

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



COUNCIL

Monday, 14 January 2019

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, 14 JANUARY 2019 AT 6:30 PM WHEN THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS IS PROPOSED TO BE TRANSACTED

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Council held on Monday, 10 December 2018.

3. APOLOGIES.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Joyce to make a statement on "Being a good employer".

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

- i) Councillor Roberts to propose and Councillor Haque to second:

“Northampton Borough council is committed to being the best employer we can be and to set the standard for other local employers.

We therefore to commit to refreshing our employment procedures to include an updated policy on family friendly working.

It can be hard to balance the needs of family with those of employer but it's in everyone's interests to get the balance right.

There are several family-friendly working options to consider, including parental leave and flexible working arrangements. Flexible working can include working part-time, job sharing, shift working, working school hours, staggering time and working from home.

As an employer we are keen to help staff find the right work/life balance because we want them to be productive and focused on work, getting the best possible outcome for our service users.

Parental leave and flexible working arrangements are two ways to make work more family-friendly.”

ii) Councillor B Markham to propose and Councillor Beardsworth to second:

“In September 2018 this council expressed its concern about the number of new housing developments that were failing to transfer highways facilities or open spaces to the relevant local authority but instead were establishing management companies with no democratic oversight.

In order to protect residents from uncontrolled charges and poor levels of service the council would like to see Highways and open spaces on new estates built to the standard required by local authorities.

The Council therefore requests that the Planning Department introduces a Supplementary Planning Guidance requiring developers to build infrastructure on new developments to local authority standards to facilitate the transfer to the appropriate local authority.

The council also request that consideration is given to introducing appropriate policies to achieve these aims in Part 2 of the local plan that is currently being prepared for submission to a planning inspector.”

iii) Councillor Beardsworth to propose and Councillor Meredith to second:

This Council recognises the importance of retaining good members of staff over the next 15 months to ensure that skilled staff are available to transfer to a new Unitary authority to continue to provide good local government services to the residents of Northampton.

The Council has HR policies and procedures in place but these need to be understood and adhered to to achieve the goal of retaining good members of staff.

The Council recognises that a number of good members of staff left the authority

towards the end of 2018 and their knowledge and skills have been lost to the future Unitary authority.

The Council requests that the Chief Executive reviews the departure of members of staff in the final quarter of 2018 to decide if the current policies and procedures are as strong as they should be and to assess whether Managers, Supervisory staff and Councillors require training to understand their role implementation these policies to ensure that good staff are retained.”

iv) Councillor Stone to propose and Councillor Nunn to second:

“Northampton has a strong and proud history of manufacturing, including its boot and shoe trade and heavy to medium engineering.

Despite the demise of such important companies such as British Timken, Express lifts, Northampton Machinery Co, RHP Bearings and Plessy, we do still have centres of excellence with Cosworth, AMG Powertrain, Churches shoes, Trickers and many others.

This Council is already very pleased to buy products and services from many local companies, and as part of continually seeking to get best value for the local taxpayer, is keen to work with more local companies and employers.

There are now two national campaigns to promote manufacturing, the GMB Union “Making it” and “The Made in Britain” which is run for manufacturers.

This Council therefore recognises both of these campaigns, and agrees to promote their membership to local companies, along with continuing to encourage potential manufacturers to site within the town. The Council will, wherever possible and cost effective, use local suppliers to support the local economy.”

v) Councillor B Markham to propose and Councillor Beardsworth to second:

“The Council is undertaking a Community Governance Review with the intention of establishing two tiers of local government across Northampton when the new Unitary arrangements come into force.

This will constitute a major change to the way that services are delivered to local communities and the level of council tax that households are expected to pay.

This Council therefore expects that in any literature provided to the public, setting out proposed new Parish Council arrangements, will detail the service provision from the new council and clearly state the anticipated Parish Council precept which will be additional to the existing level of council tax.

The Council also requests that any ballot of the public includes the option to be part of a Town wide Council as an interim step towards the longer term development of new two tier local government arrangements across Northampton.”

vi) Councillor King to propose and Councillor Larratt to second:

“The Disability Confident scheme, run by the national government, promotes a disability-inclusive culture among employers across the UK.

The scheme helps employers:

- draw from the widest possible pool of talent
- secure high quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard working
- improve employee morale and commitment by demonstrating that all employees are treated fairly

Disability Confident employers are changing behaviour and cultures within their organisations, networks and communities. Northampton Borough Council is serious about equal opportunities and proud of its proven track record of being an Equal Opportunity employer and, as such, it already carries out numerous actions to make a difference for disabled people. Nevertheless, we are aware this is only a part of a much broader journey.

Therefore, this motion calls on the Council to commit to signing up as Disability Confident Committed and taking the necessary steps to become a Disability Confident Employer, playing an active role in changing attitudes for the better.

Under the Disability Confident scheme, this Council will further commit to carry on learning and strengthening the networks it will need to continue to improve its offer to existing and future disabled employees.”

10. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

George Candler – Chief Executive
The Guildhall
Northampton

Public Participation

1. Comments and Petitions

- 1.1 A member of the public (or an accredited representative of a business ratepayer of the Borough) may make a comment or present a petition on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers. A comment or presentation of a petition shall be for no more than three minutes. No notice of the nature of the comment to be made or of the petition is required except for the need to register to speak by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

(Public comments and petitions will not be taken and the Annual Council Meeting or other civic or ceremonial meetings.)

NOTES

- i. Comments may be on one or more subjects but each person has no longer than three minutes to have their say.*

- ii. *The same person may make a comment and present a petition on different subjects. In such instances that person will have three minutes to make their comment and a separate three minutes to present a petition.*

2. Member and Public Questions

- 2.1 A member of the public (or business ratepayer of the Borough) may ask a maximum of two written questions at each meeting, each limited to a maximum of 50 words, on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers. Each question shall:
- be submitted in writing and delivered, faxed or e-mailed to Democratic Services no later than 10.00am seven calendar days before the day of the meeting; and
 - include the name and address of the questioner and the name of the Cabinet member/Committee Chair to whom the question is put.
- 2.2 At the meeting, copies of all questions and the responses to them from the public and Members will be made available to the public and press. The Mayor may allow one supplementary question, without notice, that arises directly from the original question or response.

(Questions will not be taken at the Annual Council Meeting or at civic or ceremonial meetings or meetings called to deal with specific items of business.)

NOTES

In respect of paragraph 2.1 above, questions may be rejected on certain grounds that are set out on page 4-12 of the Council's Constitution and which may be viewed at www.northampton.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=1919 or by seeking advice using the contact details below.

3. Motions

- 3.1 A member of the public may register to speak to a motion under the 'Notices of Motion' item on the agenda. Registration to speak must be made to Democratic Services by 12 noon on the day to the meeting. Speaking to a motion is restricted to three minutes per person.

(The 'Notices of Motion' item will not be taken at the Annual Council meeting or meetings called for civic or ceremonial purposes.)

4. General

A member of the public may make a comment, present a petition, ask a question or speak to a motion at the same meeting subject to the restrictions set out above.

5. Contacts

Democratic Services: e-mail democraticservices@northampton.gov.uk

Tel 01604 837722

Mail Democratic Services
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton NN1 1DE

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 10 December 2018 AT SIX THIRTY O’CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

COUNCILLORS: Malpas, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Cali, Chunga, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, M Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Kilby-Shaw, Smith, Stone and Walker

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ashraf declared a personal interest as a board member on Northampton Partnership Homes.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 5th November 2018 were agreed

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Meredith, Choudary, Caswell and Graystone.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor welcomed the newly elected Councillor Emma Roberts to the Council.

The Mayor announced that he had recently attended the opening of the Metro Bank on Abington Street and had supported and participated in International Men’s Day.

The Mayor further announced that on the 18th November 2018, he had attended the ‘Road Traffic Victims Day’ which was held at the Holy Sepulchre.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Kilbride for printing the Mayor’s Christmas Cards. He also gave thanks to the work of the Salvation Army in the Kingsley Ward. The Mayor noted that he had visited a number of residential care homes and that he would continue to do so in the run up to Christmas.

The Mayor explained that in conjunction with his Mayoral cause, he invited Mr Stan Robertson to the Council meeting to explain to the Chamber the work that he was doing around the Town for the homeless people in the Town.

Mr Stan Robertson invited 2 young volunteers that he had worked with that had inspired and humbled him in the compassion that they had demonstrated towards

those less fortunate than themselves, especially towards homeless people.

Anya (9) explained that she wanted to help homeless people and wanted to make a wish that every homeless person receive a gift over the Christmas period.

Levi (12, soon to be 13) said that he felt sad that there were many homeless people who did not have a family who would look after them and that he very much wanted every homeless person to be given a gift and some food and also food for their dogs.

Mr Stan Robertson explained that he ran a local project that supplied breakfast for local homeless people every day of the week. He stated that poverty and homelessness was not a problem; a lack of humanity was. He commented that there was a need for people to demonstrate compassion and understanding and to recognise the value of every person regardless of their personal circumstances.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Three Hope Centre users spoke to the Council and explained their positive experiences and the changes that they had been able to make to their lives and their futures and the support that they had received from members of staff at the Hope Centre had greatly improved their lives and given them the opportunity to get off the streets. They each gave one word that they felt represented what the Hope Centre had given them: 'Humanisation', 'Safety' and 'Future'.

A petition was submitted calling on Midland Heart to rescind the eviction notice and honour the commitment to provide a permanent home for the Hope Centre at Oasis House.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that 4 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.

Councillor Hibbert, in response to a supplementary question asked relating to question 2, explained that the resources were in place to support homeless people if a SWEP is issued.

Councillor Hallam, in response to a supplementary question asked relating to question 3, explained that the timetable for the implementation of the low emission strategy was underway and that all the relevant information was available on the website.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

Councillor Nunn, as Leader of the Council submitted his report and elaborated thereon. He explained that the next steps with the Unitary project would be the

critiquing the Structural Change Order and noted that although written by Government, they would champion the interests of Northampton residents. The Leader further explained that he had recently met with the acting Chair of the Hope Centre and that the administration were committed to continuing their support to the service. He noted that there were a number of homeless people who were difficult to reach out to and that in such circumstances, there was a real need for partnership and multi-agency working.

In response to questions asked, the Leader explained that he would meet with the Leader of the opposition and the Chief Executive to discuss information relating to Churches Conservation Trust. He responded to a further question by announcing that the administration were committed to supporting the Hope Centre. The Leader further responded to questions and confirmed that currently the Council were continuing with Unitary and noted that it was anticipated that the elections for May 2019 would be postponed. He explained that the progress on St James Mill link road had been temporarily halted as the related costs had increased considerably due to large amounts of contamination to the land which was not known originally.

Councillor Larratt elaborated on his Cabinet Member report and explained that there was one update which was that a draft report would be presented to Cabinet in the near future on webcasting.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Larratt explained that a report on 'Updated motions' was to come to a future Council once additional details had been included. He commented that he was disappointed to see the recent arson attack on the Market Square of one of the market stalls. In order to attract new traders, he explained that there was a lot of advertising and a social media project. He further noted that should food- stalls be encouraged to the market square and extension in trading hours would be considered. He noted that some market traders would be supporting the 'People's Plan. He confirmed that the current Sunday market would only be in situ until Christmas. Councillor Larratt explained, in response to questions asked, that he would be happy to write to Network Rail asking them to provide some protection to the elements for train passengers waiting outside of the station. He further noted that he would be willing to look at the prospect of supporting local farmers markets once he was fully briefed.

Councillor Eldred submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon, reminding members that the draft budget would be considered at Cabinet on the 12th December 2018. In response to questions asked, he confirmed that the debt collection recovery was 97% and it was anticipated that this would increase. He explained that Universal Credit was a Government decision that had to be implemented. In relation to the homelessness budget, Councillor Eldred explained that there had been a significant increase in spending but considered it a necessity to ensure people did not have to sleep on the streets.

Councillor Hill elaborated on his Cabinet Member report and noted that a planning application for the development of 17 dwellings and retail units at the former Tanners Pub had been approved. He explained that work continued on the production of the Local Plan Part 2.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Hill explained that he would share information about the value and apportion of finances for Section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levies. He explained that in relation to the viability of the percentage of affordable houses, this was assessed independently.

Councillor Hadland elaborated on his report and responding to questions asked, confirmed that the number of new business start-ups that had failed were 2 in the Business Incentive Scheme (BIS). It was noted that the tender documents for Vulcan Works had been reviewed and a report would be submitted to the January 2019 Cabinet meeting.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Hadland stated that the decrease in footfall was on par with the national average and that the Town Centre had become better and cleaner of late. Responding to questions relating to Albion House, it was noted that it had been purchased as a strategic option for the Council. In response to questions asked, Councillor Hadland noted that he was aware of the parking issues near to the University and commented that he, along with the Cabinet Member for Planning would speak to the Ward Councillor about her concerns. He further explained that work on the Eleanor Cross would soon be underway.

Councillor King elaborated on her Cabinet Member report and responded to questions by explaining that the 2 additional Police Officers were being fully funded by the Council and were not being taken away from their duties. She thanked those who had contributed to the successful Christmas light switch on in the Town Centre. Responding to further questions, Councillor King stated that she would explore whether she could acquire information from the police on stop and search figures for a future meeting.

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

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Stone stated that residents were living in increasingly uncertain times with the prospect of the creation of a Unitary Council, Brexit and the introduction of Universal Credit. She reported that homelessness figures had increased both nationally and in Northampton and expressed her concern that it would get worse. She explained that life expectancy had decreased and a direct correlation could be made between that and increasing poverty. She stated that air quality, crime and child poverty in Northampton was falling below the national average and asked that more be done to address the issues in 2019. She noted that the local media had been promoting and questioning the public on ways to improve the town centre. She called for Councillors to join her in requesting local MPs to stop the cuts that are being imposed on local authorities and look to adopt an anti-poverty strategy.

In response, Councillor Nunn commented that there was a need for people to talk up the Town and to be proud of the history and heritage of Northampton. The Leader listed the achievements of the administration in 2018 and spoke of the completed

restructure under the new Chief Executive, a decrease in the number of interims employed, more Council homes being built than under any other previous administration, winning gold in East Midlands in Bloom and improvements to the Drapery. He explained that there were many more achievements that were notable and considered the list to be indicative of a successful and progressive Council.

Councillor Stone stated that there was a lack of recognition of the deep damage that had been done to some residents of Northampton, with a cap on benefits but not on rents, colossal use of foodbanks due to ongoing deprivation and poverty and suggested that the administration look at other Councils such as Liverpool and Salford and their anti-poverty strategy to address the challenges that residents of Northampton faced.

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

Anne Wankiiri addressed motion i) and noted that many BAME women were affected by domestic abuse and that was exacerbated by a number of conflicts such as their immigration status; she explained that many women from African countries were distrusting of the police, due to their experiences of corruption in their countries of origin,) and were therefore not able to access the help that they needed.

Marianne Kimani stated that the difference between domestic abuse of white women and BAME women was that there were many instances of forced marriages, rape within the extended family and honour killings and asked that a working group be established to specifically address such issues.

Maheepjot Kaur commented that whilst there were numerous incidents of domestic abuse, there was a distinct lack of support for the victims. She stated that BAME women could be abused by extended family members and that this was exacerbated by guilt and shame; some women lacked faith in established systems and referred to the financial controls that their abusers had, which forced them to remain in the abusive relationship or face destitution.

i) Councillor Ashraf proposed and Councillor Stone seconded:

“BAME (Black and minority ethnic) women are disadvantaged, economically, socially and politically. They are also subject to increasing levels of domestic slavery and domestic abuse. There is a growing issue with women and their children without recourse to public funds. We know there is an issue with FGM. We therefore call on Northampton borough council to establish a working group with and for BAME women to examine the issues, and with partners, to suggest solutions”.

Council debated the motion.

Upon the requisition for a recorded vote there voted for the motion: Councillors Ashraf, Beardsworth, Birch, Cali, Chunga, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Haque, Joyce, B Markham, Marriot, McCutcheon, Roberts, Russell, Smith and Stone.

There voted against the motion: Councillors Aziz, Bottwood, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Hibbert, Hill, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, M Markham, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel,

Sargeant, Shaw and Walker

There abstained the Mayor.

The motion was lost.

Charlotte Creasy spoke on motion ii) and explained that many young girls were having to improvise with their periods as they were experiencing period poverty. She reported instances of women, and girls, using socks and rags as substitutes for sanitary products. She referred to the 'Red Boxes' explaining that they were used for all experiencing period poverty to access free sanitary products. She further reported that the Red Box project had been very successful in schools and she had continued to support and donate sanitary products to foodbanks and youth clubs and expressed her concern that this was an issue being faced by women.

ii) Councillor Smith proposed and Councillor T Eales seconded:

"Period Poverty has long been recognised as an issue for women with those who can least afford it, suffering the most. There are several national campaigns that aim to support women and make a stand against period poverty such as "Bleeding Insane Campaign" and "Red Box".

We think that is a disgrace that in 2018 anyone should have to choose between buying food and buying Tampons, or that women and girls are missing work or school because they cannot afford sanitary products. The average cost to a women is £4,800 during their life for sanitary products.

We call on the council to become ambassadors and set a great example for other businesses to follow by:

1. Provide free sanitary products in all council work place bathrooms.
2. Establish a red box donation point and join the Red Box Project.
3. Work with our local to communities to raise awareness of this issue"

Council debated the motion.

Upon the requisition for a recorded vote there voted for the motion: Councillors Ashraf, Beardsworth, Birch, Cali, Chunga, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Haque, Joyce, B Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Roberts, Russell, Smith and Stone

There voted against the motion: Councillor Aziz, Bottwood, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Hallam, Hibbert, Hill, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, M Markham, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Sargeant, Shaw and Walker.

There abstained the Mayor.

The motion was lost.

Zoe Tatham addressed Council on motion iii) and explained that refuges had no funding in place and that by 2019 they would need financial support and whilst she recognised the importance of the money that the Council had previously given, she requested that Members support the motion and ensure that the refuges stay open.

Natreice Westwood stated that she had been in contact with a victim who had been isolated and the implications of the abuse she had suffered had significantly impacted on her mental health. She reported that once support had been given to the victim and her children, she had been offered support and had been tutored in identifying warning signs in perpetrators of violence.

Nicky Hornby spoke as the development manager of EVE and explained that they offered a holistic approach to supporting both the victims and the perpetrators (who recognised their need to change) and reported that since March 2017 they had received no funding from the Borough Council. She stated that they were currently supporting themselves by using their reserves but noted that they wanted to take steps to prevent closures.

iii) Councillor T Eales proposed and Councillor Stone seconded:

“Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service (formerly women’s aid) do valuable work to support victims of domestic abuse. They currently run 5 refuges with 21 beds, which will not be funded from April 2019. Partner organisation Eve is at risk of losing 13 beds. NDAS have launched a fundraising campaign to raise £100k by March to keep the refuges open for 12 months. Losing these refuges will mean that the responsibility of helping these victims out of abusive homes will fall onto NBC.

We therefore call upon this council to not only recognise NDAS for the service they have been providing to domestic abuse victims but to give some much needed financial assistance”.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

Brian Hoare addressed Council on motion iv) and stated that he was pleased to support the motion. He commented that he considered the Council’s website as somewhat inadequate as he had found it very difficult to find information on Air Quality management and associated data and asked that consideration be given to the issuing a monthly update on the air quality of the Councils website that would be easy to access.

The Mayor noted that an amendment had been proposed by Councillor Hallam and noted that Councillor B Markham had accepted the amendment. The altered motion had would be seconded by Councillor Hallam:

iv) Councillor B Markham proposed and Councillor Hallam seconded:

“This Council recognises the value of openness and transparency in communicating with the public about air quality and the steps that it is making to monitor and to reduce air pollution.

This Council notes that other authorities, such as Kings Lynn and West Norfolk District Council, make effective use of corporate websites to share information about air quality monitoring in an accessible way, including regular monthly publication of raw data from air quality monitoring tubes.

Northampton Borough Council resolves to review the accessibility, frequency of update and timeliness of the air quality data and activity published on its own website in order to match the openness and transparency achieved by other local authorities.

This Council also notes that it is important that members of the public understand that the raw data can only be properly analysed and trends assessed after a 12 month period to take account of any seasonality or specific in-month events that might skew the data such as road traffic closure.

Council also notes that this is a highly complex and technical area of work and resolves to work openly with all those with appropriate expertise in this area.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

At this juncture of the meeting, Councillor Beardsworth thanked the Democratic Services Manager for her work and wished her well in the future.

10. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

There were no items to be considered as a matter of urgency.

The meeting concluded at 9.47pm

Agenda Item 7

Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019



Since my last report to Council, I have continued to work with the Cabinet, Members, the Chief Executive, and Officers across all areas of the council. Many of these activities and issues are referred to in Cabinet colleagues' reports.

Unitary Status

The new Government Commissioner has begun his work at NCC, with the task of looking at Children's Services. Given both the vital importance of this service area in Northampton, and the large proportion of resources that it will form as part of the budget for a possible new unitary council, I feel that the presence of this additional Commissioner is a positive, and the Chief Executive and myself now have an introductory meeting in the diary with him.

Economic Development

I attended a Cross Corridor Leaders Group, comprising local authority leaders from across the whole of the Oxford to Cambridge area. This group is overseeing work being undertaken on three key areas – 'Productivity', 'Place', and 'Connectivity'. With Northampton being on the northern geographical edge of this area, it is important that we remain closely involved in this initiative and benefit from the opportunities that it will bring. I've long felt that the phrase 'corridor' is not a helpful one, as it implies somewhere to just pass through, and am pleased that lately that term has tended to be replaced by the phrase 'Arc'. Although still perhaps not ideal, this at least is consistent with what this initiative should deliver; although without doubt infrastructure such as road and rail are vital, ensuring that existing communities are maintained and supported to grow in a thoughtful way, and that economic growth delivers prosperity and jobs, are also vital.

On 11th December I was glad to meet with the representative of the Department for International Trade who supports the Midlands Engine initiative, to explore ways for working together and ensure that Northampton benefits from potential opportunities.

Park & Ride

I was delighted that we were able to work with the University to allow the public to use their Park & Ride in the run-up to Christmas. As a short test, the numbers that used the service were in the hundreds rather than in the thousands, but given that new Park & Rides normally require sustained promotion and advertising, the test seems to show that there is a potential demand, and that, at times of peak town centre traffic, this should become a key part of the town's transport mix giving visitors an attractive, alternative option to bringing their vehicle right into the town centre.

Other Activity

Whilst many of the things I have been involved in are referenced in more detail in colleagues' cabinet member reports, some of my other recent activities of particular note include:

- It was a pleasure to visit the Environmental Teams at Westbridge, and following their hard work throughout this year, to join Cllr. Hallam in wishing them all a Happy Christmas as they logged on to start their shifts.
- Meeting with the organisers of the Northampton Music festival, to make sure that the council is supporting this great event as best it can. (This year's Music Festival will take place on Sunday 16th June.)
- I was pleased to finally get the chance to meet with the Directors of Goodwill Solutions, and to take a tour to see and understand the work that they do including their Learning Academy, and how they help so many people move their lives forward.
- On 21st December I was very pleased to visit Little Cross Street, and join in the marking of the completion of the new homes there. The homes themselves are extremely well designed and built, reflecting as they do modern techniques, as well as input from residents as to what they felt was needed. The transformation of the environment in that part of our town as a result of the work that partners such as local residents and Northampton Partnership Homes have undertaken together is so very good to witness.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Leader of the Council



Report of the Deputy Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019

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

The next meeting of the newly constituted MAG will be held at 5.00 pm on Tuesday 29th January 2019. This meeting will be open to nominated Councillors, Market Traders, and Market Personnel only.

In comparison to previous years, trading and footfall was down in December, as it was nationally. Entertainment staged on the Market in the run up to Christmas was well received and we did have additional stalls trading, taking advantage of the Christmas footfall.

Councillor Training

The next meeting of the Councillor Development Group will be held on Wednesday 23rd January 2019.

Since the last meeting of the Working Group on 28th November further training / briefing events are under consideration and being planned. We will be updated on these on 23rd January and details will be published as soon as possible thereafter.

Now that Caseworker contains the electoral register further refresher training for Members involved in the project has been scheduled to take place on 8th January 2019.

Further training / briefing sessions that have been arranged are as follows:

30/01/19 – Unitary Update – to be delivered by the Chief Executive. One session at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room.

There will be other events regarding progress towards establishing a Unitary Council in the coming weeks for Councillors from across the County.

Web Casting

I have met with officers to discuss taking this project forward in light of quotes received. Officers are now looking to secure the funding to proceed with the project as soon as possible.

Street Lighting

An electrical engineer has been engaged to develop proposals to carry forward the recommendations contained in the recent survey report. The objective is to have these proposals ready to commence work on our lighting stock on 1st April 2019, utilising funds provided within the 2019/20 capital programme, if approved during the budget process.

The contractor who undertook the survey is currently rectifying the faults identified during the survey that present a safety hazard.

The new lights for South Bridge are shortly to be installed. Work is scheduled to commence on 14th January 2019 and will take up to two weeks to complete. Firstly new wiring will be installed before the lights are erected.

Rail Issues

The East West Rail Consortium met on 11th December 2018 in Bedford.

Preparation for the inquiry regarding the TWAO with regard to the Western Section of East West Rail, that affects Northampton as it includes the north / south corridor, is well underway. Network Rail gave a positive update on progress regarding this section of the project. Northampton continues to feature strongly in the documentation regarding the project.

Governance Review

A consultant been engaged to undertake the consultation process that the review requires. Officers and the Chief Executive have very recently met with the consultant, Opinion Research Services, to discuss the consultation programme and process. We are looking to finalise all the details within the next two weeks so that consultation can commence at the end of the month.

Councillor Phil Larratt

Deputy Leader of the Council



Cabinet Member Report for Housing and Wellbeing

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019

New council homes in Little Cross Street

On 21st December 2018, the Leader of the Council and I visited Northampton Partnership Homes' latest development of 9 flats and 9 maisonettes in Little Cross Street.

These new council homes were officially opened by the Rt Hon Andrew Lewer MP, and we were all immensely impressed by the high quality of the homes and the amount of care and thought that has gone into their design, layout and construction.

Investing in housing and regeneration

During the next few weeks, Cabinet will consider three very important reports on housing.

On 16th January 2019, an update will be provided on the very exciting work that the Council, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) and Legal & General are undertaking to develop a scheme that will transform Belgrave House (a large, unattractive empty office block in the town centre) into a vibrant development of 120 apartments for key workers.

On 6th February 2019, approval will be sought for a Housing Regeneration Policy that sets out the principles and processes that the Council and Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) will apply and follow when regeneration involves the demolition or major reconfiguration of homes and the works make it necessary for residents to move permanently out of their homes.

On 6th February 2019, approval will be sought for a comprehensive temporary accommodation action plan which builds on the Council's success in minimising the number of homeless households it places in Bed & Breakfast and out-of-borough accommodation and sets out, in detail, the measures it will introduce to reduce the use and cost of temporary accommodation.

Northampton's Emergency Nightshelter

I am delighted to report that 2018 was another very successful year for the Nightshelter.

During the year, 151 guests moved in and another 24 men were offered a place but managed to resolve their housing problems, so did not need to stay. 83% of referrals were accepted.

Of the 151 guests who moved in during the year, 84% were British, 28% had no income, 12% were in paid employment or receiving a pension and 60% were in receipt of benefits. Almost a quarter were part of a probation / youth offending programme, and one fifth were part of a drugs intervention programme. The guests' average age was 39; their average stay was 36 nights.

Between them, the guests spent a total of 4,469 nights in the Nightshelter during 2018. To enable the Nightshelter to open 12 hours a day, every night of the year, its fantastic team of volunteers donated (between them) a total of 6,630 hours of their spare time. On six nights a week, local faith and community groups also prepared delicious home cooked meals for the guests.

Two thirds of the people who have stayed in the Nightshelter (101 in 2018) have been helped to move on successfully into more settled housing. Although it is not suitable for everyone, the Nightshelter has proved particularly effective at helping even the most entrenched rough sleepers to come off the streets, establish new social circles and rebuild their lives.

Tackling, preventing and reducing rough sleeping

Although the Nightshelter has significantly improved the health and wellbeing of hundreds of people who would otherwise have had to sleep rough in Northampton, much more needs to be done to tackle, prevent and reduce rough sleeping in the borough.

Discussions are taking place with specialist advisers in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with a view to securing additional funding, advice and support.

The MHCLG has expressed particular concern about the temporary encampments and makeshift shelters that have sprung up on the outskirts of Northampton, and the number of organisations that are putting people's lives at risk, and reducing people's life expectancy, by sustaining rough sleeping rather than doing everything possible to encourage people to leave the streets.

I am hopeful that, with the assistance of the MHCLG, we can recapture the energy, enthusiasm and appetite for joint working that local services and organisations showed during the development of 'TOGETHER we change lives' (our multi agency strategy) and that everyone will redouble their efforts to tackle this most urgent of issues.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)

SWEP is co-ordinated by the Housing & Wellbeing Service and complements the work of the Nightshelter, the Street Outreach Team and other local services and organisations.

Between 21 December 2018 and 31 March 2019, the All Nations Church in Kettering Road is operating a Winter Shelter that will provide overnight shelter for up to 11 homeless men and women, irrespective of the temperature. This will complement Northampton's Emergency Shelter (and the alternative emergency housing provided for women) which, at the time I am writing this report, are accommodating 18 men and one woman respectively.

Although there is no strict definition of what counts as 'severe weather', a Winter Shelter will normally operate when the temperature falls below freezing and is forecast (by the Met Office) to remain below freezing for a period of at least three consecutive nights.

When SWEP is activated, men and women who are sleeping rough in Northampton will be able to access the SWEP Winter Shelter (and have a meal and a safe, warm place to sleep) that will operate from the ground floor of Oasis House from 9.00pm until 7.00am.

Although the Housing & Wellbeing Team will be running the SWEP Winter Shelter (and providing overnight cover and Team Leaders for the evening and morning shifts) it is appealing for volunteers who can help out from 8.30pm – 11.30pm and from 6.00am – 8.30am.

To volunteer for the SWEP Winter Shelter, please visit: www.northampton.gov.uk/swep

Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing



Cabinet Member Report for Environment

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019

Environmental Services Contract

At time of writing, we are in week 26 of the contract and the contract is running well.

The new service and collection days are working well, residents and collection staff are settling into the new arrangements. There was one collection day change over the Christmas period but this only affects one collection day (Christmas day collections moving to the Saturday 29th December).

Street cleansing continues with the scheduled operations working their way around the Borough and the transformation teams are now dealing with leaf fall but will return to 'deep cleaning' early in the new year.

Grass cutting has now ceased and the winter shrub maintenance programme has begun in earnest, the service is receiving a large amount of positive comments.

Tree and woodland service continue to deal with service requests and any priority work plus developing a schedule to inspect and undertake any relevant work in the enhanced tree programme.

Sports pitch bookings continue with some liaison with local teams to fine tune the services to their requirements. Over the summer, meetings have been held with both the local and national Football Associations to investigate how to improve football pitch quality in Northampton and I'm pleased to state that a pilot scheme to improve pitch quality at the Racecourse Park, Lings Playing Fields and Far Cotton recreation ground has been created and that the National Football Association will be investing £26,000 to improve these pitches over the next 12 months.

Along with the day to day running of the contract, the team are currently working on a number of improvement projects including introducing a sacrificial sack trial, 'in it to win it' Northants Waste Partnership project to improve food waste recycling and working on plans for a potential cemetery extension.

Parks & Open Spaces

- Improvements to the Dallington Park Car Park and Warren Road have been made to help ease the parking pressures at the weekend when there are football matches taking place.
- A new small children's play area has been installed near Mushroom Field Road, Ecton Brook.
- New play surfaces have been laid at Ladybridge Park and St Crispins Park; replacing the old worn out mats.
- Additional bollards were installed at Southfields Park to stop entry of unauthorised vehicles.
- A new "Welcome" sign has been installed at Rectory Farm Park.

Enforcement Contract

The total number of fixed penalty notices issued by the environmental enforcement team from the start of the service to the end of December 2018 is 7132.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment



Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement & Community Safety

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019

Councillor Community Fund

Since 1 April 2018, a total of £93,025.78 has been spent by councillors on supporting the delivery of positive outcomes in their wards.

Partnership Support

Applications for the partnership grant for 2019-20 are open. The deadline for applications is 1 March 2019.

23 January partnership showcase event to be held at the Guildhall. Opportunity for the community and voluntary organisations that were funded through the partnership grant in 2018-19 to showcase the good work that they have been delivering in the Town and to promote the support services that available to the community.

Forums

3 December - International Day for People with disabilities – event in Great Hall. Information stands and performances by disability groups. Very well received by attendees. Launched a survey to find out what people with disabilities and carers would like to see in Northampton for Purple Tuesday a national initiative for disability friendly shopping days.

7 December - Autism Reality Experience – training for staff and partners to help understand how people on the spectrum can experience the world.

7 January – nominations for Inspirational Woman open, to support this year's International Women's Day

28 January – Holocaust Memorial Day plans are being finalised with our partners and Jewish community, to hold both a civic ceremony and evening commemoration event.

Events

The Christmas events programme finished on Saturday 22nd December with the Igloo cinema's final screening late in the afternoon. The 2018 Christmas programme was a success and plans have already started for 2019.

The Council is working with partners in developing the event programme for 2019.

Culture & Heritage

The New Year sees a photographic exhibition opening at Abington Park Museum showcasing photography by Abington Camera Club which reflects the changes that winter brings to the park.

Members of the Northamptonshire Film Archive Trust return at the end of January to show a selection archive film footage of Northampton. The event is expected to sell out to an audience of 65.

The first of a series of six Over 60s talks begin in January with a whistle stop tour through the history of the canals of England and Wales. All six talks have sold out attracting 65 people to each event.

January sees the museum host a vegan food fair at the end of the month – the interest in vegan food has been growing over the last couple of years and this is expected to continue going forward.

Towards the end of 2018, two visits to view the shoe collection took place by the CEO and employees of the first shoe factory to open in November in over 40 years - Foster and Sons.

Senior Shoe Curator and Collections Manager attended the Cordwainers Livery Company Footwear Education Reception, Clothworkers Hall, London 27 November 2018

The museum has recently received an important donation objects from the late Northampton composer, Sir Malcom Arnold including a portrait and Knighthood medal.

Museum Expansion Project

Internal demolition work and the external demolition of the connecting bridge between the Guildhall Road Block and Old Gaol Block has been completed. Excavation and break out of historic drainage was undertaken and no archaeological issues emerged. Thirty seven 15 metre pilings and foundations have been installed and work has begun on the steel framework for the extension building. The exhibition fit out contractor has been appointed and a start-up meeting will take place in late January. Tenders went out for the café operator and returns are being analysed with an appointment expected in early February. AT the last site meeting Wildgoose Construction reported that all work streams were on programme.

Customer Services

We are pleased to welcome Goodwill Solutions who have joined the One Stop Shop (OSS) partner's hub and are delivering a programme called Building Better Opportunities (BBO) and holding weekly drop in clinic within the OSS. Goodwill Solutions is a Community Interest Company who work in a way that helps the local community, working with disadvantaged people across Northamptonshire to help them back into work and to become a valuable member of our community. They are completely self-funded using profits from the business, to run numerous projects. Since 5th December they have ran three drop in clinics and have managed to sign up 12 customers. The clinics are available every Wednesday 9:30 – 16:30 in OSS.

Community Safety

24 November – 4 January police overtime and days of action, commenced on the Town Centre. Days of action, have included: Public engagement in the Grosvenor centre giving out personal safety advice, information and materials. Advice and information from Police partners and Solve It. Walkabouts, including enforcement action, to tackle anti-social behaviour, street drinking and begging. Promoted 16 days materials to businesses in the town centre (domestic abuse and sexual violence materials, promoting support agencies). Posters with tear offs are now in many toilets and changing rooms in the town. Promoting legitimate places for donating to help the homeless in Northampton and how people can get help. Engaging with businesses around rough sleepers and street beggars- asking shops to have our materials on display for customers.

Planning continues with partners, to hold our second primary school conference at the Deco Theatre, on 5 February 2019, the day will include presentations, performances and workshops on community safety topics, including hate crime, knife crime, online safety, fire safety, railway safety, anti-social behaviour and personal safety. More than 200 year six students will attend.

Councillor Anna King

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019

Finance

On the 12th December the Cabinet considered the published draft Budget 2018/19 and medium term financial plans for consultation. Full details of our draft Budget and the consultation can be found on our website using the following link:

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200110/budgets-spending-and-performance/2400/budget-consultation>

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was published in the week before Christmas. This broadly confirmed the funding estimates made in our draft Budget. There were a few announcements in the Settlement that are likely to affect our medium term financial position, including:

- Council tax referendum limits remain at the greater of £5 or 3.00% for lower tier councils.
- Confirmation that the Northamptonshire Councils will be part of the 75 business rates retention scheme for 2019-20.

An assessment is being undertaken on the impact of the provisional settlement on our draft Budget and any amendments will be reflected in the Council's final budget which is planned to be considered by Cabinet in February and at Council on 25th February.

Revenues & Benefits

The Revenues and Benefits Service continues to deliver to service standards, it has also consulted on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which informed elements of the draft budget for 2019-20.

The impact of Universal Credit on the Revenue and Benefits Service and capacity requirements will be monitored.

The Service is also actively supporting (at no direct cost to NBC) all Councils across Northamptonshire in considering Single Person Discount Reviews to deter and/or detect fraud.

Facilities Management

Every Friday and Saturday and some Thursdays during December saw Christmas parties facilitated at the Guildhall, the parties were very successful. December also saw confirmed bookings for 3 wedding ceremonies, 1 wedding reception and a Jobs Fair.

Repairs to the Investor Suite have been underway after the issue with the young man who smashed the glass roof in the early hours of a Saturday morning. New furniture will now be procured to replace the damaged items.

Councillor Brandon Eldred
Cabinet Member for Finance



Cabinet Member Report for Planning

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019

The first meeting of the new West Northamptonshire Joint Planning and Infrastructure Board took place in December. The board consists of members and officers from Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council, South Northants Council and Daventry District Council. Although the board does not have executive powers it will be instrumental in shaping planning policy especially as we move towards unitary in 2020.

Planning permission N/2016/1593 was granted on 20th December 2018, following the finalisation of a S106 agreement, for the variation of planning condition 6 of outline planning permission N/2014/0475 for the development of up to 800 units at the University of Northampton Park Campus site, Boughton Green Road.

Development Management has maintained 100% performance standard in terms of major, minor and other applications in both November and December 2018.

Building Control inspected and issued completion certificates for the following Northampton Partnership Homes projects:

- **St Katherine's Court, Castle Street** - Single storey extension to entrance, over cladding to facade, infill balconies and internal mechanical & electrical works (FP/2016/750) – 11th December 2018.
- **34 Little Cross Street** - Demolition of existing flats (Number 34 to 56 Little Cross Street) and construction of 18 new flats and maisonettes (FP/2016/752) – 11th December 2018.
- **St Peter's House, Castle Street** – Construction of new retail unit in front of existing block of flats (FP/2016/753) – 18th December 2018.

During December 2018 Building Control issued **46** completion certificates.

Local Plan Part 2

Work continues on the production of the Local Plan Part 2 with an aim to submit to Cabinet early this year.

Heritage

Public consultation on the review of the Barrack Road and Derrigate Conservation Areas will commence later this month and last for six weeks. The review will be placed before Cabinet in due course.

Repairs to the Balestra Bar are due to commence shortly.

Queen Eleanor Cross – The Council has gone out to tender for the forthcoming repairs due to take place in the Spring.

Councillor James Hill
Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning



Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration and Enterprise

Northampton Borough Council

Monday 14th January 2019

Town Centre Operations

The two hour free parking offer in the council's multi-storey car park during the week (Monday – Friday) show 713,908 visitors taking advantage of the free parking offer between April – December 2018.

During the same period in our multi-storey car parks Saturday's parking visitor numbers were 238,016 and on Sunday's parking visitor numbers were 113,278.

Footfall

The footfall figures in Abington Street and Market Square during the year, January – December 2018 were 12,564,317.

Footfall across the town centre's 4 cameras showed 16,556,678 visitors

Capital and Repair Works

Delapre - Breedon Aggregate works are complete and within programme and budget.

Street Lighting Scheme – All lights inspected, emergency repair work ordered and to be complete before end of January 2019. A procurement exercise has taken place and a consultant has been appointed to produce energy saving/cost saving reports and lighting designs.

St. Crispin's Community Centre – Security works will be complete within the next few weeks.

Upton Country Park – detailed design is underway. A QS has been appointed to produce a tender document in due course – this is to enable a tender and work to commence on site May/June 2019.

Rectory Farm Community Centre – An architect will be appointed within the next 10 days to commence design/costings up to planning stage before end of March 2019.

Tenders for the operation of the café at the Museum are being accepted.

Councillor Tim Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning