

## MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 5 November 2018 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

**COUNCILLORS:** Malpas, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Cali, Choudary, Chunga, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Smith, Stone and Walker

### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

### 2. MINUTES.

With the inclusion of Councillor Malpas being present, the minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018 were agreed.

### 3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Ashraf, Caswell, Duffy, Graystone, Kilbride, M Markham, Marriot, Sargeant and Kilby-Shaw.

Councillor Russell commented the resignation of Councillor Culbard was due to ill health and on behalf of the Labour Group, expressed their gratitude and thanks for the work that she had carried out whilst in position.

Councillor Meredith concurred with the comments of Councillor Russell and noted thanks and best wishes to Ms Culbard.

Councillor Nunn gave thanks for the commitment and work that had been undertaken by Ms Culbard and wished her well through her illness.

### 4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor made a statement on his charity the Hope Centre. The Mayor announced that over £2,000 had been raised for MacMillan Cancer and noted the centenary of Armistice Day and urged Members to attend all services taking place on Remembrance Sunday including his event at Abington Park at 2.30pm.

The Mayor announced that the Diwali event that he had attended on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2018 had been hugely successful and thanked the event organisers for their work.

The Mayor further announced that he was delighted to announce that Northampton

received a Gold Award at the East Midlands in Bloom awards. He thanked the officers and community groups who had contributed to the success.

## **5. HONORARY RECORDER - JUDGE MAYO INDUCTION**

Councillor Nunn explained that the appointment as Honorary Recorder was in the interest of maintaining the close ties between the Civil authorities and the Courts.

His Honour Rupert Mayo thanked the Council and urged the continuation of the appointment to ensure successive Honorary Recorders be appointed in the future.

### **RESOLVED:**

That in pursuance of the statutory powers derived from the Court Acts 1971 and the Local Government Act 197, His Honour Rupert Mayo is appointed Honorary Recorder of the Borough of Northampton.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS**

Mr Raymond Overall addressed Council and questioned the winding up of the Markets Advisory Group's former composition. He commented that he had been the Chair since its inception and considered the administration to have failed Northampton Markets and the traders. He stated that the Markets Advisory Group had degenerated but reported that this was due to a lack of action from the Council and poor management.

Mr John Dickie commented that he had a number of concerns about the proposal to give more power and responsibilities to Parish Councils, with the Community Governance Review. He noted that he was concerned that there could be potential financial inequalities between parishes and suggested that some parishes were already mounting a 'land-grab' and noted that council tax should be spent on all of the residents.

Mr Tony Mallard commented that recent news articles had highlighted the treatment of patients with autism and learning difficulties who had been subjected to abuse. He stated that there were numerous instances of patients being detained and abused in secure hospitals, known as Assessment and Treatment Units (ATUs) which the NHS had reportedly spent £470 million on and asked whether there was anything within the power of the Council to highlight the issue and plight of the patients.

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

The Mayor advised that 10 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 where stated, supplementary questions were asked as

detailed below.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 1, Councillor Hibbert stated that he would look into the viability of modular homes.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 2, Councillor Hibbert stated the Council had signed up to a motion to explore the housing of homeless vulnerable women.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 3, Councillor Hallam stated that he would ensure that the 'friends' and community groups would be kept updated.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 4, Councillor Hadland explained that it was unfortunate that repairs on the Queen Eleanor Cross had been delayed but that this was due to extensive work that had been recommended following investigations carried out by structural engineers.

## **8. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS**

Councillor Nunn, as the Leader of the Council submitted his report and elaborated thereon. He explained that he had continued to work with other Chief Executives and Council Leaders of all councils in preparation for the Unitary Councils.

In response to questions asked Councillor Nunn stated that the shadow board would be a balance of political representation but that it was unknown at the current stage what the composition would be and who would be in the Cabinet. He explained that he had attended a trip to China in order to build relations and considered it a positive trip which encouraged the celebration of Chinese customs. Responding to a further question, Councillor Nunn explained that he would pass on relevant information with regards to the £70,000 community partnership fund that was given to Cabinet. He responded to further questions by explaining that the Air Quality Report would be brought back to Cabinet and that this information would be shared and available to Councillors. He confirmed that he would investigate the problems that were present when accessing Abington Memorial Park.

Councillor Larratt, as the Deputy Leader, submitted his report and explained that he had met with officers with regards to Thorplands 81. He responded to public comments noting that the proposed changes to the Markets Advisory Group had already been approved by Cabinet as it had not been effective. It was explained that progress was being made with the street light contractors and reported that there had been a variety of problems with street lights but that bids were being made to the capital budget next year.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Larratt explained that the contractors would not be looking at all of the lights as some were the responsibility of the County Council. Responding to further questions, Councillor Larratt commented that he considered it a necessity for a shelter to be put in place outside the train station for people waiting for taxis and he would look into the installation of a shelter. He further

noted that webcasting would be going ahead but the financial implications were still being considered.

Councillor Hibbert submitted his Cabinet Member report and explained that the rough sleepers count had recently taken place to obtain a snapshot of the numbers of rough sleepers in the Borough and explained that of the 22 males and four females that were found sleeping rough, 19 were already known to the Council's street outreach team. He explained that a report was soon to be taken to Cabinet which would explore the potential to reduce costs of temporary accommodation and noted that the Council had recently granted planning permission for an additional 17 council houses.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Hibbert explained that a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) was in place and would be managed in conjunction with the Hope Centre, which would take place in the event of instances of 'severe weather', which would normally operate when the temperature falls below freezing and forecast to remain below freezing for a period of at least three consecutive nights. It was further explained that various steps were being taken to assist homeless women who were living on the streets and sleeping rough which included the provision of bed and breakfast accommodation once they had been vetted by officers at the Guildhall. Councillor Hibbert explained that 'business' cards had been placed on every desk as they which had information relating to homelessness printed on them. Responding to a further question, Councillor Hibbert commented that he would be happy to remind Northampton Partnership Homes tenants of their obligations, specifically relating to fireworks.

Councillor Hallam submitted his Cabinet Member report and noted how proud he was of the work being carried out by Veolia and IDVerde. He highlighted the response of a reported environmental issue which had been resolved in under two hours.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Hallam commented that the neighbourhood wardens were fully staffed which had strengthened the team. It was explained that a record number of formal notices had been issued in Far Cotton which was as a result of fly-tipping, sending out the message that it would not be tolerated.

At this juncture of the meeting, the Mayor announced that the time limited for Cabinet Member reports had been reached and no further Cabinet Members would elaborate on their reports.

## **9. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS**

The Mayor announced that due to sudden ill health, Councillor Marriott was unable to attend and asked for Council to agree that Opposition Group Business be withdrawn

### **RESOLVED:**

Council agreed to the withdrawal of Opposition Group Business.

## **10. CORPORATE PLAN 2018 - 2020**

Councillor Nunn proposed a report that sought Councils approval of the Corporate Plan 2018-2020 and explained that despite the inevitability of Unitary, it was still essential for the Council to remain focused in order to deliver direction and commitments on behalf of the Administration outlining key strategic priorities and objectives.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

Councillor Stone commented that the corporate plan had not identified areas that really mattered to the electorate. She explained that in some areas of the Borough life expectancy was falling, a contributing factor of which was inequality, specifically poverty. She reported that over 18,000 children in Northampton were living in child poverty which was unacceptable and very little was being done by the Administration to address the issues and no solutions offered and called for the Administration to adopt a poverty strategy.

Councillor Beardsworth stated that she considered there to have been a lack of consultation with members of the public to identify their needs. She commented that despite the Administration committing to having more homes and better homes, the number of people experiencing homelessness had increased. She further questioned the commitment to 'spending money wisely' when there had been no money recovered from the Sixfields loan. She commented that she considered the Corporate Plan to be a good wish list, but questioned whether it was just that: the increase in evictions and a rise in the number of people being housed on temporary accommodation did not demonstrate a commitment to helping those in need.

Councillor Meredith commented that he considered there a need for an increase in funding for the community of allotment holders and asked for funding to be given for the provision of toilet facilities.

### **RESOLVED:**

That Council approved the Corporate Plan for 2018-2020 and that the Chief Executive be authorised to finalise the document and publish this alongside the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

## **11. REORGANISATION OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE ORDER 2018 - HUNSBURY MEADOWS.**

Councillor Larratt proposed a report which sought Councils approval of the Northampton Borough Council (reorganisation of Community Governance) order 2018.

Councillor Oldham seconded the report.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Northampton Borough Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) order 2018 (Appendix 1 of the report) be approved

- 2.1.1 The electoral arrangements for parishes – the ordinary year of election, the size of the council, the number of councillors to be elected and parish warding;
- 2.1.2 Grouping parishes under a common parish council, or de-grouping parishes

## **12. PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Councillor Larratt proposed and elaborated on a report that sought Council to approve amendments to the Council's constitution to reflect changes that have occurred in the Council. He explained that this had been undertaken as part of the Constitution review Working Party (CRWP) and that whilst there were still some additional amendments to be made, the workings of the CRWP, the majority of the Constitution had been updated and would be published on the authorities' website.

Councillor Oldham seconded the report.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the following be agreed:

- 2.1 adopt the Constitution appended to this report at Appendix 1, subject to additional amendments that will be made to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers to incorporate the decisions made by the Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee and the Taxi and General Licensing Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018 regarding the delegated powers of Officers;
- 2.2 delegate to the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer the power to make typographical, numbering and formatting changes and any other minor changes required to the Constitution, and instruct the Borough Secretary to make the additional changes to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers in respect of licensing activities as referred to in recommendation 2.1, prior to publishing the document;
- 2.3 authorise the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to publish the updated Constitution; and
- 2.4 authorise the Constitution Review Working Party ('CRWP') to review changes to the Constitution on an ongoing basis and present any further review to Full Council as appropriate.

## **13. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF THE BOROUGH - POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION AND FURTHER ACTIONS**

Councillor Larratt proposed a report which sought Council's approval of the updated

draft Terms of reference for the Community Governance Review (CGR) and to approve the recommendations made by the Working Group at its meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018. Councillor Larratt explained that he had visited a number of residents associations and parish Council meetings, to communicate and update them on the potential changes.

Councillor Nunn seconded the report and explained that the consultation exercise would empower residents and local people to ensure that they achieved the best for people in their communities.

Councillor Stone commented that the Labour Groups preference had been for a Unitary Northampton but since this had been dismissed as a valid option, it was now essential for residents to be aware of their options and to feed into the consultation. She further commented that it was essential for people to be aware and educated about the potential costs prior to them be able to make an informed contribution.

Councillor B Markham commented that the CGR of Hunsbury Meadows had taken 18 months to complete and questioned how a Review of the whole Borough could be undertaken in the allocated time. He further reported that the proposed timetable was too restrictive and rushed before information about the future of the Borough Councils responsibility, including the Mayoralty functions were known and the potential increases in costs, specifically with additional precepts.

Councillor Golby commented that he fully supported the recommendations and the proposed CGR and cited Duston Parish Council as an example of local political activity and cohesion working exceptionally well.

Councillor Hill concurred with the comments made by Councillor Golby and stated that he considered areas of the Borough that were not parished may have suffered from a disadvantage.

Councillor Beardsworth stated that she considered there to be a lot of inequality with regards to the additional costs in parished areas and considered some areas would not benefit from being parished and urged the Council to commit to resolving and recognise the inequality that parishing may pose.

Councillor Larratt commented that the proposed CGR would allow residents to have an opportunity to feed into proposals that would affect them once the Council had been instructed by Government to move to Unitary and explained that he wanted residents to have a voice and explained that he considered parish councils to be qualified in setting their own precepts as they would have a better understanding of their areas. He further noted that the Milton Keynes in its entirety was covered by parishes. He explained that he was fully in support of the proposal and felt very strongly that residents needed to have their voices heard and considered.

## **RESOLVED:**

That Full Council be recommended to:

- 2.1 approve the updated draft Terms of Reference for the CGR attached as Appendix 1 and delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group the power to make any necessary amendments to the Terms of Reference prior to publication;
- 2.2 approve the recommendations made by the Working Group at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018 and therefore:
  - a) approves the 3 options set out in this Report at paragraph 3.2.6, to go forward for consultation as part of the CGR; and
  - b) delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group power to approve the appointment of appropriate contractors to carry out the consultation element of the CGR on behalf of the Council
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Executive to publish the final Terms of Reference for the CGR and delegates to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group the power to determine the nature, form and methodology of the consultation and authorises the commencement of the CGR consultation.

#### **14. TREASURY MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT**

Councillor Nunn submitted a report which sought Council's approval to accept the recommendations made by the Audit Committee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 to make an amendment to the NBC Treasury Management Strategy.

Councillor Nunn seconded the report.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Council approved the following recommendations made by Audit Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 and amended the Northampton Borough Council Treasury Management Strategy 2018-19 as follows:

- a) approves the use of indirect property funds to achieve a greater income yield for treasury funds; and
- b) approves the investment of up to £8.000M, in one or more indirect property funds and delegates power to the Section 151 Officer, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, and after receipt of advice from Linked Asset Services (the Council's external treasury Management Advisors) with due regard to security and liquidity to approve such investments subject to the limitation that funds to be invested in would be restricted to those that are already utilised by one or more other Local Authorities and are offering in excess of 4% return/yield at the time that the investment is placed.

## 16. NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr Alistair Thompson addressed Council on Motion i) and stated that he agreed with the motion and noted that Northampton, when covered in the news, was not often of a positive nature. He commented that trust in local Councillors and Politician was not high and urged the Council to consider establishing a Councillor led, cross party group to develop a 'Peoples Plan for Northampton'.

- i) Councillor Beardsworth accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor B Markham.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

"The Council recognises that in 18 months' time that responsibility for the regeneration of Northampton Town Centre will pass to the newly formed Unitary Authority.

The Council also recognises that delays implementing regeneration projects in Northampton may occur if the new authority does not have a clear understanding of the stakeholders' vision for Northampton.

Building on the good work of the Business Improvement District and its recent consultation, as well as the work of others, this council agrees to set up a cross party working group, working with a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties to produce a "*Peoples Plan for Northampton*" to enable the new Unitary Council to prioritise projects in its first year. This Council requests that the working group produces its report by September 2019".

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

Mr Martin Sawyer addressed Council and asked for the resignation of Councillor Hadland. He stated that no longer was the Town regenerating, but degenerating and £4 million was spent on the demolition of the former Greyfriars Bus Station, only for it to have become unused. He reported that the administration had failed to deliver any regeneration in the Town centre of late and requested that someone with commitment to regenerating be given the role of Cabinet Member for Regeneration.

- ii) Councillor Beardsworth accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Meredith.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

"The council notes that in spite of the fact that two firms of consultants have been appointed to produce a development scheme without success, the site of the former Greyfriars Bus Station has stood empty since March 2015 and adds to the sense of decline in Northampton Town Centre.

The council notes the appointment of a new consultant to produce a development scheme and calls on the administration to ask this consultant to draw up options for the site to be brought into a temporary use as a matter of urgency for the public's benefit. While accepting that this is an interim measure pending the long-term development of the Greyfriars site, whatever happens in the short term must not be to the detriment of a long term permanent development".

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

- iii) Councillor G Eales accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Stone.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

The technological advancements of recent decades have much in common with the effects of the Industrial Revolution in the latter part of the 18th century. Specifically, both movements accelerated the displacement of workers by machines that could perform tasks faster, more accurately and 24/7. While technology enables business owners to reduce overhead by downsizing their workforce, individuals whose skill sets are now obsolete have limited options for employment if their current jobs are eliminated.

Given that Northampton has a large proportion of warehousing and transport as its employment base, both of which face the introduction of new technology and automation in the near and medium future, this equates to at least 37% of workers in fear of their job.

Working in partnership with other appropriate bodies such as local colleges, the University of Northampton, and relevant industry training bodies and organisations, the council will start to prepare and identify the finances to allow for upskilling of workers. The partnership will assist with;

- Training through employers and other agencies
- Planning for the future to deal with the implications of new technology as it is introduced.
- Organising a Symposium on the future of employment and the local economy with the university and employers.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

- iv) Councillor Birch accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Russell.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

We note with concern the effects of holding commercial events on our town parks resulting in damage to the grass and terrain. The damage to the parkland is taking months to repair and meanwhile our residents are not able to enjoy the full use of these public open spaces.

This Council resolves to introduce a legally binding contract with commercial hirers, including fairs, to ensure the full restoration of the site and land impacted upon by the event, at the expense of the hirer, requiring a deposit to cover the likely cost of this work should it be deemed necessary.

Council also resolves to liaise through Park Management Committee's regarding events in individual parks. As we move towards Unitary status parishes may wish to take on the responsibility of their parks and these issues need to be regularised.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

Mr John Joseph addressed Council on motion v) and explained that he was in attendance as

a representative of the Northampton synagogue. He thanked Councillor King for putting forward the motion especially during a period when there had been an increase in anti-Semitism. He commented that a Holocaust Memorial Day and explained that he considered the Town and its residents to be welcoming of and accepting of all faiths.

v) Councillor King to propose and Councillor Hill to second:

Northampton Borough Council resolves to join with the Government in signing up to the internationally recognised International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance guidelines on antisemitism which define antisemitism thus:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish Community institutions and religious facilities.”

This Council resolves to:

- 1) Acknowledge the importance of tackling anti-Semitism in all its forms, to support the growing Jewish community in our town and across the county.
- 2) Restate its condemnation of all forms of racism in all its manifestations
- 3) Adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism as the working model for challenging and confronting incidents of this form of racism.
- 4) Asks the Executive to look to adopt similarly agreed definitions to confront and challenge all forms of racism and discrimination that exist within our society.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

vi) Councillor Hallam proposed an alteration to his original motion, in consultation with the Borough Secretary. Councillor King seconded the altered motion:

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

There is an increasing number of reports received by Northampton Borough Council (NBC) regarding abandoned shopping trolleys. These are often abandoned in roads, on walkways and in parks, where they have the potential to cause accidents and are an eye sore within the community.

Although many of local supermarkets try to take effective action to prevent the abandonment of shopping trolleys, it is too often the case that they do not act quickly enough on reports received.

This Council, therefore, resolves to investigate whether it ought to use legal powers available to it to more effectively tackle the problem by charging supermarkets a fee for each trolley collected by NBC. This set charge would be solely to recover the cost of collecting a shopping trolley that is found by an NBC authorised officer on ‘any land in the open air’ (including watercourses), and that appears to them to be abandoned. The Council would have to comply with certain statutory procedures in order to set up such a scheme, including a requirement to consult with supermarkets and other shops which offer the use of shopping trolleys to the public. This Council notes that officers will commence the necessary preparatory work with a view to preparing a report for the Executive so that it may make a decision as to whether or not to introduce such a charge throughout the entire Borough and, if so, what amount that charge should be set at.

Abandoned trollies are a real nuisance and NBC is hoping that if such a scheme is created, rather than paying fees, supermarkets will take more responsibility for collecting their trolleys and, consequently, help reduce the number of such incidents.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

The Mayor stated that he had been informed that the proposer of motion vii) did not wish for this motion to be moved. Therefore, as per the constitution, any motion thus set out in the summons be not moved at the meeting either by a Member who gave notice thereof or by some other Member authorised in writing on their behalf it shall, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

vii) Councillor King accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Hibbert:

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“There has been a growing understanding of the positive impact that taking part in the arts can have on health and wellbeing. By supplementing medicine and care, the arts can improve the health of people who experience mental or physical health problems. The arts can improve healthcare environments and benefit staff retention and professional development.

There are many case studies and a wealth of evidence in *Creative Health* report, conducted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, to support three key messages:

- The arts can help keep us well, aid in our recovery and support longer lives better lived.
- The arts can help meet major challenges facing health and social care: ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health.
- The arts can help save money in the health service and social care.

Northampton Borough Council (NBC) expresses its strong support for the report's ten recommendations to increase awareness of how engaging in the arts can bring benefits to health and wellbeing.

This Council notes the recommendation 3 of the report, which encourages all local authorities to designate an individual to take cross-sector responsibility for arts, health and wellbeing.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

**15. 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 10.03pm