

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL 2 - IMPACT OF THE MOVE OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON**

Thursday, 21 March 2019

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Graham Walker (Chair), Councillor Danielle Stone

CO-OPTED MEMBER: Jane Bunce

Councillor Emma Roberts –
addressed the Scrutiny Panel

Officers Derrick Simpson, Town Centre Manager
Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Birch.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2019 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

4. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESS

Councillor Roberts addressed the Scrutiny Panel and commented that she had previously attended a meeting of the Panel she urged the Panel to consider, when making its recommendations that the same mistakes are not made again. She was pleased that the Police was working with the university and checking vehicle registrations of vehicles that are parked around the University in residential areas. Councillor Roberts commented that she felt that the results of the consultation would make a difference but would push the parking problem further into the ward. Councillor Roberts referred to the problem of taxi pick up/collection and commented on the need to ensure appropriate localities were designated for this. She acknowledged that the University worked hard on this. Councillor Roberts commented that many residents still getting problems such as ASB and parking and there is a need to look at better planning in future e.g. the feasibility of halls that back onto Malt House Close - there is a need to put in something to stop noise travelling.

The Scrutiny Panel made comment, asked questions and heard:

- Things are working better, at start of this Scrutiny review there had been major concerns, as the Review progressed the Panel has noticed changes over a period of time, e.g. residents' meetings at the University. It was suggested that it would be good for University to attend residents' meetings, particularly Far Cotton.
- The University is working to rectify problems.
- Residents from Malthouse Close and Thomas Chapman Drive have concerns regarding noise, take away deliveries being ordered for their house and students not turning up to pick up the take aways and taxis regularly turning up at the address.
- The Flagging of Taxis is within NBC remit and this has been raised with Licensing. Taxi companies have been told to use Becketts Park entrance. It was suggested that Officers should undertake checks in the early hours
- It was felt that a lot of the issues raised should have been looked at before the University was built at the Planning stage.

Councillor Roberts was thanked for her address.

5. REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION RECEIVED TO DATE

The Scrutiny Panel made comment:

- It was concerned there may not have been enough information given to local residents on the impact of the University moving into the town and if the council consulted those residents again more feedback and concerns would be raised. However, we still need to explore what opportunities are available to improve the situation for local residents.
- The Panel supports and commends the University offers of free bursaries for refugees. During Refugee Week the University is hosting a lecture at this offer should be promoted.
- The Panel understands it has been difficult parking for some residents but acknowledges the work the University with respect to improving the situation by funding the works for the residents parking schemes which should be complete towards the end of April / early May 2019.
- The University is looking for a park and ride site on east of town.
- The University now allows students to park on waterside campus overnight at weekends.
- The Panel is concerned about the ASB issues affecting local residents including unauthorised pizza deliveries to one residents home although the University are constantly reminding students of the correct post code to use.
- Late night noise is still a concern and the University has promised that advice will circulated to students on the campus reminding them of their responsibilities especially around late night noise.
- It was noted that local residents should contact NBC and request monitoring equipment to monitor noise levels and report any issues to the council.
- The Panel recommends the Planning process should be reviewed to ensure residents close to proposed large redevelopments are informed fully of the likely

implications from the proposed development and measures are implemented in advance of the developments opening.

- Delapre Abbey Park Management Committee to be put in touch with Research Unit at the University.
- The University would explore what options are available to reduce the noise issues from the student halls located close to Malt House Close. A possible recommendation could incorporate something around the University limiting the opening of the windows of the halls near to Malt House to reduce noise to the neighbouring residents.
- The importance of joined up working was highlighted.
- A recommendation around the undertaking an Economic impact assessment by students of the benefits the University has had on the town centre e.g. supermarkets, coffee shops and footfall and car parking.
- It was noted hospital parking had not been impacted by the move of the University.
- The night time economy has improved since the University has relocated. The Chair congratulated the University on its security in the town centre and for looking after both students and others in the night time.

The Chair advised that the next meeting would consider the final report of the Scrutiny Panel.

The meeting concluded at 18:45 hours