

## **MINUTES**

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 19 June 2017 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

**PRESENT:** HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR Councillor G Eales (in the Chair).

**COUNCILLORS:** Ansell, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Caswell, Chunga, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Gowen, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, M Hill, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, M Markham, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Smith, Stone and Walker

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Eldred declared a personal non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of Northampton Town Football in the Community Charity.

### **2. MINUTES.**

The minutes of the Council meetings held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April and the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

### **3. APOLOGIES.**

Apologies were received from Councillors Malpas, Marriott, Cali, Choudary, McCutcheon and Kilby-Shaw.

### **4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Mayor announced that he had attended many events since his appointment in May 2017 including a garden party held by the Queen at Buckingham Palace and the Northampton Carnival in the beginning of June. The Mayor announced that sadly, there had been several vigils held to remember those recently killed in the terrorist attacks, both in Manchester and London and to remember those who had perished and been affected by the Grenfell fire.

The Mayor further reported that his Mayoral Northampton Facebook Page increased from just over 400 'likes' to near 1,100. The Mayor also noted that Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2017 would be Armed Forces Day noting that all members should have received an invite and also noted that Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July would be the Civic and Charity Sunday at All Saints Church and encouraged Councillors to attend.

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS**

Mr Martin Price addressed Council and spoke as a member of Northampton 'Men with Sheds' and explained that it was a movement had been established 10 years ago to offer friendship and companionship with other mature gentlemen (and women) running workshops and craft activities. He noted that the organisation ran on

donations and thanked Councillors who had donated through their Councillor Empowerment Fund. It was explained that 40% of over 65's lived alone and that loneliness impacted on people mentally and physically and that 'shedders' worked together within communities and stated that he would like to continue to work with the Council in partnership with Age UK.

Mr Tony Mallard spoke as the Chair of the Residents Association and commented that the recent electioneering campaigns had seen Councillors engaging with local residents but that since then, there seemed to be a lack of communication with Members and commented that some did not respond to phone calls and/or emails and further commented that elected Members were there to serve the community.

Ms Nua Zantah addressed Council and explained that she was from Syria and had lived there from birth, but due to the recent conflict she had travelled and studied in various countries and had been granted residency in the UK. She encouraged the Council to support refugee week which was referenced in Motion ii) and hoped that there would be cross party support for it.

## **6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Mayor advised that 7 questions had been received from Councillors and members of the public and that the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions and answers were given as tabled (included in an updated agenda on the Council's website) unless were stated, supplementary questions were asked as detailed below:

In response to a supplementary questions asked relating to question 1) Councillor Hadland stated that the £7.592m spent on the bus station was the final capital expenditure, which included the cost of the roof.

In response to a supplementary questions asked relating to question 2) Councillor King stated that final design work was being carried out and would be available for public viewing in the near future and that the final date would be known once all necessary tests were completed.

In response to a supplementary question asked relating to question 3) Councillor King stated that there was no commitment to go to phase 2 of the museum project and additional expenditure for future phases would be funded from external pots and fund raising.

In response to a supplementary questions asked relating to question 5) Councillor Nunn stated that the work towards a mutually satisfactory conclusion but that there had been a lack of capacity to prioritise the issue any further.

In response to question 6) Councillor Hibbert confirmed that he concurred with the figures relating to the Homeless Accommodation Charges in the first 2 months of the financial year.

## **7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS**

Councillor Nunn, Leader of the Council, submitted a report and elaborated thereon and noted that there had been a permanent appointment to the position of Governance and Risk Manager who would ensure the Governance Action Plan would be delivered. He reported that there had been cross Council workings with Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire to ensure that infrastructure developments across the region could be developed. In response to questions asked, Councillor Nunn stated that a meeting had been arranged with residents and members of Friends of Delapre Abbey (FoDA) on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017. He further explained that since the recent insurance pay-out for an accident in 2002 he had been assured by the Leisure Trust Manager that lessons had been learned and process put in place to ensure that anything similar could be avoided in the future.

Councillor Larratt submitted his Cabinet Member report and noted that the Markets Advisory Group were to meet on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2017. It was noted that meeting of officers and members working group had recently taken place and priority remained to establish a complete and accurate register of NBC/NPH) owned street lights and progress in the area was being made. In response to questions asked Councillor Larratt confirmed that Councillor Training could include procurement processes. He also noted that he would look at putting a training programme on to look at achieving a 'dementia friendly' Town. Responding to a further question, Councillor Larratt confirmed that consultation with Market Traders would happen prior to any reconfiguration of the Market and that the funding was already in place.

Councillor Hibbert submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon and recognised the work that was done by 'Men with Sheds'. He updated Council on the refurbishment that was being undertaken at Eleanore House and further noted the high number of referrals made from the nightshelter to assist with housing needs. In response to questions asked, Councillor Hibbert commented that following the Grenfell fire, NPH would be sending out letters to residents and confirmed that he was confident that there were enough procedures in place to ensure that major incidents could be dealt with effectively and efficiently.

Councillor King submitted her Cabinet Member report and noted that she had attended the Domestic Violence Homicide event held at the Guildhall. She further reported that the consultation on the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for the Marble Arch area was still open should anyone wish to make comments or representations. She also noted the 32 projects and organisations that had been allocated funding through the Councillor Community Fund. In response to questions asked, Councillor King stated that she would look at initiatives with the Police to prevent illegal motorcycling, which had recently resulted in a 3 year old child being seriously injured. Responding to further questions, Councillor King reported that there had been over 60 delegates at the IDAHO event and that the feedback had been received but not yet put into a meaningful format. She further reported the presentation of information relating to Community Safety and Crime would be looked at and that there would be a new phase of CCTV introduced in the future which is anticipated would help reduce and deter shoplifting from shops.

Councillor Hallam submitted his Cabinet Member report and noted that the Environmental Enforcement report was due to go to Cabinet in June 2017 and in response to questions asked confirmed that the Kettering Road and the Wellingborough Road would be cleaned. He further confirmed that officers had worked hard to move on the travellers that were in Kingsthorpe.

At this juncture of the meeting, the Mayor informed Council that the allocated time had been met and no further Cabinet Member reports would be heard.

## **8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS**

Councillor Stone stated that there were numerous broken promises made by the Administration and very little had been delivered from their manifesto. She commented that there was a need for a mechanism to be put in place to ensure there was transparency with work that had been achieved and what was outstanding and noted that whilst senior officers were distracted by Sixfields, there were a number of motions that had been passed by the Council that had not been actioned; a time frame was needed to allow Councillors to monitor progress and that a commitment was needed to ensure the integrity of motions.

Councillor Nunn, in response commented that he agreed that more could be done to improve the progress of Motions but suggested that the Council meeting was not an appropriate forum to discuss the matter and that it would have been better to use the opportunity to debate something meaningful.

Councillor Stone concurred that debating could be improved; she asked that information be supplied after council meetings on what advice/processes were in place for implementing requests made through motions.

## **9. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Councillor Nunn proposed a report to approve the draft revised Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, which had been approved by Cabinet on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the draft Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure that is appended to the Cabinet report be approved;
2. That authority be delegated to the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to include the details of the external whistleblowing hotline provider in the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure approved by Full Council once a provider has been appointed, and to make any other necessary minor amendments to the Policy and Procedure, prior to its publication; and
3. That the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer be instructed to ensure that training is provided to Councillors and Council staff about the new

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, alongside a campaign to raise awareness of whistleblowing arrangements.

## **10. NOTICES OF MOTION**

i) Councillor Davenport proposed and Councillor Ashraf seconded:

“This Council welcomes the 30th Anniversary of the Call Care Service which was set up in 1987.

The Call Care system is operated 365 days a year and 24 hours a day and responds to hundreds of daily alarm calls from sheltered housing tenants. It allows vulnerable people to live life independently but can obtain assistance when needed.

This Council asks the Chief Executive to write to the Call Care staff to pass on our congratulations for their work and our acknowledgement of this important milestone.

This Council hopes to see the Call Care System to be in place for another 30 years”.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried

ii) Councillor Birch proposed and Councillor Russell seconded:

“This Council notes Refugee Week on 19 - 25 June 2017.

Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities.

This Council hopes refugee week is a great success across the UK.

This Council asks the relevant Cabinet Member to look at how Northampton can play a part in refugee week next year”.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried

## **11. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.**

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 8.11pm