



## Report of the Leader of the Council

### Northampton Borough Council

8<sup>th</sup> June, 2015

I would like to welcome all new Councillors to the Council. I look forward to working with all councillors to further develop Northampton and serve the citizens of the Borough.

Following my appointment as Leader of the Council, I am working with my Cabinet team to progress the commitments made in our manifesto, and to continue the good work of the previous Administration. I am also meeting key partners to discuss our plans and matters of mutual interest.

My colleagues on Cabinet have highlighted matters in their reports within their areas of responsibility. I am pleased to see that since the last ordinary Council meeting on the 2nd March excellent progress has been made. I would like to highlight some particular developments for the Council.

On the 15th March, the former Greyfriars Bus Station, Offices and Multi-Storey car park was demolished through a “blowdown”. This was a key stage in the process of clearing this site for development to enhance the town centre.

Also in March, work commenced on the restoration of Delapre Abbey. I congratulate all those involved in bringing this excellent project to the point of delivery. I am sure we all look forward to the restored Abbey being even more at the heart of Northampton’s heritage and community.

The 100th anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli were marked by a ceremony at Towcester Road cemetery. The Council worked with the Western Front Association and other partners to make this year’s anniversary a particularly significant occasion, and were pleased to be supported by representatives of the New Zealand High Commission and the Australian High Commission.

The 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day was marked by a special civic Service at All Saints, followed by the marking of the National Silence and Remembrance at the Town and County Memorial.

Plans are currently under discussion with regard to the marking of the 70th anniversary of Victory over Japan (VJ) Day.

On the 1st April, the Council implemented the Living Wage for employees employed by the Council and implemented revised rates for Apprenticeships. Council has requested a review of further actions that the Council can take to implement the Living Wage, and I have asked the Chief Executive to bring forward this review for consideration by the General Purposes Committee.

Also on the 1st April, the Council implemented new terms and conditions for all employees as agreed by the General Purposes Committee. This was the conclusion of a 16 month programme of discussion, consultation and decision-making involving all employees of the

Council, led by the Management Board working with the support of LGSS. These changes have meant that the Council now has modern terms and conditions that enable the Council to deliver fair employment alongside the best services that can be afforded for the citizens of Northampton. These changes are being closely monitored.

On the 7th May, as we all know, Northampton held the largest and most complex elections that have ever been held in the Borough with combined Parliamentary, Borough and Parish elections. I would like to congratulate the Elections Team on rising to this challenge, and once again congratulate those who were elected in all these elections.

Finally, Council will also be aware that a new Government was elected on the 7th May. A demanding legislative programme was announced on the 27th May in the Queen's Speech. Bills have been announced which are of particular interest to the Borough Council and I will be working with my Cabinet,, the Chief Executive and colleagues to take the opportunities available from this new legislation as it is enacted.

Councillor Mary Markham  
**Leader of the Council**