

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON MONDAY, 21 JANUARY 2013 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

COUNCILLORS: Ansell, Aziz, Beardsworth, Begum, Bottwood, Capstick, Caswell, I. Choudary, Duncan, Eldred, Flavell, Ford, Glynane, Golby, Gowen, Hadland, Hallam, Hibbert, Hill, King, Larratt, Lynch, Mackintosh, Malpas, Markham, Marriott, Mason, Mennell, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Palethorpe, Parekh, Patel, Sargeant, Stone, Strachan, Subbarayan, Wire DL and Yates

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mackintosh declared a personal interest in item 17 (ii) in so far as the motion referred to the Royal and Derngate of which he was a trustee.

Councillor Hadland declared a personal interest in item 17 (ii) in so far as the motion referred to the Royal and Derngate of which he was a trustee.

Councillor Marriott declared a personal interest in item 17 (ii) in so far as the motion referred to the Royal and Derngate of which he was a trustee.

Councillor Sargeant declared a personal interest in item 17 (ii) in so far as the motion referred to 78 Derngate of which he was a trustee.

Councillor Hadland declared a Personal Interest in item 16, Northampton Central Area Action Plan- Adoption in so far as reference was made to WNDC, of which he was a Board member and the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee of which he was Chair.

Councillor Mackintosh declared a Personal Interest in item 16, Northampton Central Area Action Plan- Adoption in so far as reference was made to the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee of which he was a member.

Councillor Flavell declared a Personal Interest in item 16, Northampton Central Area Action Plan- Adoption in so far as reference was made to the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee of which she was a member.

Councillor Hallam declared a Personal Interest in item 16, Northampton Central Area Action Plan- Adoption in so far as reference was made to the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee of which he was a member.

Councillor Capstick declared a Personal Interest in item 16, Northampton Central

Area Action Plan- Adoption in so far as reference was made to the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee of which she was an observer.

Councillor Capstick declared a Personal interest in item 17 (iii) as it referred to Northampton Credit Union of which she was a member.

Councillor King declared a Personal interest in item 17 (iii) as it referred to Northampton Credit Union of which she was a member.

Councillor Yates declared a Personal interest in item 17 (iii) as it referred to Northampton Credit Union of which he was a member.

Councillor Conroy declared a Personal interest in item 17 (iii) as it referred to Northampton Credit Union of which he was a member.

Councillor Strachan declared a Personal interest in item 17 (iii) as it referred to Northampton Credit Union of which he was a member.

Councillor Strachan declared a Personal interest in item 7, Cabinet Member Presentations in so far as reference was made to the Friends of the Racecourse of which he was a member.

Councillor Hill declared a Personal interest in item 15, Community Governance Review Reorganisation Order, as his wife was a parish councillor for Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish Council.

Councillor Nunn declared a Personal interest in item 15, Community Governance Review Reorganisation Order, as a parish councillor for Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish Council.

Councillor Eldred declared a Personal interest in item 15, Community Governance Review Reorganisation Order, as a parish councillor for Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish Council.

Councillor Patel declared a Personal interest in item 15, Community Governance Review Reorganisation Order, as a parish councillor for Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish Council.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 3 December 2012 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors N Choudary, Davies, Eales and Lane.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

There were none.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Mr Coop noted that the previous meeting of Council had endorsed the recommendations for the creation of Hunsbury Meadows Parish Council. However since then the Liberal Democrats, in a Focus magazine, had stated that there had not been enough consultation and that local residents had been railroaded into supporting the creation of a parish council. He hoped that Council would reject what he regarded as spurious allegations from the Liberal Democrats.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor announced that four questions had been received from members of the public and that they and the responses had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution. In the absence of Mr Adams and Mr McNabb the Mayor noted that their questions and the responses would be posted to them.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

At this juncture each of Cabinet Members made a presentation of their respective portfolios that had been circulated with the agenda.

Councillor Mackintosh presented his Cabinet Member report, elaborated thereon and thanked staff for continuing to provide services during the recent inclement weather. He also noted that in a recently published cities progress report Northampton had moved from 61st out of 63 to 1st place in terms of resilience against the recession. Councillor Wire DL welcomed the appointment of extra park rangers and neighbourhood wardens and thanked the Administration for listening to the Opposition. Councillor Mackintosh commented that this had been in their manifesto. Councillor Beardsworth asked why he had apparently changed his mind over the Rushden Lakes development proposal. Councillor Mackintosh commented that in principle he was in favour of investment and job creation but when the scale and magnitude of the proposals had become known it appeared that they would have a detrimental impact on Northampton and so had changed his mind and was pleased that the Secretary of State had agreed that the application be called in.

Councillor Caswell presented his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon. Councillor Wire DL noted recent comments by the Leader of the Council made on the radio about problems with refuse collection. He was supportive of the problems but the Cabinet Member could not continue to rely on the Liberal Democrat rush for cash just before the last elections as an excuse for missed collections etc: was Councillor Caswell going to resign? Councillor Caswell commented that Council was well aware that the Administration had commissioned a report on the situation with Enterprise, which had been published to Councillors, and they were working to implement its recommendations. He accepted that Christmas had been mixed but the arrangements had been put in place by the previous contract management and combined with this many members of the public had assumed that the arrangements would be the same as for the previous year without reading the leaflets that had been distributed. Councillor Meredith noted that some of the Christmas bin collections had taken place at 8.00pm and asked if any risk assessment had been carried out in respect of the safety of residents, children and staff. Councillor Caswell commented that risk assessments were the responsibility of Enterprise. Councillor Beardsworth in

noting the Beasley Report referred to by Councillor Caswell asked whether in monitoring the performance of the contract KPIs would be taken more notice of. Councillor Caswell indicated that KPIs had been monitored and would continue to be so. Councillor Mason commented that she had attended a meeting of the Brookside Residents Association who had been angry about the refuse collection service and asked when it would improve. Councillor Caswell stated that improvements had already been made. Councillor Capstick noted that the Government was to remove the ability for Councils to levy fines from residents who put their rubbish out too early and asked if the Administration would be objecting to this. Councillor Caswell noted that it was too soon to be able to assess what the effect might be on the Council. Councillor Glynane commented that he was dismayed by the condition of the Town and asked when the Cabinet Member was going to get a grip of Enterprise. Councillor Caswell commented that the Beasley Report had been submitted to both the Overview & Scrutiny and Audit Committees and that the report's recommendations were being implemented. Councillor Strachan in noting that the County Council now had responsibilities for public health asked if the Council had any arrangements to work with them. Councillor Caswell commented that the Council would be working with the County Council through the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Councillor Eldred presented his Cabinet Member report, elaborated thereon and noted that one business, part of the Frost Fair, had seen an increase of 68% in business.

Councillor Markham presented her Cabinet Member report, elaborated thereon and expressed her thanks to the Housing Solutions team for their work during the two recent flooding incidents at Billing. Councillor Beardsworth noted that the previous Administration had set up a scheme of collecting surplus furniture from council houses and recycling it through Spencer Contact. They had told her that this was not happening any more. Councillor Markham commented that she was unaware of the scheme but would look at it if Spencer Contact got in touch with her. In answer to a question from Councillor Mennell, Councillor Markham reported that use of bed and breakfast accommodation had reduced to 20 cases and in answer to a question from Councillor Mason 20 to 30 extra people were being accommodated by Oasis House during the current cold spell. In answer to a question from Councillor Glynane, Councillor Markham commented that she had not known about the arrangement with Spencer Contact. Councillor Meredith asked what had happened to the council garage review and also to the cleaning of blocks of flats in particular on the Eastern District. Councillor Markham commented that the garage review was almost complete and that the cost of repairs was currently being assessed and that in respect of the cleaning of flats this would be completed and that the costs of a service were also being assessed and would be reported on in due course. Councillor Wire DL, in welcoming the energy programme noted that some residents had had problems with new boilers and tenants were being referred to EON without having any contact details. Councillor Markham commented that tenants views had been taken on board beforehand and that she had attended most if not all of the tenants meetings. She had remained close to the project and believed that tenants had been assisted; EON had been involved as it was their funding that had provided the boilers.

Councillor Bottwood presented his Cabinet Member report and noted that in fact

Facilities Management had reintroduced the hosting of Christmas Parties as opposed to there being introduced for the first time.

Councillor Hadland presented his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon. Councillor Subbarayan in supporting the gateway proposals asked how the £2m from the New Homes Bonus would be spent and in respect Skills Research workshops how they would be advertised and who would be involved. Councillor Hadland commented that in respect of the New Homes Bonus some ideas were in the early stages of development and would be consulted upon in due course. One of the Skills Research workshops would take place in St James and all the local businesses would be contacted. Councillor Wire DL noted that the lights at the Mayorhold Car Park were left on 24 hours a day. Councillor Hadland commented that it was proposed to change the lighting to LEDs which were more economic to run; that there were security issues concerning the lights being left on and that he would look at the possibility of them being turned off at appropriate times again. Councillor Hill commented that he was pleased to see the works to preserve the outside walls of the Guildhall and asked that the portraits of famous local people within the building should be more clearly identified. Councillor Hadland stated that he would look into this matter.

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Beardsworth stated that there were Houses in Multiple Occupation (HIMOs) in nearly every ward in the Borough. They often caused problems and other Councils used new powers and licensing to control them. She referred to the London Borough of Newham who had introduced a penalty scheme for properties in poor condition and or with poor facilities, for example, a lack of recycling. HIMOs had an impact on local neighbourhoods as Councillors well knew. The previous Liberal Democrat administration had put something into place but this had now been overtaken by new planning laws. She believed that the Council should do more to encourage landlords to be more responsible. The current property market conditions made a HIMO an attractive proposition for landlords and Councillor Beardsworth noted schemes in Oxford, Cambridge and the London Borough of Newham: Oxford had a new licensing scheme.

Councillor Markham stated that she was pleased to see that Councillor Beardsworth was taking more interest in HIMOs now than when she had been part of the previous administration. She noted the Article 4 Direction the Council had put in place and stated that she would like to be more progressive but was attempting to implement what the previous administration had failed to do. At present landlords were paying for a licensing system but were not getting anything back for it as there was no HIMO team.

Councillor Beardsworth commented that when the Liberal Democrats had formed the Administration in 2007 the Council had been assessed as being the worst in the country and four years later it had become the most improved: necessarily it had not been possible to do everything during that time. She wanted to look to the future and make improvements and hoped that the current Administration would not be hostile to ideas that came from the opposition.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2012-13

Councillor Bottwood submitted a report that set the Council's performance in relation to its treasury management activities, including its borrowing and investment strategy, for the period 1 April to 30 September 2012 and also made changes to investment and counterparty lending limits, to enable the effective management of risk in relation to investments. Councillor Mackintosh seconded adoption of the report.

RESOLVED That the following be noted:

- a) The Council's treasury management activities and performance for the period 1 April to 30 September 2012.
- b) The increase in maximum value for any single investment transaction in the Schedule to TMP 1 (Risk Management), from £7m to £10m, approved by the Council's Chief Finance Officer.
- c) The increase in the maximum level of investment with any counterparty or group of counterparties in the Schedule to TMP 1 (Risk Management), from £15m to £20m, approved by the Council's Chief Finance Officer.
- d) The change to the counterparty limits in the Treasury Strategy to increase the maximum values for UK nationalised or part nationalised banking institutions to £20m from the existing £15m, approved by the Council's Chief Finance Officer.

10. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2013/14

Councillor Bottwood submitted a report that set out the calculation of Northampton Borough Council's Tax Base for the year 2013/14 under the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) regulations 2003 (SI 2003/3012) and amendments made in the Local Government Act 2012. Councillor Mackintosh seconded adoption of the report.

RESOLVED: That Council agree to approve the tax base for 2013/14 at 58,074.34 Band D equivalent properties and associated parish tax bases as set out in the report:

	2013/14	(2012/13)
Billing	2,394.26	2,702
Collingtree	443.35	515
Duston	4,748.13	5,486
Great Houghton	246.80	287
Hardingstone	658.39	767
Upton	1,687.65	1,566
Wootton & East Hunsbury	5,442.79	6,357
West Hunsbury	1,447.71	N/a

Hunsbury Meadow	369.95	N/a
Northampton (Unparished)	40,635.31	49,520
Total tax base	58,074.34	67,200

11. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

Councillor Bottwood submitted a report that set out a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Local Scheme) for adoption by Council. Councillor Mackintosh seconded adoption of the report.

Councillor Palethorpe asked for assurances that all 11,500 people affected by the proposals had been consulted and that the 8.5% contribution rate would also apply in 2014/15.

Councillor Bottwood commented that the report set out the situation.

Upon a requisition for a recorded vote;

There voted for the recommendations Councillors Ansell, Bottwood, Caswell, Duncan, Eldred, Flavell, Ford, Golby, Hadland, Hallam, Hibbert, Hill, King, Larratt, Lynch, Mackintosh, Malpas, Markham, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Sargeant and Yates.

There voted against the recommendations Councillors Aziz, Beardsworth, Begum, Capstick, I Choudary, Glynane, Gowen, Marriott, Mason, Mennell, Meredith, Palethorpe, Subbarayan, Stone, Strachan and Wire DL.

There abstained: The Mayor.

The recommendations were agreed as follows:

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the results of the consultation process be noted.
 2. That Council the financial implications and analysis associated with the chosen scheme be noted.
 3. That the design of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme detailed in paragraph 3.4.6 of the report and the associated protection the scheme provided for the residents of Northampton be agreed.

12. REVIEW OF COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS AND EXEMPTIONS 2013-2014

Councillor Bottwood submitted a report that set out the options for the review of discounts and exemptions resulting from the Local Government Finance Act 2012. Councillor Mackintosh seconded adoption of the report.

RESOLVED: That the following be agreed:

1. Class A (vacant properties undergoing alterations as defined

by the regulations) attract a 100% charge from the day they become vacant

2. Class C (empty unfurnished properties as defined by the regulations) attract a 100% charge from the day they become vacant
3. Second homes (as defined by the regulations) to be charged at 100%
4. That the long-term empty property premium of 150% is implemented for properties vacant for over two years.
5. That the above policy position in respect of discretionary discounts and exemptions be kept under review in respect of future years

13. NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES 2013/14

Councillor Eldred submitted a report that set out the Council's response to completing NNDR Form as required by paragraph 40 of section 1 to the Local Government Finance Bill. Councillor Mackintosh seconded adoption of the report.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to the NNDR1 form for 2013/14 as set out in appendix 1 of the report.

14. STATEMENT OF GAMBLING PRINCIPLES

Councillor Malpas submitted a report that sought adoption of a Statement of Gambling Principles following the three yearly review required by the Gambling Act 2005. Councillor Hill seconded adoption of the report.

RESOLVED: That the Statement attached to the report be approved for publication as the Council's Statement of Gambling Principles for the three year period commencing 31st January 2013.

15. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW REORGANISATION ORDERS

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report that set out the final recommendations of the Community Governance Review for Council to decide to what extent it wished to implement the recommendations. In doing so he asked that Council agree to two amendments to the Reorganisation Order firstly at paragraph 19.1 to change the number of parish councillors from eight to twelve for the proposed East Hunsbury Parish Council and secondly at paragraph 24.1 to change the number of parish councillors from eight to twelve for the proposed Wootton, Wootton Fields and Simpson Manor Parish Council. Councillor Eldred seconded adoption of the report as amended.

Upon being put by the Mayor, Council agreed to accept the amendments to the Reorganisation Order.

Councillors Hill and Nunn expressed their opposition to the proposed split of the

existing Wootton and East Hunbury Parish Council area stating that it did not have the support of the parish council and had received only minimal support from local residents.

In answer to a question Councillor Mackintosh commented that it was up to each parish council to decide whether or not to pay its parish councillors an allowance: it was generally rare for parish councillors to take an allowance.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the final recommendations for the Community Governance Review of the whole of the Council area, as reported in the minutes of the Council meeting of 3rd December 2012 be approved in full and implemented.
 2. That in agreeing resolution 1 above, Council makes that decision in cognisance of paragraph 3.1.11 of the report and as detailed in the report to Council dated 3 December 2012 and attached as appendix 2 to the report.
 3. That the draft Reorganisation Order attached as Appendix 1 to the Report and as amended at paragraph 19.1 to change the number of parish councillors from eight to twelve for the proposed East Hunsbury Parish Council and at paragraph 24.1 to change the number of parish councillors from eight to twelve for the proposed Wootton, Wootton Fields and Simpson Manor Parish Council, be approved and that the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer be delegated authority to make the necessary changes to the Order to give effect to Council's decision and the authority to make any other minor amendments to the Reorganisation Order or maps referred to therein; and to instruct an Authorised Officer to execute the Reorganisation Order;
 4. That the Director of Customers and Communities be authorised to take all the required steps to bring the recommendations into effect, including the publication of the outcome of the review as required by law.

16. NORTHAMPTON CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN- ADOPTION

Councillor Hadland submitted a report that updated Council on progress on the Northampton Central Action Plan (CAAP) since the approval to submit it to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and also sought the adoption of the CAAP as recommended by Cabinet. Councillor Nunn seconded adoption of the report.

In answer to questions Councillor Hadland commented that the former Royal Mail site was important and that a planning approval had recently been granted for it but it was a different matter to get someone to act on it. In respect of Eagle Drive improved links with Brackmills would be developed.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the contents of the Cabinet Report dated 16th January 2013 “Northampton Central Area Action Plan – Adoption” attached to this report and its associated appendices be received.
 2. That the CAAP be adopted as part of the development plan for Northampton in accordance with Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and that it replaces the saved policies of the Northampton Local Plan 1997 as identified in CAAP Appendix I.
 3. That the Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning be delegated authority in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning) to make any necessary further minor amendments, including factual updates, page numbering and changes in the format of the CAAP prior to its final publication.

17. NOTICES OF MOTION

- (i) Councillor Mackintosh proposed and Councillor Hadland seconded:

“This council welcomes plans being developed by Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, Friends of Northampton Castle and the Churches Conservation Trust to create a Heritage Gateway on the former site of the town’s castle.

The Heritage Gateway will be located at the western entrance to the town centre, taking in Castle Station, St Peter’s Church and Black Lion Inn as well as the wider area.

As a former seat of power for the kings and queens of England, Northampton’s history is nationally significant as the town has witnessed many major events through the centuries. The Heritage Gateway will help bring together much of Northampton’s history as well as drawing attention to our many other historic assets for the benefit of the whole town.

Council acknowledges that this work will make a valuable contribution to the regeneration of Northampton by promoting and improving access to some of our town’s unique heritage assets.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote the motion was carried.

- (ii) Councillor Mackintosh proposed and Councillor Eldred seconded:

“This Council welcomes the establishment of the Cultural Quarter which is both a key component of the Northampton Alive regeneration project and this Administration’s vision for our town. A vibrant and prosperous Town Centre will help attract more

visitors and inward investment, and will further enhance our reputation as a cultural venue.

Council recognises the important contribution which The Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton Arts Collective now at Number Nine Guildhall Road, the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, and 78 Derngate for their commitment to the town and for their contribution to Northampton's artistic and cultural diversity. These attractions, including the new cinema at The Royal and Derngate, will continue to put Northampton on the cultural map and attract visitors to our town.

Council also welcomes the decision of the University of Northampton to relocate to the Town Centre, and the positive benefits this will bring with the new student accommodation on the doorstep of the Cultural Quarter, and hopes this establishment will lead to further regeneration and more cultural organisations locating in the Town Centre."

Councillor Wire DL proposed and Councillor I Choudary seconded an amendment; "That the second Paragraph, Third line be amended by adding the words "the Rennie Mackintosh House" after "Art Gallery and" but before "78 Derngate"."

The amended motion to read:

"This Council welcomes the establishment of the Cultural Quarter which is both a key component of the Northampton Alive regeneration project and this Administration's vision for our town. A vibrant and prosperous Town Centre will help attract more visitors and inward investment, and will further enhance our reputation as a cultural venue.

Council recognises the important contribution which The Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton Arts Collective now at Number Nine Guildhall Road, the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, and the Rennie Mackintosh House, 78 Derngate for their commitment to the town and for their contribution to Northampton's artistic and cultural diversity. These attractions, including the new cinema at The Royal and Derngate, will continue to put Northampton on the cultural map and attract visitors to our town.

Council also welcomes the decision of the University of Northampton to relocate to the Town Centre, and the positive benefits this will bring with the new student accommodation on the doorstep of the Cultural Quarter, and hopes this establishment will lead to further regeneration and more cultural organisations locating in the Town Centre."

Councillor Mackintosh indicated that he would accept the amendment. Upon being put by the Mayor, Council accepted the amendment.

Council debated the amended motion. Councillor Mackintosh noted that the Planning Committee had, at its meeting on 15 January, granted planning permission for the type and location of signs for the Cultural Quarter.

Upon a vote, the amended motion was carried.

(iii) Mr Silver, as a founding Director and current president of Northampton Credit Union, commented that it had originally been established in 1977 for employees of the Council but since had expanded to cover all those who lived or worked in Northamptonshire. It was a savings and loans co-operative. Loans were made on the basis of the savings a member had accrued. Short term loans attracted a 6.5% interest rate that compared very favourably with those advertised by pay day loan companies. The credit union currently had 1,500 members and other proposed mergers within the county, if carried through, would raise this to over 2,000. Assets were currently over £600,000 and with the proposed mergers would rise to over £800,000. Most of the loans made were under £500 and even those assessed to be high risk attracted an interest rate of 2% per month that again was very competitive when compared with other products.

Councillor Wire DL proposed and Councillor Capstick seconded:

“This Council notes that in April 2012 it approved a motion to promote Northampton Credit Union and how to apply. This Council believes that the terms of this motion have not been sufficient.

With the Government bringing in many changes this year to benefits the need to promote credible and reputable credit unions is more urgent than ever.

Over 2000 working families in Northampton will soon lose on average £468 per year in support for childcare costs following the Government’s plans to reduce the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit.

Many residents have fallen prey to payday loan companies and loan sharks, which charge exorbitant interest rates. Many households now face even more hardship.

This Council therefore asks the Cabinet to take urgent measures to promote such credit unions and point out the huge risks of payday loan companies and loan sharks. This message needs to be conveyed directly to our residents.”

Council debated the motion. Councillor Eldred noted that if the Credit Union wanted to the One Stop Shop could be used as a means of advertising itself.

Upon a vote the motion was carried

(iv) The Mayor sought the agreement of Council to waive Council Procedural Rules so as to allow Councillor Stone to move and Councillor Gowen to second the motion set out at 17(iv) of the agenda as Councillor Davies was not able to be present at the meeting. Council consented to the change in proposer and seconder of the motion.

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Gowen seconded:

“This council notes the global and local concern about gender-based violence, including domestic violence, and the continuing level of violent attacks against women in Northampton. There were 1207 violent domestic crimes in Northampton between December 2011 and November 2012. This is unacceptable.

We know that violence against women is of concern to many people in Northampton, which has and continues to affect many. Therefore we pay tribute to the outstanding work of the Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Forum, and the pioneering work of the Sunflower Centre in Northampton.

We note that gender-based violence is a priority for International Women's Day on March 8th, and resolve as a Council to contribute to the global action to combat gender based violence by organising an event for International Women's Day on March 8th, building on a similar event held by the Prime Minister in Downing Street at last year's International Women's Day, and invite the local network of women's and other gender based organisations to participate in the event.”

Council debated the motion. Councillor Eldred noted that a diary of events, to be sent to Councillors, included an event on 8 March 2013 in support of International Women's Day and was referred to in his Cabinet Member Presentation submitted earlier in the meeting.

Upon a vote the motion was carried.

(v) Councillor Mason proposed and Councillor I Choudary seconded:

“This Council welcomes and supports recent initiatives to save energy in our homes such as,

- Installing 71 solar panels under Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP)
- Installing External Wall Insulation to 888 homes under CESP
- Creating the Northampton Energy Saving Service which last year help over 200 residents improve the thermal comfort of their home and lower their fuel bills, which will continue for another financial year.
- Installing Cavity Wall Insulation and Loft Insulation to 107 homes under the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT)
- Planning to install 19 air to water systems and EWI to 20 homes off the grid in Collingtree which are struggling to heat their homes as many are on storage heating or solid fuel. This is a pilot scheme.

However, Northampton Borough Council recognises the difficulty many households face with higher energy bills and is committed to addressing issues around fuel poverty. Fuel bills are a big concern for our residents.

Northampton Borough Council is committed to supporting families and communities find the best and cheapest energy provider.

The Council asks the Cabinet to explore ways by which we can help residents to

switch to cheaper energy providers.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote the motion was carried.

The meeting concluded at 20.38 hours.