



Deputy Leader of the Council
Northampton Borough Council
Monday 18 September 2017

As Deputy Leader of the Council, I have been continuing to support the Leader and Cabinet colleagues across a variety of areas within the council, and can report on some of my specific responsibilities as below.

Market

Since the last meeting of the Market Advisory Group on 27th June when Traders were given plans of the Market layout as it currently exists and were asked to come up with their suggestions for its reconfiguration, a Steering Group has met twice to progress matters. All Traders were offered the opportunity of joining the Group.

At the first meeting of the Group, that unfortunately was not well attended, the reconfiguration was discussed. No suggestions for the reconfiguration had been received from Traders despite having issued them with plans to draw up their suggestions. The reconfiguration was also mentioned in a Newsletter to Traders asking them for views and ideas.

Since the consultation commenced we had also received a Healthcheck Report we commissioned through the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA). This report has been sent to all Traders, and will be discussed in further detail at the next MAG meeting in October on a date to be confirmed.

The report is critical of the narrow covered aisle towards the east of the market, and recognises the need to improve the presentation of the market by removing regularly empty stalls. The Steering Group therefore considered and agreed a plan to remove eight stalls adjacent to the covered aisle so that the aisle can be widened and the cover removed. Work to deliver this wider and uncovered aisle is due to commence during week commencing 11/09/17.

More stalls really need to be removed to reduce the number of regularly empty stalls, but it would be preferable to try and increase the number of Traders operating on our Market by creating more prime stalls on a second main aisle. If the reconfiguration doesn't improve occupancy rates, we may have to revisit the matter of removing further stalls.

When the new configuration has been implemented, the new covers will be installed throughout the market. As previously reported, this is something that has been budgeted for in the current financial year.

As previously reported, Traders are very keen to modernise and have lock up stalls / units. The second meeting of the Steering Group, attended by Planning Officers, started to investigate the possibility of this. However, such stalls / units would have to be budgeted for in a future year.

Councillor Training

Councillor Development and Briefing Sessions already scheduled are as follows:

- **19/09/17 – Mechanics of Twitter** open to all Councillors. Two identical 1 hour sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Communications Team.
- **20/09/17 - Safeguarding Refresher** open to all Councillors. Two identical 2 hour sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Head of Housing & Wellbeing.
- **27/10/17 – Councillor Drop in Session - Setting up a Twitter Account** open to all Councillors. From 3.00 pm to 5.30 pm. To be delivered by the Communications Team.
- **30/10/17 - Councillor Briefing Session - Social Lettings Agency** open to all Councillors. Two identical sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Head of Housing & Wellbeing.
- **07/11/17 – Councillor Briefing Session - S106 and CIL** open to all Councillors. Two identical sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Head of Planning.
- **12/02/18 – Data Protection Training** open to all Councillors. Two identical sessions, one at 2.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Senior Information Governance Officer.

Further details regarding these sessions can be obtained from Tracy Tiff.

Members are asked to register to attend these events with Tracy Tiff as soon as possible.

A further event, Personal Safety and Conflict Management for Councillors, is in the process of being arranged and the details will be communicated as soon as they are available.

The following will be included in the Councillor Development Plan 2017/18 and are still to be arranged:

- A briefing on FGM
- A briefing on Benefits, particularly Housing Benefits

First Aid Training is being offered to Councillors as and when spaces become available on courses.

Training proposed by the Standards Committee will also be arranged.

Specific Training will be arranged for Members of the Audit, Planning and Licencing Committees as required.

Scrutiny

The Working Group taking forward the outcome of the Match Day Parking Scrutiny Review is now up and running and has met twice.

Cabinet considered a report on Air Quality on 13th September 2017 taking forward some of the outcomes / recommendations of the Scrutiny Review - Emissions Strategy.

Web Casting

We are continuing to procure the equipment and services required to enable the Web Casting of Council and Committee Meetings with quotes being obtained.

Updating the audio visual equipment in the Council Chamber at the same time will make the facility more suitable for hiring out the venue to others for meetings etc. This will hopefully generate more income for the Council.

We still want to be able to start Web Casting either late in 2017 or early 2018.

Street Lighting

Cabinet considered a report regarding this Council taking on responsibility for those lights that Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) currently maintain that are not on their land or do not meet their lighting criteria within the Borough. Most of these lights are in our Park & Open Spaces and Housing Areas and on certain footpaths.

Once it has been resolved to take on some or all of the lights in question, a report will be commissioned to survey all of the NBC owned street lighting to include repairs required, lights which could be removed or improved, an options appraisal, energy saving solutions and invest to save opportunities.

The Working Group will continue to oversee progress and the delivery of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel.

The Officer / Member Working Group met on 7th August. Notes of the meeting are available.

The meeting had an update on the completion of the installation of the heritage lighting on St Giles Square, George Row, Mercers Row, Wood Hill and Fish Street. The heritage heads for the installed heritage columns will soon be fitted.

It remains our priority to establish a complete and accurate asset register of NBC / NPH owned street lights. This work is nearing completion. When completed all lighting columns will be plotted on a map of the Borough in preparation for them to be added to our interactive mapping service

The Working Group is continuing to pursue the issue of lights on South Bridge. Designs are being considered and costs are being obtained. NCC are happy for NBC to undertake this work, and have suggested that it be done when the bridge is closed for repair and they are prepared to work with us on this.

Joined up Working

Along with Julie Seddon and other NBC personnel, I recently attended a meeting with NCC representatives regarding the cleanliness and maintenance of gateways to Northampton. While NBC and NCC work together to in respect of the primary road network that is the responsibility of the Highways Authority (NCC), there remains a major problem in working with Highways England with regard to the A45. To try and improve this situation and secure a better standard of maintenance of the A45 through the Borough, with NCC and through two of our MP's, we hope to arrange a meeting with Highways England in the not too distant future.

Councillor Phil Larratt

Deputy Leader of the Council