

**Council**  
**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement & Safety**

*Safe, clean neighbourhoods for people to live in*

**Community Safety in Partnership**

The Safer Stronger Northampton Partnership continues to develop, showing crime reductions in most categories through effective joint working on priority areas, backed up by clear accountability and performance management. Burglary, robbery and vehicle crime have all been falling recently, and although the violent crime figures remain a worry some of this is due to more active intervention by the police. Anti-social behaviour incidents have decreased since last year, and more referrals than ever are being made to the Anti-social Behaviour Unit hosted by this Council. We have demonstrated that early intervention has been effective in reducing future offending.

The Partnership's progress has been reviewed at the beginning of November by the Home Office/GOEM team which carried out the initial support programme early in 2007. Their report is expected soon, but immediate feedback was very positive. One clear result of strengthened partnership working is the production, for the first time and in advance of national changes, of a truly partnership 'strategic assessment' for community safety on the evidence of which future plans can be soundly based.

*Make Northampton people proud of their parks, open spaces, leisure and cultural heritage*

**Balloon Festival**

A report is due to go to Cabinet on 3<sup>rd</sup> December with the Balloon Festival outturn, data which, in previous years, has not been known. The February 07/08 budget included a profit expectation of £216,000 which required the introduction of an entrance fee, justified by a significantly improved entertainment offer which was well received. Introducing a charge allowed us for the first time to collect some reliable data regarding attendance which will form a baseline to market the festival more effectively next year. The event was affected by poor weather this year, and we recently released approximate figures showing that the festival made a loss of up to £160,000, in lieu of the final figures due in December. We now need to plan how this event can be developed for future years to become a major attraction to the town, whilst no longer being a financial drain on this Council.

A working group has also been established to consider the future of the Festival and the results of public consultation carried out as part of Local Democracy Week in October. The group's recommendations will be included in the report to Cabinet in December.

**Museum Service in Spring Boroughs**

The museum service continues to reach out to Northampton's communities. Of particular note is the short film about Spring Boroughs and its relatively unknown

history, made by young people from that area with no previous experience of film-making. Their passion and professionalism has greatly impressed everyone who has seen the film 'X Marks the Spot', which has already won a well-deserved award.

Brendan Glynane  
November 2007