

# **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **CABINET**

**Wednesday, 25 May 2011**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Palethorpe (Chair); Councillor Hill (Deputy Chair); Councillors Bottwood, Hadland and Councillor Malpas

### **1. APOLOGIES**

None

### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

Pam Varnsvery spoke in respect of Item 5a – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report of Scrutiny Panel H – Lease between NBC, Northampton Football Club and the Athletics Club. As a former member of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and stated that she welcomed and supported the report and recommendations within it. She commented that she had no confidence in the new Administrations commitment to carry out the duties as stated in the recommendations. In reference to section 5.1.3 of the report, Mrs Varnsvery further commented that she had concerns about the future of the Athletics Club and emphasised the fact that she wished for all future discussions about the club be held in public and stated that the Conservative Administration had the opportunity to rectify the failings she suggested they had made in 2005.

Paul Varnsvery spoke in respect of Item 5b – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report of Scrutiny Panel E – Commissioning Framework for the Voluntary and Community Sector. He reported that Northampton Borough Council had enjoyed a very good relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector. The transferred dates of CEFAP funding had been well received and that under the Liberal Democrat Administration there had been an increase in funding of the Voluntary and Community sector. He thanked the former members of the Scrutiny Panel who had been involved and wished the new Administration would be able to work with the County Council and other Authorities in the implementation of the Commissioning Framework.

David Garlick addressed Cabinet in respect of Item 5b - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report of Scrutiny Panel E – Commissioning Framework for the Voluntary and Community Sector. He explained that he had been Chair of the Panel and thanked members of the panel and the Scrutiny Officer for the excellent report presented. He recommended the report be implemented and noted that the relationship between the Borough Council and the Voluntary and Community Sector was excellent and added that there had been significant improvements with the County Council. He requested that care be taken of the Voluntary Sector and not treated or judged as a business.

Richard Matthews spoke in respect of Item 5a - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report of Scrutiny Panel H – Lease between NBC, Northampton Football Club and the Athletics Club. He commented that the conduct of the former Conservative Administration with regards to the football and athletics club had been unacceptable and that lessons should be learned and he hoped for the new administration to rectify the problems from the past and hope that they implement the recommendations.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **5. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

##### **5.1 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT OF SCRUTINY PANEL H - LEASE BETWEEN NBC, NORTHAMPTON FOOTBALL CLUB AND THE ATHLETICS CLUB**

The Deputy Chair of Overview and Scrutiny welcomed the Panel Member- Councillor Glynane, who outlined the report. He commented that he regarded it as an exceptional piece of work and emphasised that the recommendations should be taken seriously. He reported that there was a good opportunity to develop the athletics club and progress towards improving the facilities. He reported that he very much appreciated the work carried out by Councillors Yates and Malpas as former members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Beardsworth explained that during her term a Mayor, she had been involved in the Special Olympics, some of which had been held at Sixfields. She reported that she was aware that some people with special needs no longer felt welcome and that emphasis should be placed on providing the right facilities for the right people. She requested that Cabinet take on the recommendations laid out in the report and to consider the suggestions made.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted

##### **5.2 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT OF SCRUTINY PANEL E - COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

The Deputy Chair of Overview and Scrutiny welcomed the Panel Member- Councillor Meredith, who outlined the report. He congratulated all the Members and staff who had been involved in the report and expressed his excitement and satisfaction at how well the Council has worked with the voluntary and community sectors and hoped for a continuation of this in the future. He emphasised that all the evidence gathered in the findings of the review had been carried out over a ten month period and that he had also received very positive feedback from voluntary sectors who had congratulated the work of the Council. He further stated that he agreed with all the recommendations made in the report and hoped that Cabinet would take any necessary action.

Councillor Mennell reported that she was very pleased with the work that had been carried out between the Council and the Voluntary and Community Sectors. She commented that further communication and work should be carried out with the tenants association and asked how the new administration would be approaching the matter in the future.

The Chairman commented that comments were appreciated but that this Cabinet was not the correct arena for answers to be given on the matter, but a possible meeting could be arranged at a later date to discuss.

The Chairman reported that the Review was a sound piece of work and commented that people be minded that the Council did have limited resources.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted

### **5.3 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - REPORT OF SCRUTINY PANEL R & P - NEIGHBOURHOOD MODEL**

The Deputy Chair of Overview and Scrutiny welcomed the Panel Member- Councillor Mason, who outlined the report. She explained that the Review had taken three months to complete and had been conducted due to the fact that a number of agencies, such as the Residents Association and other co-opted members, had expressed their dissatisfaction of the neighbourhood model. She commented that there was greater support for alternative methods in which people could engage with the Council such as more involvement with Parish Councils and Further Education establishments. She argued that consideration should be given to those people whose first language was not English and that there was a need to liaise with such people more extensively in the future.

Councillor Mason reported that there was a need to hold at least two public meetings a year and it would be, and has always been considered, necessary for the Police to be involved in them. It was commented that the Chief Executive would be communicating with people from the Police Force and the Fire Brigade to request continued representation at Public Meetings. She further commented that all members of the Scrutiny Panel had been very keen on continued communication with residents and hoped that Cabinet would accept the recommendations.

The Chairman thanked the work of all of the Scrutiny Panels.

Councillor Malpas thanked Councillor Mason for taking over his position of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel when he had been unable to continue in that capacity. He also expressed his gratitude to the Overview and Scrutiny Officer for her continued hard work.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted

### **6. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

### **7. COMMUNITY ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAMME (CESP)**

Councillor Malpas, as the relevant Portfolio Holder, introduced and outlined the report. He explained that at a previous Cabinet meeting (16<sup>th</sup> March 2011) previous Cabinet Members had been advised on the Community Energy Savings Programme (CESP). He commented that whilst it was a small report the implications that it would have, if the recommendations were to be accepted, would be considerable and significant to some of the more deprived residents of Northampton. It was reported that the measures listed in the report that the CESP would be able to deliver would allow people to have options about what would be most suitable in assisting those people affected by fuel poverty.

Councillor Mason commented that it would be useful for the newly elected Ward Councillors to be consulted on the issue and requested a re-consultation in order to ensure the affected Ward Councillors were fully aware of the implications of the report.

Councillor Beardsworth explained that this had been a programme, which she was most keen on. She commented that by saving people money on their energy bills would lead directly to an increase in living standards and championed any means in the reduction of fuel poverty.

#### **RESOLVED:**

Cabinet approved the Community Energy Savings Programme work to be awarded to E-on

The Director of Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Borough Solicitor, be authorised to confirm the terms of the legal agreement.

The meeting concluded at 6.55pm