

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL 3 - NORTHAMPTON POST UNITARY

Wednesday, 4 July 2018

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Brian Sargeant (Chair) , Councillors Vicky Culbard, Sam Kilby-Shaw and Jamie Lane

CO-OPTED MEMBER: Morcea Walker, Deputy Lietenant

Officers Laurie Gould, Solicitor
Marianne McCarthy, Solicitor
Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

Members of the Public David Huffadine-Smith
Tom Appleyard

Press James Averill, Democracy Reporter

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Joyce (Deputy Chair); Councillors Danielle Stone and Lee Mason (Co Optee.)

The Chair announced he was pleased that both Morcea Walker and Lee Mason had accepted the invitation to be co opted to this Scrutiny Panel.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. DEPUTATIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Mr David Huffadine-Smith addressed the Scrutiny Panel on agenda item 8.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

5. PRESENTATION TO SET THE SCENE

Laurie Gould, Solicitor, gave the Scrutiny Panel a presentation that set the scene for the Review.

The Scrutiny Panel asked questions, made comment and heard:

- Oak Apple Day is a Borough Council tradition and was traditionally held at dawn on 29 May each year. It fell on a Sunday one year and was moved to 12 noon. There is a need for this event to be recaptured by the Borough. It is an important Borough event.
- The Mayor is the Chair of the Housebound Fund
- The Mayor is the President of Town Twinning
- The Mayor is the President for St John's Home
- Honorary Freeman take place just once every civic term – The Panel queried what would happen in terms of Unitary.
- For the final report it was requested that all the Mayor's charities, from a specific date, are included
- There is a need to ensure that the Mace is retained in Northampton's Museum, in the borough.
- A potential recommendation of the final report was suggested "that it is ensured that all silver assets are made secure."
- The punch bowl, that is kept in the Mayor's Parlour, was presented to a former Mayor when he had a child whilst in Office
- Councillor Lane confirmed that he was the first Mayor to instruct Hereditary Free Women to the town and queried should there be a Unitary Council who would lead on such a service
- The Panel conveyed the view that it hoped that there would be a Town Council, with a Mayor
- The Panel commended the book "The Borough of Northampton and Its Guildhall and Civic Traditions - RJB Morris" and asked if copies could be brought out of storage and sold to Panel members who wanted to purchase a copy. The Scrutiny Officer undertook to make contact with the relevant officers.

6. CORE QUESTIONS

The Scrutiny Panel considered the draft core questions and made updates.

AGREED: That the core questions, as attached, are sent to the expert advisors, as detailed on the Scope of this Review

7. SITE VISITS

It was suggested that Councillor Danielle Stone be asked if she would be able to report back on the site visit to Chester, that another Working Group was setting up. This would inform the evidence base of this Review.

Further site visits were suggested:

- Raunds Town Council
- Higham Ferrers Town Council

The Scrutiny Officer undertook to make the necessary arrangements with the Chair.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Mr David Huffadine-Smith, individual, addressed the Scrutiny Panel. He commented on the potential Unitary Authority and the other Authorities that it would include; querying whether they also had Mayors. He felt that discussions need to take place with them. He suggested there needs to be joint working. Mr Huffadine Smith went on to refer the Panel to Torbay and its Unitary issues.

Councillor Jamie Lane, in the capacity of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, advised Mr Huffadine-Smith that that the Committee has already approved the scope of this Review and its remit is specific to Northampton, the Panel is investigating how it can recommend how Northampton's heritage can be protected. Representatives from other Authorities could be called as expert advisors.

Mr Huffadine-Smith was thanked for his address.

The Community Impact Assessment for this Review was approved and would be published on the Overview and Scrutiny WebPage.



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BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

SCRUTINY PANEL 3 – NORTHAMPTON POST UNITARY

The Scrutiny Panel is currently undertaking a review: Northampton Post Unitary

The purpose of the Review is

- To look at Northampton, (being mindful of the potential Unitary Authority), giving particular consideration to how civic pride and ceremonies can be preserved

CORE QUESTIONS:

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Scrutiny Panel:

1. Please can you provide details of civic pride, events and ceremonies that currently or previously took place in Northampton for the Scrutiny Panel's consideration for inclusion of its formal list
2. How are Northampton's civic events and ceremonies marketed?
- 3 Please provide suggestions how you feel the pride and history of the Borough and the Guildhall can be preserved and enhanced as part of any new Unitary Authority.
- 4 **Question to internal witnesses:** What is role of Northampton Borough Council in civic events and ceremonies within the borough ?
- 5 **Question to external witnesses:** What is the role of partners in civic events and ceremonies within the borough ?
- 6 In your opinion, how can all assets, including Museums and their contents, in the borough be preserved and secured?
- 7 Do you have any other information you are able to provide in relation to civic pride in Northampton

