



Cabinet Member Report for Deputy Leader

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 11 December 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

A meeting of the Market Advisory Group (MAG) was held on 22nd November 2017. Unfortunately only one trader was present with his partner. The Chair and an employee of a trader were also present. I was very disappointed at the attendance by traders and have since written to them all to try and find out why it was so poor. I'm also seeking the trader's views on the format of the MAG going forward, especially in light of the recommendations in the Healthcheck Report we commissioned through the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) in May 2017. Responses are slowly coming in.

I have met with officers about the anti-social behaviour and other activities that appear to be occurring on the market in the evenings. Consideration is being given to ways of tackling this.

Councillor Training

The Councillor Development Group met on 2nd November. Minutes are available.

There was a presentation from the Data Protection Officer regarding the future requirements of the Data Protection Act (DPA). The data Protection Officer went on to provide details of caseworker.gov, a Councillor case management system that would meet the DPA requirements. The Group agreed:

1. That the Working Group gives its support to all 45 Borough Councillors being registered with the Information Commissioners Office.
2. That a presentation on caseworker.gov is given to all Members on 30 November 2017. Two identical sessions would be given. Within the sessions information regarding the principles of a potential in-house system would also be given.
3. That 15 Councillors (proportionally cross party) trial the preferred Councillor case management system; evaluate it and encourage other Councillors to participate.

Two systems were presented to Councillors on 30th November 2017 and Members scoring of the systems presented are currently being analysed, although it appears that the caseworker.gov system was clearly Members preferred option. Once the analysis is complete the chosen system will be procured and the trial will commence.

Councillor Development and Briefing Sessions already scheduled are as follows:

- **12/12/17 – Benefits Briefing** - Open to all Councillors. One session focussing on Housing Benefits and the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme from 6.00 pm to 7.30 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Partnership and Development Officer.

- **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.
- **23/01/18 - Unitary Status Update - Councillor Briefing - Open** to all Councillors. One session 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by the Council's advisors.
- **01/03/18 – Personal Safety Training** – This training is to be delivered by an external trainer. It is limited to 15 Councillors and is already fully booked. Should there be further demand for this training, a further session will be considered.
- **07/03/18 - Universal Credit, Changes to Benefits and Zero Hours Contract Briefing** - 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 Community Law.
- **21/03/18 – Debt and Debt Management** – This training is open to all Councillors. Two identical sessions one at 3.00 pm and one at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room. To be delivered by Northamptonshire Credit Union.
- **27/03/18 – Advanced Safeguarding 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 Head of Housing and Wellbeing.

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 briefing on the Social Lettings Agency will be arranged if there is enough interest / take up.

Efforts are continuing to be made to arrange an information / briefing session regarding FGM. Officers have been in contact with Safeguarding at Northamptonshire County Council about providing this and we are still awaiting their response

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

Web Casting

I have met with the officer working on this to discuss the ongoing procurement of the equipment and services required to enable the Web Casting of Council and Committee Meetings. Various quotes have been received and are currently being evaluated in consultation with a Northamptonshire County Council officer. I expect to see a summary of the quotes in due course.

Street Lighting

The Working Group continues to oversee progress and the delivery of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel. The Officer / Member Working Group is to meet again on 11th December 2017.

We have finally resolved which lights this Council will take over responsibility for from Northamptonshire County Council (NCC). As previously reported, most of these lights are in our Park & Open Spaces and Housing Areas and on certain footpaths / cycle tracks.

On 11th December, the Working Group will give further consideration to the specification of the survey of our complete lighting stock, including the lights we have taken on from NCC. Once the specification has been finalised the work will be tendered.

The installation of the heritage lighting on St Giles Square, George Row, Mercers Row, Wood Hill and Fish Street has now been completed, with the heritage lanterns being installed on 28/11/17. The lights look good and are very fitting in the heritage setting of the town centre.

Now that the transfer of lights from NCC is resolved, we've more or less got a complete and accurate asset register of NBC / NPH owned street lights. There are just a few minor ownership issues remaining to be resolved. All our lighting columns are being plotted on a map of the Borough in preparation for them to be added to our interactive mapping service and being assigned a unique identification / reference number to enable fault reporting.

The Working Group is continuing to pursue the issue of lights on South Bridge. Designs have been seen and we're still waiting to see a drawing as to how they will look on the bridge.

Councillor Phil Larratt

Deputy Leader of the Council