

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny

Report of Scrutiny Panel 2 – Pre-decision Scrutiny – Museum Trust

Draft Version 3

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to undertake pre-decision Scrutiny - Scrutiny of the establishment of the Museum Trust to ensure the best outcome for the future of the Museum Service and Cultural Quarter. A copy of the Scope of the Review is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to notify Cabinet on the outcome of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel that undertook the above pre-decision work in response to the decision by Cabinet to consider Trust Status for Northampton's Museums.

2 Context and Background

- 2.1 The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Museums had advised the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programming event in March 2016 that work was underway regarding investigating the feasibility and benefits of establishing a Museum Trust. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to include a review of Museum Trust (Pre-decision Scrutiny) in its Work Programme 2016/2017 and commissioned Scrutiny Panel 2 to undertake the review. A short, sharp review commenced in May 2016 and concluded in July 2016.
- 2.2 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly corporate priority 1 – Northampton Alive - A vibrant town for now and the future.
- 2.3 Membership of the Scrutiny Panel comprised Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair); Councillor Sally Beardsworth (Deputy Chair); Councillors Jane Birch, Arthur McCutcheon, Samuel Shaw and Brian Sargeant.
- 2.4 The Scrutiny Panel established that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities:

Background data, including:

- Presentation to set the scene
- Relevant Legislation
- Relevant data

2.5 A series of meetings were held that provided key information to the Scrutiny Panel.

2.6 The purpose of the meetings was to:

- Help non-Executives understand the process of establishing a Museum Trust and the legal framework around the establishment of a Museum Trust.
- Enable non-Executives to meaningfully challenge the rigour and robustness of the proposed process

3

Conclusions and Key Findings

3.1 The findings from this pre-decision Scrutiny activity are detailed at Appendix B and are presented in the form of a comprehensive set of questions and answers.

4

Recommendations

4.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to undertake pre-decision Scrutiny - Scrutiny of the feasibility of establishing a Museum Trust to ensure the best outcome for the future of the Museum Service and Cultural Quarter. Scrutiny Panel 2 therefore recommends to Cabinet that:

4.1.1 Cabinet considers the findings of the Scrutiny Panel, attached at Appendix B.

4.1.2 Cabinet notes that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is satisfied that further investigation into the establishment of a Museum Trust including a full options appraisal will ensure the best outcome for the future of the Museum Service and Cultural Quarter.

4.1.3 Cabinet notes that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is satisfied that the commissioning of detailed planning including a full business plan and a 5 – 10 year financial plan should be undertaken to establish a Museum Trust.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4.1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the outcome of the feasibility report, and should the museum move to trust status that the Committee also monitor the impact on the Museum Trust after it has been in existence for six months.