

Council
Monday 17th March 2008

**Supplementary Report of the Leader of the Council,
Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Improvement**

Aspire for excellence / High standards of service

Management Structure

The Chief Executive will issue a consultation document this week to staff regarding the structure of the organisation. This expands on his earlier consultation on the culture of the organisation and the structure at Director level together with an aspiration to move to a professionally qualified, Head of Service model at the level below Director.

The results of that consultation were brought to and agreed by Cabinet on 28th January 2008.

Portfolios

I do intend to make a number of amendments to the responsibilities of individual Portfolio Holders to better align the political and managerial leadership of the Council to ensure better and more efficient and effective leadership. These changes are likely to be incremental over a period of time as new Directors are appointed and as the new management structure develops.

However, I do intend to make one very significant change effective immediately after Easter. Currently, Housing Repairs falls within the Environment Portfolio. This is largely historic as, under previous management structures the Direct Service Organisation (DSO) operating out of the Westbridge Depot were managed as a single entity. However, Housing Repairs more naturally forms an integral part of the Housing Service and, in particular, of the landlord function. Therefore, I intend to remove the anomaly whereby the Environment Portfolio Holder is responsible for this service but the Housing Portfolio Holder 'purchases' all of the service on behalf of tenants.

With effect from 25th March 2008 the Housing Portfolio Holder, Sally Beardsworth, will take over direct responsibility for Housing Repairs. This, together with management changes that are already being implemented, will result in an integrated landlord function within Housing Services and will enable the Housing Portfolio Holder to work with the new Housing Director to drive through improvements and to ensure better team working within the Housing Service.

It will also allow the Environment Portfolio Holder, Trini Crake, to focus on the core functions of the environment services.

Act as advocates for Northampton

WNDC Board Appointments

DCLG confirmed on 11th March 2008 that Cllr Tony Woods would be appointed as the NBC nominee to the Board of the WNDC for a three year term from 15 March 2008. They further announced that Cllr Richard Church would be appointed as the County Council nominee for a similar term.

I am delighted with these appointments. I very much want to see the regeneration of Northampton and want that regeneration to be of the very highest quality so that Northampton takes its rightful place as a city that people want to make their home. Government has decided that Northampton will grow rapidly. It is our job to ensure that that growth provides Northampton with an environment and facilities the equal or better than the best European cities of a similar size.

My key priority as the Leader of Northampton Borough Council and as a Board Member of the WNDC will be to ensure the two organisations work very closely together and with others for the benefit of the people of Northampton.

It is pleasing that, finally, there will now be representatives of all three major political parties on the board. The absence of any Liberal Democrat representation on the Board during its first three years was unfortunate and has very significantly weakened the WNDC.

Council and the public can now be assured that the needs of Northampton will be vigorously espoused by Cllr Church and myself.

Tony Woods
March 2008