



Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

21st September, 2015

Northampton Town Centre Limited BID

Along with Councillor Hadland I recently met representatives of Northampton Town Centre Limited, the Business Improvement District, to hear their proposal to ballot business ratepayers on a further 5-years for the BID to deliver improvements in the Town Centre. I congratulate the BID on their work over the last 5 years and wish them the best in the ballot, which closes on the 29th October at 5pm.

Town Centre activity

The Council is supporting the town centre in many ways. Summer activities in the Market Square, including the much-loved Beach, and the 'Love Northampton – Let's Keep it Clean' campaign have taken place and been well supported. Alongside these, the Council has marketed the Greyfriars site development opportunity and is getting a lot of interest from potential development partners.

Local Plan update

Cabinet has initiated the process to carry out a review of the Local Plan, and has agreed as part of this process to engage an Advisory Committee of 5 Councillors to work with the Cabinet Member responsible, Councillor Hadland.

Universal Credit

The Council has been informed that Universal Credit will be implemented in Northampton from the 23rd November 2015 for new single claimants. Discussions are underway between officers and the DWP with regard to working together on its implementation and on information for the public.

Northampton Landlords Forum

On the 28th July, I met, along with Councillor Hibbert, private landlords at the Northampton Landlords Forum. Very useful discussion took place on the Council's proposal to develop a social lettings agency and also with regard to the Council's current work with landlords. It was a useful and productive meeting and I look forward to further discussions as we work with landlords to improve and enhance private sector rented housing in the Town.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation is a significant issue across the country and it is important that all Councils are prepared and able to play their part in combatting and preventing this activity. There is an active programme of work between the County Council, Police and other agencies including District Councils. I am pleased to report that the Borough Council is hosting a countywide working conference of officers from District and Borough Councils later this month to further develop good practice in this important area.

Commemorations

Thank you to all the members who attended the Service marking Victory over Japan (VJ) Day in August at Holy Sepulchre. Planning is now underway for Remembrance Sunday on the 8th September, working with the Royal British Legion and for observing the Silence at 11am on the 11th at the Memorial on Wood Hill. I would encourage all members to support the Poppy Appeal as always.

I am also pleased to report that the Royal British Legion are once again planning to hold a Parade on Armed Forces Day (25th June 2016) which the Council will be happy to support as in 2015.

The Council is also hosting a ceremony at which veterans from Northamptonshire who were part of the Arctic Convoys will be awarded the Ushakov Medal in honour of their service.

Councillor Mary Markham
Leader of the Council