



Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 25 January 2016

Town Centre

Northampton Town Centre was much busier in December 2015 than the same month the previous year.

Footfall was up more than 22 per cent, from 1,249,511 visitors in December 2014 to 1,526,974, with a full calendar year increase of 2.6 per cent, from 14,476,969 to 14,859,519.

And free parking has continued to have a positive effect, with a December increase from 229,813 to 247,986 – up 7.9 per cent.

This has helped provide a 10.7 per cent increase between April and December – 1,788,434 up to 1,980,823 – not taking into account the surface car parks, for which parking figures are not recorded.

The new pay on foot parking operations in St Michaels & St Johns MSCP's have been well received by customers and have enhanced the Council's service provisions with credit / debit card usage growing month on month.

The refurbishment works to the lift L7 in the Grosvenor Centre car park was placed on hold during the Christmas period to support the shoppers using the car park but works have recommenced and will be complete in early March.

The replacement programme of 20 surface car park payment machines has commenced and will be complete by early March. 15 new machines will offer customers credit / debit card payment options which will enhance the customer offer.

Planning

N/2013/1035 and N/2013/1063 – Northampton South SUE (Collingtree) – The public inquiry for the appeals took place between 1st and 18th of December, a decision will be due by early summer.

N/2015/0333 – A planning application for a new Aldi store together with residential development on the former Chronicle and Echo site was approved in principle by the Planning Committee on 17th December, subject to a S106 agreement to secure necessary planning obligations.

N/2015/1454 – A full planning application for the redevelopment of the former St Crispin's hospital buildings for 235 new houses and apartments has just been received by the Council.

N/2015/1474 – A planning application for the extension of the existing BMW unit (14,000 m2 floor space) at Pineham has just been received by the Council.

N/2015/0738 – A planning application for the conversion of Newspaper House at Derngate for 64 apartments was approved by the Planning Committee on 17th December.

Duston Neighbourhood Plan – the Neighbourhood Plan was made at Council on 14 December 2015. It now forms part of the Development Plan, meaning that it is a material consideration when deciding planning applications.

Regeneration

The purchase of the Guildhall Road County Hall block has been completed

The former NBC premises in Fish Street have been marketed, and a sale agreed

Lake View site – the site has now been acquired and will be used for sheltered housing accommodation. An application for the demolition of the existing buildings has recently been submitted.

Greyfriars – 3 bidders have been shortlisted. The successful parties will submit final proposals by the end of March. Public Consultation will then be undertaken before Cabinet make a final decision.

Sixfields Development Site– Work is continuing re surveying the land for potential development; predominantly surrounding the level of remediation required to bring forward development.

St Giles St – We are working towards a start on site in February. Full consultation with businesses has been undertaken and a Liaison Group has been formed with them. It met for the first time on 11th January and will meet fortnightly throughout the works. In addition an officer will be keeping in daily contact with those affected.

We are keen to ensure all the town's main shopping areas are improved and following on the success of St. Giles Street, a meeting is being held with owners of buildings in Gold Street to look at the potential of using the Business Incentive Scheme to improve the appearance of some of the buildings in this important gateway to the Town Centre.

We have recently written to the owners of St. Edmund's Hospital site outlining their responsibility for making some of the buildings more secure.

Councillor Tim Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning