what is happening in sheltered housing to ensure we all receive clarification on the requirements for this type of accommodation?

Response

On 7 September 2016, the Cabinet approved the rebranding of the Council's 'sheltered housing' as 'older persons' housing' and approved the reclassification of its stock of bungalows (previously classified as 'general needs housing') to 'older persons' housing' in order that all future lettings could be made to people who are either aged 55 or over or have a disability, require accessible housing and are under the age of 55.

At the same meeting, Cabinet approved 'in principle' the reclassification of up to 600 flats and bungalows from older persons' housing to 'general needs housing' and agreed that Northampton Partnership Homes would consult with the affected residents in order to establish their housing preferences and their current and future needs.

Since September 2016, Northampton Partnership has consulted with, and assessed, a total of 163 tenants and, to date, 31 moves have been completed. It has also re-designated, as 'older persons' housing', any general needs bungalows that have become empty.

Eleonore House has also been reconfigured and refurbished, the Council has secured tenancy nomination rights to a new Extra Care housing scheme in Upton and, as I have explained in previous reports, construction of Lakeview House (the Council's newest older persons' housing scheme, comprising 45 one-bedroom flats) is progressing well.

Northampton Partnership Homes has confirmed that, since the Cabinet decision in 2016, older persons' housing has only been let to people who are under the age of 55 if they have a disability and are able to demonstrate a need for accessible housing.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 22

Question to Cllr Eldred from Cllr Davenport

I am finding that the procedures in place for the application for funds accessing a DHP, which has always been strict, is tightening up even more due to funding being cut. Are we satisfied that people are not suffering unduly due to the cut in this funding?

Response

The service seeks to contain expenditure within the Government contribution where possible but use all the available money on the most vulnerable residents. The funding 2015-2017 increased, as a result of the impact of the Social Sector Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax) and Benefit Cap round 1 or round 2. The funding we have had available is as follows

2015 £316,083

2016 £399,599

2017 £545,641 + £14,000 NBC contribution

2018 £501,613

The service has met its remit spending almost all the Government contribution each year, however, the impact of the Benefit Cap really came into effect last year and the DHP payments exceeded the Government fund. NBC allocated a further £14,000 at the end of the year to support the higher demand.

As an administration we are keen to support our most vulnerable residents and will consider what additional funds might be made available later in the year from existing budgets.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 23

Question to Cllr Nunn from Cllr Beardsworth

Last July you announced that the Council and Northampton BID were working on a Masterplan for regeneration of our Town Centre. With the planned closure of yet another major retailer in the town and continuing issues with air pollution and traffic clogging up major streets can he tell me when consultation on this Masterplan is likely to start?

Response

Successive administrations have written a great many documents regarding the town centre. This administration has grasped the major key aspects that needed addressing, and is progressing them, as described in the answer to question 4. This involves working closely with the BID on the most urgent agreed priorities.

We have recently commissioned a Town Retail Study, which will provide much needed up to date evidence to underpin future strategy and assist in targeting potential town centre operators, particularly in areas where the offer is currently underdeveloped, and with the new Chief Executive and Economic Development team in place, we are now in a better position to bring forward a borough wide growth strategy and within it a Town Centre Strategy is important.

Overall, the re-invention of the town is not something that the council alone can solve, and we are also engaging with landlords, and with the relatively high number of organisations and developers that continue to enquire about all areas of the borough.

Councillor Nunn
Leader of the Council

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 24

Question to Cllr Hadland from Cllr Beardsworth

In April you told us that it was not feasible to use Albion House as part of plans to increase parking around Derrnate Theatre and that converting the building for use as temporary accommodation for homeless people did not make financial sense.

Has any consideration been given to transferring the property to the Housing Revenue Account and conversion to apartments for people on our housing waiting list?

Response

Our initial view was that converting the building for any sort of residential use would not be cost effective. However, the pressures on all forms of housing are such that we are re-visiting this along with considering other options.

Councillor Tim Hadland

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 25

Question to Cllr Eldred from Cllr B Markham

Northamptonshire County Council recently released the audit report for 2017/18 . Given the issues this highlighted and the “minor” anomalies and questions about the 2016 /17 raised by this council's auditors is he concerned that 7 scheduled meetings of our Audit Committee have either been postponed or cancelled since May last year?

Response

I agree that the continued highlighting of issues by the external auditor for NCC is of interest to NBC.

I acknowledge that having meetings postponed is inconvenient, and yes meetings cancelled or postponed is on the face of it a concern. The latter deferment is in fact one meeting postponed several times and with the knowledge of our external auditor. But I note that the Audit Committee did still meet in that period on seven occasions, so am not concerned that we have not held sufficient meetings.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 26

Question to Cllr Hallam from Cllr B Markham

The Council started measuring Air Pollution levels around the Northgate Bus Station in March 2013 but stopped in Dec 2015. Measurements resumed in February 2017 at 4 locations split between Bradshaw Street and Sheep Street.

The Drapery is effectively an extension of the Bus Station with buses discharging their exhaust fumes and particulates into this important Town Centre Street.

Why is no Air Quality monitoring undertaken in the Drapery?

Response

Air quality monitoring is carried out in locations selected to measure relevant exposure to air pollution in accordance with DEFRA technical guidance. The monitoring locations in Bradshaw Street and Sheep Street are in close proximity to residential properties which reflect exposure to traffic around the bus station. The monitoring locations were subject to further review in late 2017 and an additional monitoring location has been added in the vicinity of County Chambers in The Drapery to monitor exposure at this residential location.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 27

Question to Cllr Hallam from Mr Sawyer

Michael Gove the Environment Secretary published a Clean Air Strategy on the 22nd May 2018 stating that :-

“Air pollution is the fourth biggest threat to public health after cancer, obesity and heart disease and the new government strategy sets out how we will go further and faster than the EU in reducing human exposure to particulate matter pollution.”

Northampton Borough Council has submitted its ASR 2018 report to DEFRA showing the 2017 monthly diffusion tube monitoring results and the historical performance from 2013 to 2017.

The historical results show that in many of the major arterial roads leading to the town centre the “distance corrected” annual readings are still stubbornly above the 40m gram threshold.

The council’s policies to protect public health appear to be failing

Can the Portfolio holder advise the public

- when he expects to see a down turn in the current dangerously high readings?
- In respect of Location No 9 on the Harborough Road where the readings have been as follows what action is being taken to address the worst Air Pollution Health location in Northampton?

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
53.4	42.7	54.9	62.7	54.7

Response

As indicated by the air quality results quoted, levels can vary significantly year on year, due to a range of factors including weather conditions, changes in traffic profiles, roadworks etc. It is therefore not possible to give precise forecasts as to when air quality levels will improve. However, the aim of the air quality management actions working together with national air quality management initiatives is to secure a sustained reduction in air pollution levels across Northampton

The Northampton Low Emission Strategy outlines a range of actions to address exceedances of air quality standards. Progress with these actions is already being made. Policies limiting emissions from taxis and private hire vehicles were implemented in early May. Planning conditions and obligations are being imposed requiring air quality mitigation measures such as the provision of electric vehicle charging points in new developments. Dialogue is ongoing with partner agencies including the Highway authority, bus companies and road haulage operators to progress measures to reduce pollution from vehicles. In implementing these measures it is vital to take a joined up approach to ensure that solving a problem in one location does not result in creating pollution hotspots elsewhere.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Question for Full Council Monday 4th June 2018

Question 28

Question to Cllr Hallam from Mr Sawyer

Last September, the Cabinet agreed to adopt a Town Centre wide Air Quality Management Area, a decision reinforced by the approval of the Low Emissions Strategy last December. Could you please provide a progress update on this and an estimated date for declaring that AQMA?

Response

I can confirm that the necessary technical work required ahead of the formal declaration of an AQMA is being progressed. It is planned that the formal declaration will be made before the end of 2018.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment



Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 4th June 2018

Since my last report to Council, I have continued to work with the Cabinet, Members, Directors, and Officers across all areas of the council. Many of these activities and issues are referred to in Cabinet colleagues' reports.

Unitary Status

At its extraordinary meeting on 14th May, I made the commitment to the council that we would form a Cross-Party Working Group to ensure we achieve the best for Northampton from the local government reorganisation to unitary. I can confirm that this has been done, and that the Group has already met twice. The agreed objectives of this group are:

- 1) To help consider, develop and shape the Council's contribution in relation to the joint submission to the invitation from the Secretary of States to submit proposals for unitary governance in Northamptonshire.
- 2) To consider any other matter and provide advice to the Leader and Cabinet with regard to local government reorganisation in Northamptonshire.
- 3) To facilitate elected member engagement throughout the process
- 4) To facilitate and inform elected members on decisions required

The work now begun by the Group includes identifying the 'Key Asks and Red Lines' for Northampton in a unitary proposal, and this work includes looking at ways that other towns have kept what matters most to them as they enter a new unitary. The six areas under which 'asks and red lines' are being considered are;

- Civic
- Governance
- Infrastructure
- Political
- Operational
- Strategic

Subject to the council's debate on the motion regarding carrying out a local public consultation to compliment the formal consultation, we would aim to ask residents for their views on the 'key asks, red lines' such as civic matters, the name of a new council, level of representation, infrastructure priorities, local area working, continued support for the Voluntary Sector, a Town and further Parish Councils, etc.

The Group has also worked with the Chief Executive to plan briefing and workshop events for Members, so Members are asked to note the following in their diaries:

1. Briefing session on local government reorganisation in Northamptonshire:

Monday 11th June at 2pm and Tuesday 12th June at 6pm

This will be presented by George Candler, Chief Executive, who will take members through the work undertaken. In particular the session will highlight the consultation documents that will go live on Wednesday 13th June. The sessions will be the same, repeated twice, so members only need to attend one session.

2. Workshop with elected members to seek their feedback on the consultation:

Preferred date for NBC: Tuesday 19th June (second date: Thursday 21st June) – both at 6pm.

This will be an opportunity for elected members of NBC to meet with ORS (Opinion Research Services) who are undertaking the consultation on unitary proposals, and feed into the consultation process in your role as elected member at the Borough Council.

3. Workshop with elected members on the outcomes of the consultation and final proposal of a unitary council

Preferred date Monday 20th August at 6pm (second date Tuesday 21st August).

This will be an opportunity for elected members of NBC to meet with ORS (Opinion Research Services) who are undertaking the consultation on unitary proposals and hear the outcomes of the consultation. Members will also hear from PWC who will be presenting the final draft proposal on unitary councils and to seek feedback from members before finalising the report.

4. Council meeting to approve (or not) the proposal:

- Weds 29th August at 6.30pm

This will be a full council meeting to consider the final proposal on unitary government alongside a covering report

The Chief Executives of the eight councils are meeting weekly to progress the work, alongside PWC and Opinion Research Services, with the eight Leaders meeting with them fortnightly, but this will all be outlined in more detail by the Chief Executive at the Members briefing on 11th / 12th June.

Independent Chair of Audit

I am delighted to confirm that Mr. Ian Orrell has been appointed to the position of Independent Chair of the Audit Committee.

The Cross-Party Appointments Panel was extremely impressed by both of the final candidates that they met, and I am certain that under an independent chair the committee will be successful in its work.

Ian Orrell has a great deal of experience of local government finance at a senior level, and I am certain that his enthusiasm and obvious natural style to work with colleagues in a supportive and involving way will be of benefit to the members of the committee. We extend a warm welcome to Ian, who has chosen to observe one Audit Committee meeting, before then taking up the chair at the following meeting.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Leader of the Council



Cabinet Member Report for Deputy Leader

Northampton Borough Council

4 June 2018

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

It is important that our Market is customer focused and provides the retail experience and offer that the public want. Therefore, following the experience of Norwich, we have developed a public survey regarding Northampton Market and its offer. This will be launched in the near future. While it will be predominately an on-line survey, we will also be making paper copies of the survey available for those without internet access. Norwich market was transformed following a similar public survey. The survey will be given a high profile launch in the media, and will be promoted on social media. It will also be promoted at our Forums, and on the Market itself.

The outcome of the survey will inform us as to the type of stalls required to accommodate the traders we will seek to encourage onto the Market to provide the offer the public want, as well as the needs of our existing traders.

With regard to the MAG and its future, further consultation has taken place with traders to inform the way forward. This is currently being considered. Together with the work has been done through NABMA to establish best practice with regard to how other Market Authorities work with traders, a report is now being prepared that will include a proposal for how the Council engages with traders going forward.

Constitution

Work is continuing to update our constitution. The Working Group met on 10th May and considered various aspects of the constitution. Most of these were agreed subject to minor changes that will be brought back to the Working Group. The Working Group asked for further work to be done on the Pre-application Planning Protocol, and agreed to the development of a new section regarding Consultants.

The agreed revisions will be brought to this Council for approval in due course.

It was also agreed that the procedure for speakers at Cabinet will be altered to bring them into line with other Committees where reports are presented before speakers are heard.

Councillor Training

The Councillor Development Group met on 9th May

I believe that all Members taking part in the trial of the CaseWorker programme have now been trained. Members who have been trained and have access to the live system should be using it. Teething issues have and are being addressed, and users are encouraged to use the Help Line.

Councillor Development and Briefing Sessions already scheduled are as follows:

- **12/06/18 (Re-scheduled from 1st March) – Personal Safety Training** – This training is to be delivered by an external trainer. It is limited to 15 Councillors and although originally fully booked one Member is now unable to attend so there is now a spare place. Anyone wishing to attend this training should contact Tracy Tiff as soon as

possible. Should there be further demand for this training, a further session will be considered.

- **26/06/2018 - Cllr Briefing - Local Government Finance Explained** – Two sessions, 2pm and 6pm in the Jeffery Room. These sessions, open to all Councillors, are to be delivered by the Interim Chief Finance Officer.
- **16/07/2018 - Councillor Briefing - FGM Awareness** - Two sessions, open to all Councillors, 2pm and 6pm in the Jeffery Room.

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

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

Those who book to attend an event and subsequently become unable to do so are asked to let Tracy Tiff know as soon as they become aware of the fact.

There is a need to programme in a briefing on the Procurement Process. This session was due to be held on 26th April but was postponed due to attendance difficulties. The Scrutiny Officer has contacted Group Whips to establish when would be the most suitable time for this session to take place. This information is awaited and when it is received a session will be programmed.

The Scrutiny Officer has sent out a survey to all Members regarding their IT training requirements. One response has been received to date.

Training for new Members to the Planning Committee is scheduled for 30 May 2018, and new Members to the Licensing Committee will attend training at East Northants Council on 19 June 2018.

Web Casting

Provider Public-I came into The Guildhall on 22nd April and carried out a site survey along with our own technician. Some information and clarification from our Assets team is required and is being pursued. Public-I also had some further IT related queries following their site survey. These need to be answered by our IT provider, LGSS, and we are now trying to get the answers / feedback required.

Street Lighting

The next meeting of the Officer / Member Working Group is to take place on 4th June 2018.

Councillor Phil Larratt

Deputy Leader of the Council



Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement & Community Safety

Northampton Borough Council

4 June 2018

Councillor Community Fund

Since the beginning of this financial year 2018-19, councillors have assigned a total of £22,524.87 on supporting community projects in their neighbourhoods.

Partnership Support

This year, 17 local support organisations will benefit from the support provided by Northampton Borough Council's Partnership Grant Fund.

Council Partnership Grants for 2018/19 include:

Spencer Contact
Warts and All Theatre
Tools for Self-Reliance
Free 2 Talk CIC
Home-Start Northampton
The Lowdown
Northampton Street Pastors
Northamptonshire Rape Crisis
Northampton Hope Centre
MHA Live at Home Northampton
Re: store Northampton
The Good Loaf CIC
Northampton Men's Sheds
Unity Leisure Northampton Leisure Trust
Northampton Inter Faith Forum
Singing4Breathing
Action Support UK Ltd on behalf of our Division Scooter 2 Go

Forums

LGBTQ Pride event – 5 May. LGBTQ flag raising took place at the Guildhall. In addition, the Pride event included signposting to transgender art exhibition, information stalls and live music at Phipps bar with International video call with Northampton, MA.

IDAHOBIT celebrations – Flag raising took place in the morning of 17th May. The Civic Ceremony and a minute of noise also took place at midday and were followed by information stalls and refreshments in the One Stop Shop.

Staff EqualiTeas event is to take place on 18th June and will be a celebration of UK Parliament's Vote 100, promoting the Pitch Perfect Northampton event, Community Forums, LGBTQ staff network, and some of the services and organisations funded through partnership grants and small grants such as Manna House counselling, Lowdown, NDAs etc.

Colours of the World – in accordance with last years motion on refugees – the singing competition to celebrate Northampton's diversity is organised for 20th June at the Deco Theatre. The competition, which is open to all school, community and charity singing groups, quartets, trios and duos, will see singers from all backgrounds battle it out in front of a live audience.

Community Safety

The St James Week of action – 4th - 9th June will see a number of community engagement events such a litter pick, alleyway clearance, community garden project and the re-painting of the St James Shoe Statues. The local primary schools were involved in the litter pick and flower planting for the Garden Project. A community fun day is held on the Saturday, which includes a cake off and a football match to commemorate Walter Tull.

Racecourse week of action – took place week commencing 30th April. It included the play equipment being painted, 2 missing swing seats replaced, 25 bikes marked. In addition, there was an engagement with park goers and park runners, two school parking operations and a Health walk. A Saturday community event took place alongside the Umbrella Fair in the Pavilion Café.

Clean up at Brookside. The whole team got involved along with the Neighbourhood Wardens clearing litter and cutting back self-sets along the river bank by the bridge. This took place on 9th May and was very much appreciated by the residents.

High Impact Community Day at Bellinge – 31st May. Information stands will be put up in and outside Bellinge Community House. Stands will include bike security marking, Personal and property safety advice and products, RSPCA providing micro-chipping at a reduced cost, promotion of Bellinge Getting Better (Northampton in Bloom community gardening project), Police, NPH, local crafts and second hand stalls, food tasting by Wiltshire Farm Foods and refreshments. There will also be sports activities at the MUGA. Additionally, Neighbourhood Wardens completed a community clean up clearing fly-tipping, cutting back and litter picking.

Dog Fouling campaign – Far Cotton. The campaign will see the highlighting of streets most effected by dog fouling, by using a chalk based spray paint that highlights dog mess to the public. It will help make irresponsible dog owners more aware of the harm they are causing and make it more visible to the public and reduce the risk of them walking in it. Initiative has been used in other districts/boroughs and

Events

The Bands in the Park programme is proving to be a success despite some rather poor weather conditions in the first few weeks. The fair at Kingsthorpe Rec was cancelled in April due to the poor ground conditions but the Racecourse Fair started on the May Bank Holiday weekend in bright sunshine.

It is anticipated that the annual Beer Festival in Becketts Park on the 1st – 3rd June will be a great success with hopefully thousands of visitors attending. At the same time the Race for Life and Pretty Muddy events at Abington Park on the same dates will also be a success where hundreds of runners are expected to take part and raising thousands for Cancer Research UK.

On Saturday 9th June the annual Northampton Carnival will take place with thousands anticipated to watch the parade and offer support which will include the Forums Float. On Sunday 17th June the annual Music365 Festival took place with various genres of music taking place in many locations across the town centre including the market square and All Saints Plaza.

Looking forward the Speedy Cup event will be on the Racecourse on 23rd June followed swiftly by Armed Forces Day in the town centre on Saturday 30 June and the Northampton Festival on the Racecourse on the 7th & 8th July.

The 14th & 15th July we have Funtopia on Abington Park for the children and families and the Fun Colour Run on the 22 July in the same park.

Culture & Heritage

Events at Abington Park Museum continue to be very well supported. Four Over 60s talks sold out very quickly to an audience of 70 at each event during May & June. A series of five Art History lectures delivered by ProArtium (art historians Dr Conny Bailey, Dr Miriam Gill and Dr

Ellie Pridgeon) proved to be very popular during May and June. A series of five adult watercolour workshops led by local artist David Douglas were well attended and a Printmaking Workshop led by Iain Hodgkins sold out to 12 adults.

A Transport Day was held in early June and attracted many families and enthusiasts. Northampton Transport Heritage ran short rides on a 1940s bus throughout the afternoon and Hannington Vintage Tractor Club, the new Silverstone Experience, Rushden Heritage Transport Society and the Vintage Motor Cycle Club all took part. A working Bassett Lowke gauge one model railway in action and sail model boats on the lake with Abington Park Model Yacht Club.

Half term workshops were themed on Nature Detectives and air dry clay modelling.

May saw the museum hired by Events in a Box for an evening wedding showcase, a private reception and a wedding.

An HLF funded Conflict and Communities project is now completed. The project, in partnership with Royal and Derngate, commemorated the First World War in Northampton. We worked innovatively to find a way to make this shared history and heritage relevant to people today including work with schools. Using research from the museum collections and through collecting new family oral histories we commissioned new theatre performances including an innovative poetry commission, an exhibition, activity days, talks, and symposia. The legacy includes a fantastic Flickr archive of 350 objects in the Museums' collections and beyond so do have a look! The event was commemorated with a thank you volunteer party on 18th April attended by over 60 people and organisations who engaged with or volunteered on the project.

A paper written in collaboration between the Senior Shoe Curator Rebecca Shawcross and Dr Ceri Houlbrook, University of Hertfordshire called Revealing the Ritually Concealed: Custodians, Conservators, and the Concealed Shoe has been published in the journal Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief.

Museum Expansion Project

The tenders for main contractor for the museum expansion project have been received and are currently under review. Work on soft strip of the existing museum building, Old Gaol Block and Guildhall Road Block has been completed, including removal of areas of identified asbestos. Detail designs for the exhibition galleries have been signed off and work is now progressing on technical design.

Customer Services

Customer Services finished the financial year with the Contact Centre achieving 92.3% of calls answered against a target of 90% and the One stop Shop have just pipped the CC with a staggering 92.9% of customers seen within 10 mins of appointment time and 96.6% of drop in's seen within 15 minutes. In addition we have achieved 95.11% of customers rating us as satisfaction. A brilliant achievement all round that could not have been achieved without the continuous drive of positive change in relation to reducing avoidable contact and improving the service deliver at first point of contact.

Councillor Anna King

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety



Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning

Northampton Borough Council

4th June 2018

Town Centre Operations

The two-hour free parking figures for April are 75,465 which is a small increase on the 2017 figures.

The April total parking numbers across all council car parks were 190,868.

The footfall figures for April 2018 show 944,550 visitors, workers and shoppers in Abington Street and Market Square, these figures are below the 2017 figures mainly due to the poor weather conditions we had throughout the majority of April.

Enterprise

Business Incentive Scheme 2018-19

We have supported 3 Businesses to date this year. This has secured £59,500 of private sector investment and created 4 jobs.

Vulcan Works

The full application for ESIF funding has been submitted and initial feedback has been positive.

The design team is in place and active, and procurement documentation is being prepared for OJEU process.

St James Mill Link Road

Design work has been completed. The formal LC7 consent has been obtained from Network Rail confirming disposal of the rail line. We are waiting a build cost from NCC Framework Contractor.

Northampton Station and Multi Storey Car Park

Officers have had meetings with Network Rail and West Midlands Trains (Train operating company).

The previous modelling work now being reviewed in the light of the new franchisee's proposals for the station including provision of 110 new car parking spaces.

Further work is to be undertaken to establish partnership approach in delivering the MSCP.

Preparation of a Local Heritage List for Northampton

The preparation of a Local Heritage List for Northampton was considered and approved at the meeting of Cabinet on 9th May. Cabinet also approved the commencement of public consultation for nominations for inclusion in the Local List, along with selection criteria for nominations and the establishment of a Local Heritage Selection Panel.

Asset maintenance and restoration

Repairs and upgrades include:-

Investigation and repair of extensive failures to the Elgar Centre plant and mechanical installations.

Installation of new benches to Victoria Street coach shelters

Carriageway repairs to Walter Tull Way unadopted highway

Evaluation of lift maintenance tenders

Dilapidations inspections to depots occupied by EMS

Refurbishment of Dallington Green plaque

Removal of asbestos to 20a Sheep Street

Ongoing concrete repairs to the Mayorhold MSCP

Ongoing Water regs upgrades to various allotments

Ongoing consultation and design of the Billing Brook lakes project

Ongoing repairs to Guildhall roof

Queen Eleanor Cross

Heritage England has approved a grant of 50% of the repair cost. Detailed procurement work is proceeding with an aim of carrying out the works this summer.

Tree Preservation Order

The confirmation of a Tree Preservation Order at Quinton Road, Wootton is to be considered at the meeting of General purposes Committee on 15th May.

Councillor Tim Hadland

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning

PLANNING

Major Planning Applications

Since our last Full Council meeting the Council have granted several key planning applications which include:

- Planning application N/2018/0264 for the construction of the St James Mill Road linked which was approved in principle by the Planning Committee on 10th April, subject to a bat survey to be carried out and agreement of a financial contribution towards CCTV provision.

- Outline planning permission N/2017/0836 for the development of up to 50 dwellings at land to the rear of Hunsbury Park Primary School, Dayrell Road which was granted, following finalisation of a Section 106 agreement.
- Full planning permission N/2017/1097 for the development of 81 dwellings at the former Emmanuel Church Middle School site, Birds Hill Walk was granted, following finalisation of a Section 106 agreement.

I am also delighted to report that Development Management has maintained 100% performance standard in terms of major, minor and other applications in both March and April 2018. I would like to congratulate the department for their continued high standards.

Local Plan Part 2

Work continues on the evidence base to support the production of the Local Plan Part 2. The evidence base and responses to previous consultations, including the Sites Consultation, are being used in the development of Local Plan policies.

Councillor James Hill
Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

4th June 2018

FINANCE

The Finance Team are now dual running the Statement of Accounts for 2016-17 and the closedown for 2017-18. The latter will now be published later than planned as they cannot be progressed properly until the 2016-17 SoA are completed.

Cabinet and the CEO are monitoring the position and engaging with KPMG, our auditor and the CEO of LGSS our Finance Service provider. Issues around asset valuations have given rise to some complex reworking of data which in turn impacts on the accounting balances for 2017-18. These transactions are not related to 'revenue budgets' per se.

The final end of year budget position for 2017-18 will be considered at Cabinet on 13 June 2018, this continues to project an underspend.

I can confirm that the Section 151 Officer Role has now formally returned to NBC as of 1 June 2018, this will enhance our governance arrangements alongside the appointment of an independent chair of the Audit Committee.

Revenues & Benefits

The Revenues and Benefits Service continues to deliver an excellent service.

They are actively monitoring businesses that might be at risk, it is a sad reality that rarely a week goes by without some form of merger or closure, mostly retail. However we must also recognise that this often leads to new businesses taking their place. An example on the Northampton High Street might be where a clothing/barber shop closed and we can see a new Metro Bank being constructed.

NCC Financial Position

The financial position at NCC continues to be monitored by our Corporate Management Team, who are particularly interested to see what effect the new commissioner appointments have on the NCC Budgets.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance



Cabinet Member Report for Housing and Wellbeing

Northampton Borough Council

4th June 2018

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

As I explained in my last report, the Homelessness Reduction Act has extended the duties that housing authorities have towards people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Although the Housing Options & Advice Team is still adapting the way in which it works with customers in response to the new legislation, the Council's recruitment of a Single Homelessness Adviser (based at the Guildhall) is already helping to prevent homelessness.

Working closely with the Street Outreach Workers and Tenancy Relations Officer, the Single Homelessness Adviser has already prevented more than a dozen people from being evicted, without a valid notice, from houses in multiple occupation. She has also negotiated with friends, relatives and landlords to allow people more time to secure alternative accommodation.

On 25th July 2018, the Head of Housing & Wellbeing and the Housing Options & Advice Manager will be delivering a Homelessness Reduction Act Briefing for Members. During the session, they will describe the Act, explain how the new service is operating and answer Members' questions.

Housing Enforcement Team

On 2nd May 2018, Northampton's Magistrates Court ordered the rogue landlord of an unlicensed HMO in Whitworth Road, Northampton to pay a fine of £36,000 (plus the Council's costs of £2,850.22 and a victim surcharge of £170) when he pleaded guilty to 12 charges.

The landlord had been served with an improvement notice but had failed to comply with it and, when the Housing Enforcement Team visited, they identified a large number of offences, including dangerous electrics, obstructed fire exits and poorly maintained communal areas.

This prosecution shows why we need to continue taking a hard line with criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords who think it is acceptable to put their tenants' health and safety at risk.

On 15th May 2018, Officers from Wolverhampton's City Council visited Northampton to learn about the Council's approach to criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords and the Housing Enforcement Team's intelligence-led, targeted approach to enforcement. From their feedback, it is clear that they were impressed and inspired by what we are doing in Northampton.

Overview & Scrutiny review of homelessness and rough sleeping

I welcome the work that the Scrutiny Panel will be undertaking to review the way in which the Council and its partners engage with rough sleepers, consider the best way in which 'Housing First' can be used to reduce rough sleeping in the borough, and understand the nature and extent of 'hidden homelessness' and how it can best be addressed.

I do hope that, with the input and commitment of all of the key stakeholders involved, everyone will work even harder together to reduce rough sleeping and, in doing so, prevent the premature deaths of hundreds of people who spend weeks, months or even years on the street.

I look forward, also, to receiving the Scrutiny Panel's findings and recommendations in relation to 'hidden homelessness' and how it can best be addressed.

HMO Briefing for Members

On 25th July 2018, the Head of Housing & Wellbeing and the Private Sector Housing Manager will be delivering an HMO Briefing for Members. During the session, they will describe landlords' obligations in relation to licensing and the HMO Management Regulations, explain what action is being taken to identify and punish those who break the law, and answer questions.

Better temporary accommodation for homeless families

Despite the sharp rise in the number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation, I am pleased to report that good progress has been made in reducing the number of households placed in Bed & Breakfast and out-of-borough accommodation.

Since 31st March 2017 – when 95 homeless households were living in Bed & Breakfast and, of these, 51 were living in temporary accommodation outside the Northampton Borough – the Council has procured a large stock of self-contained, nightly-purchased accommodation in Northampton. By doing this, it has been able to reduce its use of Bed & Breakfast by more than two thirds and reduce its use of out-of-borough accommodation by more than 80%.

On 13th June 2018, Cabinet will consider a report that recommends changes to the way in which the Council calculates the amount it charges households for temporary accommodation.

Northampton Partnership Homes

Annual Tenant and Leaseholder Conference

NPH's third annual conference, held at the Derngate Theatre on 24th April 2018, was a great success and, as well as receiving updates on progress and achievements, delegates learned about and celebrated the work that is being done in the community.

One of the highlights of the conference was the presentation of two Community Hero Awards that recognise people who go 'above and beyond' to support their neighbours and communities. This year's winners are Rose Agarm (who won the 'Community Champion' category) and Maggie Kirton (who won the 'Great Neighbour' category).

I congratulate Rose and Maggie on their awards and thank all of the nominees for the support that they have given, and continue to give, to their neighbours and communities.

Northampton break dancer and role model shortlisted for national photography award

I am delighted to report that Leigh Evelyn ('Swifty') – a tenant and community champion who has worked tirelessly to get more young people involved in dance – has had one of his photographs shortlisted for this year's National Federation of ALMOs (NFA) Photography Competition.

Visits to new council homes in Lower Bath Street and Lakeview Close

At an official opening of the scheme on 27th April 2018, Andrew Lewer MP, the Leader of the Council and I had the pleasure of meeting some of the 18 families who have recently moved into the new council homes that Northampton Partnership Homes has built in Lower Bath Street. It was heartening to see the real and lasting improvements being made in Spring Boroughs.

Earlier that day, the Leader of the Council and I had been given a guided tour of the older persons housing scheme being built at Lakeview House. We were both very impressed by the facilities that are being provided and by the speed with which the construction is progressing.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing



Cabinet Member Report for Environment

Northampton Borough Council

4 June 2018

Environmental Services Re-Provision

The environmental services contract went live today following an intense period of mobilisation.

With effect from today, residents are no longer required to separate their recyclates and during August will receive a new wheeled bin, in place of their recycling boxes, ready for use in September.

The plans for street cleansing and grounds maintenance are expected to achieve a marked improvement to the standards of the service received by Northampton residents.

Environmental Health

The enforcement officers continue to issue significant numbers of fixed penalty notices with a total of 4209 being issued up to 20 May. The officers carry out patrols at locations across the Borough.

The scope of the service has been extended to include enforcement of dog fouling offences.

On 3 May Licensing Committee approved an emission policy for taxis and private hire vehicles. This policy, which requires the phased introduction of low emissions vehicles, is a key achievement in the roll out of our Low Emissions Strategy.

Park Management Committees

Love Parks Week – 13-20 July – planning underway across the parks, commitment from Eastfield, Abington and Becketts so far.

Brief drafted to create a development/master plan for Becketts Park.

Opening event took place for Aberdare Road at the end of last month, great attendance from the local community.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Appendices: 2



COUNCIL
4th June 2018

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Chief Exec

Report Title	Local Government Reorganisation in Northamptonshire
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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the current situation regarding the potential for Local Government reorganisation within Northamptonshire. It also seeks approval to work with the other county, districts and borough councils on a draft unitary proposal for consultation, and for an agreed budget to finance the work, that will need to be undertaken over the next 3 months.

2. Recommendations

The recommendations are:

- 2.1 that Northampton Borough Council (NBC) acknowledge the recent invitation from the Secretary of State to submit a proposal for a single tier of Local Government in Northamptonshire
- 2.2 to continue to work with the other county, districts and borough councils on a draft unitary proposal for consultation, suitable for submission to the Secretary of State, set against the criteria as detailed in the formal invitation letter and attached schedule, to submit a proposal for a single tier of local government in Northamptonshire
- 2.3 to agree to a working budget of up to £100,000 (in addition to any internal resources consumed within existing budgets) with delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, that will fund any necessary work required in relation to local government reorganisation.

- 2.4 to receive a further report on the 29th August 2018 which will detail the final proposal to be submitted to the Secretary of State and the outcomes from the consultation, prior to the final submission deadline of 31st August 2018
- 2.5 To note and affirm that Council's resolution on the motion on Unitary Government dated 23rd January 2017 has been superceded following the later resolution of Council dated 14th May 2018.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Context

- 3.1.1 Council members will be aware of the financial challenges facing Northamptonshire County Council. Following the publication of a number of reports, the Secretary of State appointed a Best Value Inspector (Max Caller) on 9th January 2018 to specifically consider governance and financial issues at the Council.
- 3.1.2 The Best Value Inspectors report was published by the government on 15th March 2018. For information, a link to that report is provided below
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/690731/Best_Value_Inspection_NCC.pdf
- 3.1.3 The Secretary of State provided his formal response to the Best Value Inspectors report on 27th March. Immediately after the Secretary of States response, each Local Authority across the County received a *formal invitation to submit a proposal for a single tier of local government in Northamptonshire*. A copy of the letter that the council received is attached as Appendix A.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 Discussions about the future structure of local government in the County have been ongoing for some time, the most recent debate at Full Council took place on 14th May 2018 by way of a motion. The motion was put forward in the context of the wider debate that was taking place across the county as a result of the Best Value Inspectors report and as a follow up to an earlier motion taken on 23rd January 2017.
- 3.2.2 The motion from the Council meeting held in May 2018 is reproduced below:
- ii) *Councillors McCutcheon, Nunn and Beardsworth proposed the motion:*

“Northampton Borough Council remains committed to replacing the current two tier arrangements operating in Northamptonshire with Unitary Councils.

This Council, however, rejects Northamptonshire County Council's plan for a single county-wide local authority, believing that it is essential that local government remains local. Making local government more remote would decrease accountability and public engagement.

Additionally, it was noted that the Northamptonshire County Council's draft budget states a plan to achieve unitary status for 2019/2020 to save £10 million per annum. This Council would like to make it clear that it is opposed to a County Council unitary authority.

We strongly believe that the best solution for the town is a Northampton unitary authority with a limited expansion of the borough boundary to incorporate the Northampton Growth Area as defined in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

This Council will also ask our MPs to support us in this ambition."

Since the passing of that motion on 23rd January 2017 the Borough has co-commissioned with the Boroughs and Districts an independent report, the Deloitte report, looking at options for Unitary. We support the adoption of a Unitary Northampton, and maintain that the Deloitte's report shows this to be a viable and sustainable option. We have also written to the Secretary of State giving him our cross party view in favour of a unitary authority for Northampton. We therefore commit to the following urgent actions to be enacted prior to 4th June:-

- 1. That the Council raises awareness of unitary proposals and the benefits of a Unitary Northampton*
- 2. That the Council seeks the support of residents, institutions, businesses and the voluntary sector within the town for a unitary authority for Northampton on a wider boundary.*
- 3. That the Rt Hon. James Brokenshire MP, the new Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, be invited to the council so he can personally be made aware of the cross-party support, the case for a Unitary Northampton and can be shown round our town.*
- 4. That the town's MP's be invited to a similar cross party meeting with the council.*
- 5. There is an online consultation to enable residents of the town to express their views on unitary proposals and a series of public meetings for the same purpose, supported cross party.*

The reasons behind this motion are that the next full council is not until 4th June, we wish to further discuss the Unitary proposals and to wait until this date would prove too late given the July deadline.

We also would like members of the public to come and air their opinions so the council can move forward our campaign on an informed basis.

3.2.3 Following debate and a request for a recorded vote the motion was not carried.

3.2.4 Council should note that its resolution regarding Unitary Government passed on 23rd January 2017 no longer stands and is inconsistent with Councils resolution passed on 14th May 2018.

- 3.2.5 Prior to the Council meeting on 14th May 2018 when the motion was not passed, the 3 Group Leaders had previously written to the Secretary of State on 20th April 2018 seeking his support as a result of both the January 2017 motion and the one put forward in May 2018. The response from Rishi Sunak MP, Minister for Local Government (attached as Appendix B) on 4th May 2018 drew attention to the fact that *any proposal put forward must be made up from whole, existing local government areas* and that it must have due regard to the statutory guidance issued with the Invitation letter in that *any proposed unitary authority should have a population that at a minimum is substantially in excess of 300,000*.
- 3.2.6 In the period since the 23rd January 2017 motion was approved, all of the District and Borough Councils in the County jointly commissioned an options report to be undertaken. Following the preparation of a joint brief, and having undertaken a formal procurement process, Deloitte were formally commissioned to undertake the study. They began their work in April 2017.
- 3.2.7 Deloitte have recently completed the study and formally issued it to the 7 District and Borough Councils on 19th April 2018. Members of Northampton Borough Council were provided access to the report on the day it was issued to the Council. Members should note that contents of the covering letter from the Leaders of the District and Borough Councils seeks to put the report from Deloitte into context given the current situation of the County Council and the invitation that has been received from the Secretary of State – the wording of that joint letter is reproduced here:

Some time ago, the District and Borough Councils in Northamptonshire jointly commissioned an independent study to consider options for the future delivery of public services in the County. Following a formal procurement process, Deloitte were commissioned to undertake the work.

The report has now been issued by Deloitte.

The study was commissioned as a precautionary measure to help the Districts and Boroughs to be prepared for two potential things – either the County Council submitting a proposal for a single County wide Unitary Council to the Government and/or County Council suffering a major service or financial failure.

Since the report was commissioned, a number of significant events occurred at the County Council – the LGA financial peer review, the report of the Best Value Inspector, and the recent budget setting process, have moved the debate forward at pace. Whilst the report by Deloitte makes interesting reading, it has effectively been overtaken by events. The report does however contain much useful information and comment, none more so than the commentary that without wider reform of public services, Local Government reorganisation (in isolation) is unlikely to resolve the financial challenges that are faced.

Given the report of the Best Value Inspector (and the subsequent response of the Secretary of State) the Deloitte report will primarily now be used as part of

the required evidence base for any response by the Councils to the Secretary of State's recent formal invitation to submit proposals for a single tier of local government in Northamptonshire.

3.3 Best Value Inspectors Report – key messages

3.3.1 The Best Value Inspectors report covered a number of key topics but the executive summary is worth considering and in particular noting the following paragraphs of that report:

- a) Paragraph 1.9 recommends the creation of two unitary councils across Northamptonshire with the abolition of the County Council and all 7 of the District and Borough Councils. The report advises that the new arrangement should be established following elections in May 2020. However, the Secretary of State cannot simply impose this new structure but must respond to a proposal from one or more of the County's local authorities.
- b) Paragraph 1.10 – the report advises that the Secretary of State should give serious consideration to whether commissioners take over the running of all services (save planning) currently provided by Northamptonshire County Council.

3.4 Secretary of States invitation letter to District and Borough Councils

3.4.1 The letter from the Secretary of State advises that proposals for a single unitary authority for the entirety of Northamptonshire is not an option under the invitation. Given the potential imminent appointment of advisors to run NCC, retaining the status quo is also not an option.

The government are looking for a proposal to:

- Improve local government and service delivery across the area
- Be based on a credible geography, and
- Command a good deal of local support

3.4.2 Other factors to be considered include the recommendations of the Inspectors report on NCC and wider regional issues such as boosting housing delivery and contribution to the Cambridge/Milton Keynes/Oxford growth corridor.

3.4.3 The letters appendix gives some Secretary of State guidance on proposals including that a unitary authority should have a substantial population and at a minimum should be in excess of 300,000.

3.4.4 Other factors to be taken into account include:

- how local government will be improved
- the inspectors report and its North and West Unitary recommendation
- wider regional and national growth plans
- the level of public consultation on any proposal prior to it being submitted and
- a good amount of public support

3.4.5 Using this guidance, and other information for discussion with the Secretary of State's civil servants, the Chief Executives of the District, Borough and County

Councils are now meeting on a weekly basis to formulate next steps in preparation for any submission that needs to be completed by the deadline and are then reporting into the 8 Leaders who are now meeting on a fortnightly basis.

- 3.4.6 The deadline for submission was originally set as Friday 27th July 2018. However the 8 Chief Executives subsequently wrote to officers at the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) pointing out the risks of meeting such an ambitious timeframe and as a result the deadline has subsequently been extended to 31st August 2018.
- 3.4.7 To achieve this deadline, the Councils will require externally procured assistance as it is important that any initial high level draft submission is pitched correctly and does what both the local authorities expect it to do as well as meeting the criteria specified by government.
- 3.4.8 PWC have been procured to assist with the development of the submissions and a Programme Director has also been appointed to co-ordinate the works of all partners and consultants.
- 3.4.9 The government have made it clear that they expect to see reasonable levels of local public consultation prior to any initial submission being made. Again, externally procured assistance has been secured (Opinion Research Services) as the consultation results will be a key part of any submission. The consultation will run for 6 weeks beginning on 13th June 2018 and will engage with a broad cross section of residents and key stakeholders.
- 3.4.10 Communication with members is vital throughout this period of time and work is ongoing to develop an engagement process including the development of a series of workshops. An informal, cross-party member group has recently been established and met twice already to help inform the process as well as discussing the 'key asks' that would like to be seen in the final proposal sent to MHCLG. There will also be internal communications throughout the process to keep both members and staff fully appraised of the situation.

3.5 Community Governance Review

- 3.5.1 As part of the consideration of the future of all tiers of local government locally consideration will need to be given on whether NBC undertake a community governance review to look at the potential for creating a parish council for the town of Northampton; this parish council can – if it so determines, once created – be known as a town council which can elect a Mayor annually.
- 3.5.2 At present there are 10 parish councils surrounding the periphery of the borough but a large proportion of the overall borough remains un-parished. The borough council has the power to create new parish (local) councils, but the review process is prescribed by legislation and the council has to have regard for the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The guidance was last updated in March 2010.

- 3.5.3 Section 81 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 would require the council to publish terms of reference which would set out how it will be conducted, the expected timescales, its focus, its key considerations and the factual electoral information relating to the area.
- 3.5.4 The matters for consideration by the review (as set out in the terms of reference) would be the subject of public consultation. Following this, recommendations would be made by Members.
- 3.5.5 Recommendations would be made on matters such as whether any new Parish should be constituted and what the electoral arrangements would be (number of members, number of wards and names of wards) if creating a Parish Council was recommended.
- 3.5.6 Any recommendation agreed by the Council would be published. Members would then decide to what extent to give effect to the recommendations.
- 3.5.7 This is a summary only of the main aspects of the community governance process.
- 3.5.8 Officers are now doing further work on this; any decision on whether to proceed formally with a community governance review will be brought back to council for formal decision.

4. Next steps on the development of a proposal

- 4.1 Discussions are underway between all local councils, at leader and chief executive level, about the submission of a single collective proposal. Through this arrangement the work required, and any costs, can be shared.
- 4.2 All the district and borough councils are clear that they have neither sought nor wanted this change, but are all agreed that developing a proposal that seeks to ensure the best outcome for the people of the county is now the best way forward.
- 4.3 It is recommended that this council continue to participate in these discussions and in the work required to create a proposal in keeping with the Secretary of State's invitation and guidance, which will be used as part of the consultation process. The final decision on whether to be part of its formal submission will be brought back for discussion on 29th August 2018 prior to the submission deadline.

5. Implications (including financial implications)

5.1 Policy

- 5.1.1 Whilst this will be the most significant change in Local Government that Northampton Borough Council has had to face, there is no specific policy reference to highlight for this report.

5.2 Resources and risks

- 5.2.1 The resources in terms of specialist support have already been highlighted in paragraph 3.4. Northampton Borough Council will also need to develop its own internal project team which is currently being led by the Chief Executive and appropriate governance procedures will be put in place to ensure regular reporting to Cabinet and Council. When key decisions arise, it is likely that reports will need to go to either Cabinet or Council (or both depending on timeframes).
- 5.2.2 In terms of financial resources, the procurement of both specialist support with regards to consultation, alongside the commission of PWC, will incur costs and therefore it is proposed to create a working budget of £100,000 to be used to fund this specialist support in the short term (noting that the specialist support will be split amongst all 8 Local Authorities) as well as future work centred around local government reorganisation. The delegation of how this money is spent is given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.
- 5.2.3 This should be kept to purely local government reorganisation and the funding will be found from General Fund Reserves, if required at the end of 2018/19.
- 5.2.4 In terms of risk, clearly there is significant risk in undertaking this work, not least in meeting the deadline which is extremely tight. There are also a number of inherent risks particularly around the financing and long term sustainability of any new model and clearly this will form a key part of the overall proposal that is brought back to members for consideration prior to 31st August 2018.
- 5.2.5 There is a converse risk if NBC does not commit resources and effort to deliver the final submission in conjunction with the other seven local authorities affected, that NBC will not influence the eventual outcome and not deliver a solution in the best interest of the residents and businesses of the Borough.

5.3 Legal

- 5.3.1 The consideration outlined in this report stems from a formal invitation from the Secretary of State under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. This whole area is subject to statutory regulation, the detail of which will be provided in further Cabinet reports as appropriate.
- 5.3.2 The Council will need to ensure that consultation processes are carefully structure and executed in a way that ensures that they inform and shape the proposals and by so doing minimises the risks of legal challenge.

5.4 Equality and Health

- 5.4.1 Nothing specifically arising from this report however, due consideration will be made to the extensive consultation that will be undertaken and a community impact assessment will be completed as the project moves forward.

5.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

5.5.1 Statutory officers; Senior Managers; Leader of the Council

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Northamptonshire County Council Best Value Inspection report
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northamptonshire-county-council-best-value-inspection>
- 6.2 The Deloitte Report: Strategic Options case for the future of Public Services in Northamptonshire
<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/file/10282/deloitte-report>
- 6.3 Letter of invitation from Paul Rowsell to submit a proposal for a single tier of local government in Northamptonshire (Appendix A)
- 6.4 Letter from Rishi Sunak MP, Minister for Local Government 4th May 2018 (Appendix B)

George Candler
Chief Executive
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Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

27 March 2018

Ian Vincent
Acting Chief Executive
Northampton Borough Council
Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton
NN1 1DE

Dear Ian,

Invitation to submit a proposal for a single tier of local government in Northamptonshire

The Secretary of State today has announced in a statement to Parliament how he proposes to proceed following receipt on 15 March 2018 of the Northamptonshire County Council Best Value Inspection report. In his statement he also announced that he is inviting the principal councils in Northamptonshire to develop and submit locally led proposals for establishing unitary authorities across the county which will be right for the communities and people they serve. Accordingly, he is exercising his powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("2007 Act") to invite Northamptonshire councils to make proposals for restructuring local government, and I enclose the statutory Invitation to your council along with statutory guidance from the Secretary of State.

As you will see, a proposal in response to the Invitation can be submitted by an individual council or jointly with some or all of the other councils in Northamptonshire. Proposals should be received no later than Friday 27 July 2018.

The Invitation is to submit what the 2007 Act refers to as a 'combined proposal'. A combined proposal may be, for example, a proposal for two or more Type B proposals under the Act (a Type B proposal being a proposal for a unitary authority for the area of one or more districts which form part of a county area), or a proposal consisting of one or more Type B and Type C proposals (a Type C proposal being a proposal for a unitary authority for an area which is part of a county and one or more adjoining districts in an adjacent county). It should be noted therefore that a proposal for a single unitary authority covering the entirety of Northamptonshire is not an option under the Invitation.

Paul Rowsell CBE
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The guidance, to which any authority making a proposal must have regard, sets out what any proposal should seek to achieve, and the matters to be taken into account in formulating a proposal. In particular, any proposal should seek to achieve unitary structures which are likely to:

- Improve local government and service delivery across the area;
- Be based on a credible geography; and
- Command a good deal of local support.

These are therefore the criteria against which any proposal will be assessed.

Other factors that should be taken into account in formulating any proposal include the findings and recommendations of the Northamptonshire County Council Best Value Inspection report, and wider regional issues such as how a new authority might be able to boost housing delivery and contribute to the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford growth corridor.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch, and if it would be helpful, I would of course be happy to meet you and your colleagues.

Yours sincerely,



P ROWSELL

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS FOR A SINGLE TIER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in exercise of his powers under Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, hereby invites any principal authority for an area that is the whole or part of the county of Northamptonshire to make, in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 3 below, a combined proposal that there should be a single tier of local government for areas which together comprise an area of which that county is the whole or part.

1. Any proposal must be made by 27 July 2018.
2. In responding to this invitation an authority must have regard to the guidance from the Secretary of State set out in the Schedule to this invitation, and to any further guidance on responding to this invitation received from the Secretary of State.
3. An authority responding to this invitation may either make its own proposal or make a proposal jointly with any of the other authorities invited to respond.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.



P Rowsell

A senior civil servant in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

27 March 2018

SCHEDULE

Paragraphs 1 to 2 below set out guidance from the Secretary of State.

1. A proposal should seek to achieve for the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government, that is the establishment of unitary authorities:
 - a. which are likely to improve local government and service delivery across the area of the proposal, giving greater value for money, generating savings, providing stronger strategic and local leadership, and which are more sustainable structures;
 - b. which command a good deal of local support as assessed in the round overall across the whole area of the proposal; and
 - c. where the area of each unitary authority is a credible geography consisting of one or more existing local government areas and having a substantial population that at a minimum is substantially in excess of 300,000.

2. The following matters should be taken into account in formulating a proposal:
 - a. A proposal should describe clearly the single tier local government structures it is putting forward, and explain how, if implemented, these are expected to achieve the outcomes described in paragraph 1 above.
 - b. The need for evidence and analysis to support a proposal and any explanation of the outcomes it is expected to achieve, including evidence of a good deal of local support.
 - c. The report “Northamptonshire County Council Best Value Inspection: January – March 2018”, in particular the inspection team’s recommendation on the preferred way forward involving “the 2 unitary (West and North) model”.
 - d. The wider context for any unitary authorities in Northamptonshire around plans for growth. This includes authorities’ potential contributions to the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor; and the potential for agreement between authorities and the Government to unlock ambitious housing delivery, above the level proposed in the Government’s Local Housing Need assessment.

- e. That there should be extensive local consultation about any proposal before it is made, seeking the views by appropriate means of residents, stakeholders and partners including local enterprise partnerships, health bodies, businesses, and other organisations including voluntary organisations. The means of seeking views may include professionally led open consultation questionnaires, representative household surveys, surveys of parish and town councils, workshops, telephone interviews with other major stakeholders, and inviting written submissions.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Rishi Sunak MP
Minister for Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

Fry Building
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Tel: 0303 444 3460
Email: rishi.sunak@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

Our Ref: 3754373
Your ref: JN/CB/0477

Dear Cllr Nunn,

04 MAY 2018

Thank you for your joint letter, with Councillors Danielle Stone and Sally Beardsworth of 20 April to the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, about Northampton Borough Council's proposal for a unitary authority. I am replying as this matter falls within my ministerial responsibilities.

I welcome your council's intention to put forward a joint proposal for unitary local government across the county. As the Secretary of State told the House of Commons, we are keen that the councils in Northamptonshire think about what is right for their communities and the people they serve, and come forward with proposals.

Under the legislation, any proposal made in response to the Invitation issued on 27 March 2018 must put forward two or more unitary councils whose area comprises whole existing principal local government areas - that is whole existing districts. I would also draw your attention to the statutory guidance which the Secretary of State has issued set out in the Schedule to the Invitation, and to which councils must have regard when formulating any unitary proposal; that guidance states that any proposed unitary authority should have a population that at a minimum is substantially in excess of 300,000.

As you know, councils have until 27 July 2018 to submit their proposals to me, having first conducted extensive local consultation. I look forward to receiving your submission.

76
RISHI SUNAK MP

Appendices: 0



4th June 2018

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Chief Executive

Report Title	Independent Chair of the Audit Committee
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 That Council notes that Mr Ian Orrell, having been selected as the successful candidate, be appointed as the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council notes the appointment of Mr Ian Orrell as the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The Audit Committee, at its meeting on 3 July 2017, resolved:

“That it be recommended to Full Council that the composition of the Audit Committee is altered to provide that the Chair of Audit Committee would be an independent, non-voting, co-opted member and would be in addition to seven elected Members, and that the necessary amendments be made to the Council’s Constitution.”

- 3.1.2 At a subsequent meeting of Council on the 18th September 2017, Council approved that the composition of the Audit Committee be altered to provide that the Chair of the Audit Committee well be an independent, non-voting, co-opted member and would be in addition to seven elected Members.

- 3.1.3 It was also agreed that authority be delegated to the Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer the powers needed to determine a recruitment process in consultation with Members, necessary to enable it to co-opt an independent person onto the Audit Committee.

- 3.1.4 The recruitment process commenced in January 2018 and a staff panel long-listed potential candidates and recommended those to the Member short-listing panel.
- 3.1.5 The Member panel consisted of the Leader of the Council, the Deputy, the Leaders of both opposition Groups and the outgoing Chair of Audit Committee who were advised during the recruitment and selection process by the Monitoring Officer and the Interim Chief Finance Officer (S151)
- 3.1.6 At the panel meeting on the 15th May 2018, the panel agreed to appoint Mr Ian Orrell. There had been two candidates shortlisted who were of very high quality and considered appointable, but on balance it was agreed by the Panel that Mr Orrell be appointed to the position.
- 3.1.7 The Committee will therefore be comprised of an Independent Chair and seven other Councillor members who were nominated to the Committee at the Annual Council meeting on the 17th May 2018.
- 3.1.8 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel have been asked to consider the payment and amount of an allowance for a co-opted Chair of Audit Committee, and made recommendations, which were agreed by full Council at its meeting on 18th September 2017.
- 3.1.9 The appointment of Independent Chair of Audit Committee will be on a fixed term basis until the Annual Council meeting of Northampton Borough Council on 16th May 2019.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 The report does not have any policy implications.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 The previous reports submitted to, and agreed by Council, outlined the additional resources recommended by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 The Audit Committee is an ordinary committee of the Council. As such, the requirement in section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to maintain political balance on the Committee applies. The number of elected members on the Committee remains the same and political balance will therefore not be affected by the addition of an independent Chair who will be a co-opted, non-voting independent member of the Committee.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 There are no equality and health implications arising directly from this report.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

- 4.5.1 The Audit Committee was consulted at its meeting on 3 July 2017 regarding its recommendation in relation to an Independent Chair of the Audit Committee.

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 None specifically.

5. Background Papers

None

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer