NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
AREA PARTNERSHIP - NORTHAMPTON EAST (BILLING, ECTON BROOK, LUMBERTUBS AND THORPLANDS)

You are invited to a meeting to be held at the Brookside Community Centre on Wednesday, 18 June 2003 at 7:00 pm.

It is anticipated that the meeting will end no later than 9.00pm

RJB MORRIS
Chief Executive and Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. ELECTION OF CHAIR
3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2003
4. MATTERS ARISING
5. NORTHAMPTON ACADEMY PROPOSAL
6. LOCAL LEISURE - GENERAL DISCUSSION
   • Publicity
   • Police
   • Waste Management
   • Community Centre – Charging
   • Citizens Panel
   • Skate Park
7. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN
8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
9. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING
   16 October 2003, at Brookside Community Centre

A3821
11 February 2003

PRESENT:

Elected Members
Councillor Lee Mason (Chair) Lumbertubs Ward, NBC
Councillor Winston Strachan Billing Ward, NCC
Councillor Michael Boss Thorplands Ward, NBC
Councillor Keith Davies Ecton Brook Ward, NBC
Councillor Mary Davies Billing Ward, NBC
Councillor Margaret Pritchard Billing Ward, NBC
Councillor Mick Young Lumbertubs Division, NCC

Residents’ Representatives
Chris Berridge Rectory Farm Residents’ Association
Rachel McGrath Northampton Ethnic Minority Association
Doreen McKintosh Ecton Brook Residents’ Association
Gwyn Pritchard Storehouse Church (formerly Pilgrim Church)
Sheila Riley Blackthorn Residents’ Association

Residents
Bryn Jones Lings
Hilary Ward

Agency Representatives
Carey Bennet NCC
Roger Buckley Northampton Community Safety Partnership
John Delahunty Head of Health & Community Involvement, NBC
Claire Elsley NCC
John Harvey Assistant Head of Planning (Transportation), NBC
Robin Hodsdon NCC
Simon Mutsaars NCC

1. **APOLOGIES**

   Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Bailey, D Boss, M Hill and L Patterson; N Ajaz, M Baker, A McAuliffe, J Munroe, D Precht, Mrs Ridley, G Salmons and S Scott.

2. **MINUTES**

   Subject to:
   10 October 2002
   - item 5(A) of the meeting held on 10 October being amended to refer to “…the whole town…”
   - clarification of item 6 – the event held in September was not part of the original Regeneration Scheme, and the addition of the words “There were additional
comments relating to the subsequent Scheme.” To the beginning of paragraph 4, 4 November 2002
- Councillor Mason being added to the list of apologies of the meeting held on 4 November,

the minutes of the meetings held on 10 October and 4 November 2002 were agreed.

3. **MATTERS ARISING**

10 October 2002

(A) Regarding item 6 – Evaluation of Regeneration Partnership – S Riley expressed concern at local organisations receiving letters from the County Council requesting the return of unspent Regeneration money. S Mutsaars commented that officers at the County Council were looking into how unspent money could be allocated, but was unaware of the sending of letters to local organisations. **He undertook to look into the situation.**

(B) Regarding item 9 – Cleaner, Greener Northampton – S Riley commented that it was impossible to link up with the Cleaner, Greener campaign while local landscaping was in its current, dangerous state. Councillor K Davies reported that this and other issues would be discussed at the next meeting of the Executive, and a schedule would be drawn up for the necessary work to be carried out. Councillor Pritchard reported that the next Cleaner, Greener Northampton meeting would be held on 27 February 2003, at Brookside Community Centre.

4 November 2002

(C) Concern was expressed at the absence of a list of attendance in the minutes. **J Delahunty apologised for the oversight and confirmed the expectation that the list would appear.**

(D) Regarding item 29/02 – Devolved Budget 2002/03 – members asked questions regarding the criteria used for applications. M Mutsaars reported that Northamptonshire County Council’s policy was that funds would not be awarded to groups for the promotion of a particular religion. R McGrath commented that it was wrong to consider applications from Asian groups as being from Hindu, Muslim or Sikh groups, and Councillor Pritchard commented that Spencer Contact was a Christian organisation that helps that whole community. **S Mutsaars undertook to seek clarification so that it could be added into the process.**

4. **LOCAL ISSUES – GENERAL DISCUSSION.**

(A) S Riley made a number of general commented regarding meetings of the Area Partnership, namely that it had been a long time since the last meeting, the day of the week on which meetings are held keeps changing, and the agendas were too long. J Delahunty commented that there needed to be a balance struck between having time to carry out work between meetings and having meetings too far apart, which results in more items on agendas. If the Partnerships became successful more people would want to bring items to meetings.

(B) C Berridge expressed concern at the number of abandoned shopping trolleys in the area and enquired as to whether pressure could be put on Tesco’s to reinstate
the deposit scheme. **J Delahunty undertook to send a letter on behalf of the Partnership.** Councillor K Davies commented that enforcement could be considered if the situation did not change.

(C) D McKintosh expressed concern at the proposed increase in charges for the use of County and Borough Council community centres, commenting that the implications of such increases would be far-reaching, in some cases deciding the success or failure of centres. She added that local organisations might find themselves in a position where they would need to apply for funding to pay the increased charges. C Bennet reported that these issues were being actively discussed by the Review Team, and, with regard to school facilities, assured members that Head Teachers and Governing Bodies would be encouraged to keep charges to a reasonable level. Councillor K Davies reported that the Borough Council would be going out to consultation regarding the Borough Council-managed centres. He added that the Borough Council also needed to address the issue of having to pay for caretaking when some centres had large sums of money in the bank.

(D) D McKintosh asked whether improvements would ever be made to pavements etc in the Weston Favell area. J Delahunty reported that the Academy development would require certain improvement works. Vehicular access was being considered, as were areas that would experience increased footfall. He added that, although the current conditions were not ideal, they were more acceptable that those in other parts of the Town. Councillor Young commented that this had been an issue for some time, adding that the County Council would be spending an additional £5m on roads, cycle paths and foot paths, making better use of what was already there and making improvements to the environment. He commented that the Academy development would involve a large area of land, and discussion would be held as to the best use of it. The County Council was committed to doing all it could to make the bid a success.

5. **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET 2003/04**

Councillor Young reported that much hard work had gone into the preparation of the coming year’s Revenue Budget, and considerable improvements had been made to the Council’s position, with a £63m increase in expenditure.

Government changes to the funding of Education and the funding formula for local authorities had meant that the County Council had benefited, but had now hit a ceiling, being £11m worse off than the formulas suggests (the worst-affected council in the Country).

An extra £35m would go into the schools block and delegated budgets would be increased by 11% (1.6% in real terms).

There were a number of uncertainties in the area of Children’s Services because of the need to check local arrangements in light of the recommendations of the report of the Climbie Inquiry.

The County Council will be retaining 6 country parks and 10 recycling centres, and
more money will be allocated to Scrutiny in response to having a statutory obligation to scrutinise Health Services in Northamptonshire from April 2003.

There was a commitment to joint Area Partnerships, and the County Council will be improving its partnership working with the Voluntary Sector.

The County Council will also be increasing spending on Community Partnership Grants, for example helping village halls to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

In answer to a question regarding transport to single sex and Church schools, Councillor Young commented that this was not a budget issue. Consultation was currently being carried out and the Cabinet will consider a report on 25 March 2003. It was anticipated that some change in policy would be necessary.

6. **NORTHAMPTON ACADEMY PROPOSAL**

J Delahunty reported that the consultation process regarding the Academy proposals was to include those on the distribution list for this Partnership, and include the sending out of 600 questionnaires, telephone interviews and focus groups, among other things. The final report was due to be published at the end of April 2003.

Peter Fair had stated that he would be willing to attend a consultation meeting at Lings Forum, and had also said that he would be happy to attend the next meeting of the Partnership.

S Riley reported that she and C Berridge had attended a consultation meeting and asked questions about access to courses for the community, for example Information Technology. She also commented that the footpaths and lighting in the area needed improvement and that more publicity was needed to keep people informed.

D McKintosh reported that talks had been held regarding forming links between the Federation of Residents’ Associations and the Academy. Such links would be mutually beneficial.

Councillor Young commented that, regarding community use and involvement, schools were probably the most under-used public-funded resource of all. While it was difficult to change this in existing schools, this was an opportunity to have a different arrangement.

He added that the issue of the land and the future of Lings Forum would need to be resolved if the Academy was to open on time.

There would be a model of the proposals available by the Summer, which would be used as effectively as possible, for example special exhibitions.

Councillor Young added that the model could be brought to the next meeting and the architects invited to attend if members so wished.
Councillor K Davies commented that public access to Billing Brook was another issue that needed to be addressed, as was the need to encourage the walk to school, which would necessitate the improvement of lighting and footpaths.

Members raised the following points:

- Was consideration being given to ensuring that access to the facility would not depend on one person being willing to grant access?
- Could Community Safety be considered, and Police involvement be sought?
- The facilities needed to be affordable for local people.
- Would the sports field on Lings Way / Birds Hill Walk be affected by the development?

Councillor Young commented that there was a will to ensure that there would be more access to land and facilities than is currently available.

**AGREED:** *That this item be discussed further at the next meeting.*

7. **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL STRUCTURE PLAN REVIEW**

C Elsley presented a report of the review of the County Structure Plan, which sets out strategic policies and general principles for Northamptonshire.

A review was necessary in order to incorporate current information into Regional Planning Guidance.

Some of the many issues being looked at include the role of towns and rural areas, jobs and the future of employment and the quality of the environment. The Review was moving away from the current document towards a document that looks at how communities work. It was about striking a balance between the general and the specific.

8. **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENFORCEMENT OF PARKING CONTROLS**

R Hodsdon submitted a report as part of the County Council’s consultation process.

He reported that, currently, Northampton Borough Council carried out the parking enforcement function for Northampton on an agency basis, and report discussed rolling the enforcement arrangement out to the rest of the County.

It was hoped that as much of Northampton’s infrastructure as possible would be used in order to avoid duplication and waste of resources.

Consultation was an important part of the process and would involve Area Partnerships, Parish Councils and the Public.

A report will be submitted to the Cabinet in May 2003 which will give details of the
results of the consultation and outline proposals, which, when approved will be sent to the Secretary of State for confirmation.

If all went well, the Scheme would be implemented in July 2004. The implementation cost of £350,000 would be met by the Local Transport Plan, and any excess raised would be ring-fenced, to be spent on the improvement of transport services.

Councillor Young added that excess monies will be spent in the borough / district in which they were raised. They will not be allocated to other parts of the County.

J Harvey reported that the Scheme was working well in Northampton and had been nominated for an award. He added that a report would be submitted to the Borough Council’s Executive to get endorsement to negotiate with the County Council.

In response to a question from D McKintosh, J Harvey reported that the Borough Council had written to every school in Northampton asking if they had a problem with parking. Every school wrote back saying that they did have a problem. He added that while parking was prohibited on double yellow lines, drivers could stop to set down and pick up passengers.

C Bennet reported that all schools are in the process of completing their Travel Plans, and it was hoped that schools would look to influencing parents regarding inconsiderate parking.

D McKintosh asked that Ecton Brook Residents’ Association be kept informed of any developments.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(A) D McKintosh asked a question regarding a referendum questionnaire on the subject of Regional Government. Councillor Young reported that the White Paper ‘Your Region, Your Choice’, published last year, discussed the concept of a directly elected Regional Assembly. Such a body would have the final say on issues such as Regional Planning Guidance instead of the Secretary of State. If an elected Regional Assembly was put in place, there would need to be unitary authorities in the area covered. He assured members that if a referendum was held, there would be a great deal of publicity and education beforehand.

(B) R Buckley reported that, although Level 2 meetings had been successful in the past, they were currently in decline. He asked whether members would be happy if Area Partnership meetings could be considered part of the consultative process.

J Delahunty suggested that it might be helpful if the Area Partnership tried this.

S Riley commented on the lack of Police presence at Area Partnership meetings and the low level of representation.

**AGREED:** *That Police Issues be discussed at the next meeting.*
10. **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

   Wednesday 18 June 2003, to begin at 7.00pm.

   The meeting concluded at 2105 hours.