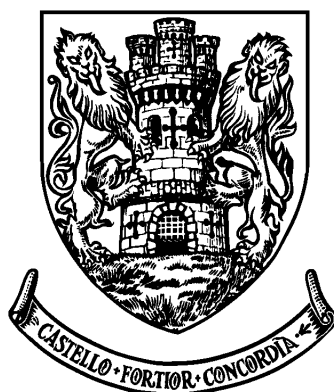


# NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



## COUNCIL

Monday, 4 November 2019

**YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 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 16 September 2019 (Copy to follow.)

**3. APOLOGIES.**

**4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS**

**6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS**  
(Copy herewith.)

**8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS**

Councillor Haque to make a statement on "Regeneration".

## 9. NOTICES OF MOTION

i) Councillor King to propose and Councillor Hallam to second:

“7 in 10 young people have experienced cyberbullying. 26% of young people who have been cyberbullied report feeling suicidal.

Whether you are in the public eye or not, you cannot get away from social media and it is ruining a lot of people’s lives.

Building on the excellent BBC’s documentary ‘Odd One Out’, featuring Little Mix star Jesy Nelson, this Council believes that there is a real need to talk more about cyberbullying, how this is making us feel and how to tackle it.

NBC is proud to say that we held a primary school event on 16th October and has two more planned for this academic year 2019-20: 11th February and 5th June 2020, all focussing on various community safety messages, including online safety.

Based on the feedback from the young people, the Council has this year also added the topic of cyberbullying and 540 year six’s will have attended the events and received this informal education.

This Council further commits to launching its secondary school programme covering cyberbullying, with the first one taking place on 24th November at Weston Favell secondary and this being rolled out to Northampton International Academy and other secondary schools before the end of the academic year.

We live in a social media obsessed world and people say things without realising the devastating affect on young lives and families. This Council is fully committed to leading the way in showing that bullying is not ok.

Lowdown offer free counselling and advice to young people aged 12-25yrs across Northampton. The following link provides information and guidance for young people facing these issues <http://thelowdown.info/issues/cyberbullying/> “

ii) Councillor Marriot to propose and Councillor Stone to second:

“This council notes with dismay the recent 1% increase in interest for loans from the Public Works Loan Board. This comes at a time when all councils, including NBC, were looking to increase their building of social housing in order to address the housing crisis.

The 1% increases the risks attached to regeneration and development and creates the need for revision of existing plans and business cases. We note this has led to, for example, a delay in borrowing for the Berkley house rebuild.

We therefore call on the council to join with the LGA to make representation to the government to have this decision reversed.”

iii) Councillor Joyce to propose and Councillor Ashraf to second:

“This council congratulates Norwich Council for winning the Stirling Architecture Prize for its recently developed housing estate, Goldsmith Street, comprised of almost 100 ‘ultra-low-energy homes’

This is the first time in the 23-year history of the Stirling prize that it has been awarded to social

housing

“A modest masterpiece” is how the RIBA Stirling prize judges described the project, designed by London firm Mikhail Riches with Cathy Hawley, representing “high-quality architecture in its purest most environmentally and socially conscious form”. The 105 creamy-brick homes are designed to stringent Passivhaus environmental standards, meaning energy costs are around 70% cheaper than average. The walls are highly insulated, and the roofs are cleverly angled at 15 degrees, to ensure each terrace doesn’t block sunlight from the homes behind, while letterboxes are built into external porches, rather than the front doors, to reduce any possibility of draughts.

Immense thought has gone into every detail – from the perforated brick balconies to the cleverly interlocking staircases in the three-storey flats at the end of each terrace – to ensure that every home has its own front door on the street. The back gardens look on to a planted alley, dotted with communal tables and benches, while parking has been pushed to the edge of the site, freeing up the streets for people, not cars.

This year’s choice sends a clear message that, despite government cuts, it is eminently possible for brave councils to take the initiative and build environmentally sustainable social housing.

We call on NBC to be brave and develop similar sustainable housing projects.”

iv) Councillor Brian Markham to propose and Councillor Beardsworth to second:

“The administration is in the process of preparing a draft budget for 2020/21 which it will consider at the cabinet meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019. This comes at a time when local government finances are being squeezed and this council is facing a deficit of £750,000+ in the current year.

In November 2014 the cabinet approved the purchase of Albion House for a sum up to £0.5M. The building has not been brought into productive use and this council believes the benefit of maintaining ownership of this under-utilised asset needs to be reconsidered.

The council requests that as part of the budget preparation, process, the Administration considers the disposal of Albion House to provide vital finance to protect vital public services.

If the administration decides not to dispose of this under-utilised asset, because it has a firm plans for the building then they should declare those plans and report back to the Council meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> December.”

**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 at 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, 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](http://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](mailto:democraticservices@northampton.gov.uk)

Tel 01604 837722

Fax 01604 837057

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, 16  
September 2019 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

**COUNCILLORS:** Malpas, Ansell, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Cali, Choudary, Chunga, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Flavell, Golby, Graystone, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, M Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Sargeant and Stone

### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

### 2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

### 3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Caswell, Eldred, Hadland, Kilby-Shaw, Smith and Walker.

### 4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor announced that there was an upcoming Civic event on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September and asked Members to attend. He stated that he would be taking part in a sky-dive on 24<sup>th</sup> September to raise money for his Mayoral Charity and asked Members to sponsor him. He reported that he had attended 115 engagements so far in his Mayoral year. The Mayor reminded Council that the Gala Dinner would be taking place on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

### 5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Mia and Ava Joyce addressed Council on behalf of Eco March Northampton and expressed the "urgent need" to ban single-use plastic bags in the town. They noted that Parliament, followed by NBC and other local authorities, declared a climate emergency, however little action had taken place following the announcement. They reported that marine life is being killed due to wasteful human practices and stated that paper and tote bags were a sustainable alternative to plastics and would significantly reduce Northampton's carbon footprint.

Alice Whitehead addressed Council and commented that 10 street trees would be planted along Penrhyn Road for the first time in approximately 50 years. The project had been spearheaded by the Save Our Trees campaign in collaboration with The

Woodland Trust, NBC and NCC. A study by Northampton University, commissioned by the Save Our Trees campaign which showed that street trees in Far Cotton had declined by 51% since the 1960s. The report further highlighted the benefits of street trees, including contributing towards a reduction in urban warming, improving air quality and reducing stress, as well as some economic benefits. Ms Whitehead stated that whilst the report was welcome, it was not unreasonable to extrapolate the pattern across trees all over the town. Ms Whitehead asked Council to support the Save Our Trees Campaign aims, which are:

- To appoint a dedicated tree officer who would feed into the now unitary authority;
- To change the Council's tree policy to allow for the replacement, in situ, of valuable urban trees;
- Regular maintenance of the town's street trees;
- Ongoing investment and reinstatement of street trees as part of the move to unitary;
- To plant more appropriate, compact trees to avoid problems seen with larger trees, and;
- For planning controls to be properly applied by developers to reduce the number of trees felled.

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

The Mayor advised that sixteen 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 unless where stated, supplementary questions were asked as detailed below.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question six, Councillor Hallam advised that the "door [was] open" for compostable food caddy bags to be rolled out to the public in the future.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question nine, Councillor Hallam stated that he would supply Councillor Ashraf with a breakdown of the duties of Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question eleven, Councillor Hallam advised that it was never too late for requests for urgent tree maintenance.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question thirteen, Councillor Hallam stated that Northampton had the highest number of charging points in the county and that work was underway to have more installed across the town.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question fourteen, Councillor Hibbert indicated that there would be increased pressures for non-homeless persons on the Council's housing waiting list, homelessness was a priority.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question fifteen, Councillor

Hibbert indicated that buying ex-council homes was a possibility.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question sixteen, the Leader advised that Councillor Eldred would issue a further answer outside of the meeting.

## **7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS**

Councillor Nunn submitted his report as Leader of the Council. He advised of a Member briefing session to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> September; this would be relating to Local Government Reorganisation and it was important for members to attend.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Nunn explained that unitary work was taking up a lot of resources but the Structural Changes Order would be imminent, stating that he and the Leader of Northamptonshire County Council were continually lobbying central government. The Leader advised that unitary alone would not transform services, input was needed from district and borough chief executives who each fronted part of the unitary project. The Leader confirmed that he would invite the new Programme Director, Paul Helsby, to Northampton Borough Council for a briefing with Members. The Leader explained that the Programme Director post was not an additional one, nor did it incur an extra cost. However the overall cost remained a concern for all members.

Responding to a question regarding dredging of the Billing Brook lakes, the Leader confirmed that it was within the Council's remit; this was a long-standing problem for the town which had now been resolved.

In response to a question relating to a motion calling for a "People's Plan", the Leader advised that a board meeting would be held on 24<sup>th</sup> September with Northampton University to review the written consultation responses. This would then lead to confirming a final template for a People's Plan. The Leader highlighted the importance of different demographics of people feeding into the consultation.

In response to a question relating to EV charging points, the Leader explained that some issues had been brought to light at the LGA conference, including charging points on terraced streets, but he saw this as an opportunity for more charging points in the town.

With regard to the St James Link Road, the Leader explained that a detailed land survey revealed higher levels of ground contamination which brought estimated costs to £4m, however the Council would continue to pursue opportunities to deliver it.

Councillor Larratt presented his report as Deputy Leader and responding to questions, advised that the Community Governance Review Working Group would always consult residents on what they had been asked to. With regard to street decommissioned street lights in the town, the Deputy Leader stated that he would be happy to check the council's asset records to find out whether any lights were due to be switched back on.

Responding to questions regarding rail issues, the Deputy Leader reported that Northampton was losing out on direct services to Crewe, however he would continue



to fight for the East West Rail to run through Northampton.

The Deputy Leader explained that a Planning Protocol had been drafted which he anticipated would give Members more involvement in planning applications and the pre-application stage, and more influence in shaping Section 106 Legal Agreements.

The Deputy Leader confirmed that he would take a suggestion to swap plastic bags for more environmentally friendly options to the next Market Advisory Group. He would also look into issues surrounding the "Report It" app.

Councillor Hallam submitted his report as the Cabinet member for Environment and explained that a paper on single-use plastics would be brought to the next Climate Change Panel in October and invited Mia and Ava Joyce to the meeting.

In response to questions, Councillor Hallam explained that the council had been spending increasing amounts of money on the town's parks and the council were always fighting for more.

Councillor Hallam explained that the money saved on reducing the cost of bulky waste collections has been spent partly on increasing the number of booking slots available by 50%. This had been well received by residents but Councillor Hallam would be happy to look into any issues that had arisen around waiting times.

Responding to a question regarding street waste bins, Councillor Hallam stated that there were several in the town that were not the responsibility of Veolia; he would look into the issue further once provided with details by Councillor Cali.

Responding to a question relating to climate change working groups, Councillor Hallam advised that delays had been caused by diary clashes; meetings were due to start in October.

## **8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS**

Councillor Ashraf made a statement on "Cleaner, Greener and safer Northampton". She noted that the Council had carried a motion declaring a climate emergency but questioned what changes had been implemented to improve air quality, tackle single-use plastic, pollution and littering. She had started speaking with residents, community groups and schools to raise awareness of the issues faced and the steps to be taken to improve their lives and the lives of their communities. She stated that people in the town no longer took pride in where they lived. Landlords frequently fly-tipped previous occupants' belongings onto the street, a long-standing issue that needed a specific policy to deal with it. She reported that most households recycled 44% of all recyclable plastic bottles and noted that of the 13,000 water refill stations across the country, there was not one in Northampton, yet Rushden Lakes had 7. Northampton Borough Council should be offering alternative solutions before asking people to change their behaviour. She advised that constituents in her ward were dissatisfied with the lack of enforcement action taken on repeat fly-tippers and noted that Colleagues have the same problem. She questioned whether the Environmental Services contractors were meeting their targets, how they were making and spending money. She stated that the Council should be planting trees in the town and flowers

on unused green sites and put solar panels on the town's community buildings.

In response Councillor Hallam explained that for 7 years under the previous Environmental contract there were 3 KPIs in "red"; he was happy to report that 2 of these were now "green" and the remaining red KPI related to fly tipping which was not the fault of the contractor but a small minority of members of the public. He noted that the Neighbourhood Wardens had recently come 3<sup>rd</sup> nationally in terms of FPNs and enforcement action taken and reported that recycling across the borough was increasing at an average of 6% per month. He further noted that residents were emailing the Council to thank Veolia on carrying out the contract to such a high level, something that scarcely happened under the previous contract.

Councillor Ashraf stated that the Council should not be picking up after people who refused to take responsibility for their own actions to the detriment of the rest of the town, that Council should be using its powers to challenge and prosecute environmental offenders.

## **9. TERMS OF REFERENCE TO THE WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE**

Councillor Nunn proposed the report which sought to amend the Terms of Reference for the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That Council agrees the revised and augmented Terms of Reference set out in Appendix 2 of the report and delegates the necessary powers and authority to the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, to amend the "West Northamptonshire Joint Committee Agreement" to incorporate the changes agreed by Council.

## **10. UPDATE ON CARRIED MOTIONS**

Councillor Larratt proposed the report which sought to update Council on Carried Motions from April 2018 to date.

Councillor Patel seconded the report.

Councillor Larratt advised that he would refer questions relating to specific motions to the relevant Cabinet Member.

Responding to a question regarding motion 3 from Full Council held on 10/12/18, Councillor King explained that the Council were working with NDAS and a "domestic violence strategy" had been created.

Responding to a question regarding motion 6 from Full Council held on 5/11/18,

Councillor Hallam asked if he could be emailed with details of under-performing supermarkets so that he may further investigate.

Responding to a question regarding motion 4 from Full Council held on 5/11/18, Councillor King advised that 2 fairs held over the summer had been relocated and that the situation was still under review.

Responding to a question regarding motion 6 from Full Council held on 5/11/18, Councillor Hallam stated that the aim of the motion was to persuade supermarkets to change their behaviour; this change could be evidenced in the increased responses from supermarkets.

Responding to a question regarding motion 2 from Full Council held on 04/06/19, Councillor King stated that primary school conferences included workshops such as “being a good citizen” as well as giving dietary advice.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Council notes the update on Carried Motions
2. That a further update is brought to Full Council at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019**

Councillor Lane, as the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report and thanked every member involved in the work of Scrutiny, specifically the Panel Chairs and members of the public for their suggestions. He thanked the Scrutiny Officer for her continued hard work and noted his appreciation for her dedication to the role.

Councillor Ansell seconded the report.

Members discussed the various panel work that had been undertaken and thanked the Scrutiny Officer and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their dedication and concurred that the topics that they had scrutinised had been extremely valuable and insightful. Members agreed that Northampton Borough Council were a great example of when Scrutiny is done well but had concerns about what it may look like under the new unitary authority.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19 be noted.

**12. NOTICES OF MOTION**

- i) Councillor Joyce 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 below:

“We are concerned that the borough council, local organisations and residents are, generally speaking, using non-renewable energy suppliers, incurring high bills, and using up precious resources.

We agree that a Big Switch to a green energy company would be much better for the environment and help reduce bills.

Noting that the value of a new contract to provide energy to this Council will be in excess of £0.5M per annum, Council notes that this will require a full procurement exercise to be undertaken, and that such an exercise will take up to 18 months, by which time the Council will no longer exist. Northampton Borough Council therefore resolves to propose to the future Unitary Council that it makes the big switch to a green energy company, lead from the front and show its commitment to renewable future.

While this Council can only operate within its own scope of control and influence, it resolves that as a key place leader, it commits to searching for best ways to encourage and work with local organisations, residents and businesses across the borough to see how they can make a difference to the environment through all relevant technologies, including options to switch to green energy companies. Therefore, this Council resolves to ask the Air Quality and Management Change Working Group to pursue this.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

ii) Councillor Roberts proposed and Councillor Russell seconded:

“This council is aware of the Government proposal to create a Children’s Trust for the provision of Children’s Services in the Northamptonshire area, serving two Unitary Authorities.

For Children’s Services to improve there needs to be a return to multi agency locality working.

There needs to be a focus on early help and prevention.

We therefore commit to modelling how this could work in two areas of Northampton, Briar Hill and St David’s.

The modelling will involve a needs analysis of the families and young people in the area.

This will be a desk top exercise looking at income, health, housing, education, employment, life expectancy, crime rates and other influencing factors.

The modelling will look at community and voluntary sector resources that can be

utilised to provide the network of support needed in conjunction with statutory services, particularly housing, adult social care, and health.

The modelling will identify gaps in provision.

The results will go to the West Northants joint committee and the West Northants Shadow Board.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was lost.

iii) Councillor Hallam accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Kilby-Shaw.

Council agreed to the altered motion below.

“Council notes the excellent work of the "Save our Street Trees" Group in Far Cotton and the work they have done in bringing both NBC and NCC together with the Woodland Trust to look at a trial project for re-instating street trees in Northampton.

Council notes the work of the former Mayor of London Boris Johnson in re-instating 20,000 of street trees to our Capital during his time as the Mayor and the benefit that can give to the wider environment and efforts to combat climate change. He also delivered his pledge to create 100 rejuvenated spaces as part of his pocket parks programme in 26 London boroughs, with more than 25 hectares of community land across the capital having been converted into new enhanced green areas.

Northampton Borough Council calls for a transformation of underused urban spaces across our town. Trees deliver huge benefits such as cleaning the air and storing carbon. To ensure future generations receive these benefits and Northampton grows sustainably, we all need to protect existing trees and plant new trees.

This council agrees to:

1. Develop a tree planting strategy that will replace the number of trees that are being felled or have died.
2. To increase the number of trees in the town to create a cleaner greener Northampton”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a requisition for a recorded vote:

There voted for the motion: Councillors Ansell, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Bottwood, Cali, Chunga, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Flavell, Golby, Joyce, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, Hill, Graystone, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, Malpas, B Markham, M Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell,

Sargeant, Kilby-Shaw, Smith, Stone, Walker.

There voted against the motion: Councillor Meredith.

There abstained: Councillor Choudary.

The motion was carried.

iv) Councillor B Markham 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 below:

“This Council discussed “Declare a Climate Emergency” at its meeting on the 3rd June 2019.

Over the August Bank Holiday weekend DEFRA declared at their Northampton Monitoring Station the Highest Pollution figures across the country had been recorded.

This Council has yet to publish “the adjusted Air Quality Readings for 2018” which the administration has said are the only figures that it is prepared to use to initiate correct action to protect the health of Northampton residents.

Councillors are concerned that adhering to this approach will result in a similar delay in 2020 waiting for the 2019 adjusted Air Quality Figures to be verified by the DEFRA.

In support of the declared Climate Emergency this Council calls upon the administration to publish “provisional adjusted Air Quality Readings” as soon as adjustments have been applied by NBC Environmental Health Department and to take action to address any areas of concern.

The Council believes that this approach will demonstrate that it is taking action at the earliest possible time to protect the Health of Northampton residents.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

v) Councillor Meredith proposed and Councillor Beardsworth seconded:

“This Council has expressed its concern in debates in this chamber at the growing signs of poverty across Northampton but it has also recognised that local action requires a multiagency approach.

Councillors believe that the Borough Council is in a unique leadership position to bring about multi-agency working to improve the distribution of collection points across the town to help the voluntary organisations maintain the flow of stock that is vital to help struggling families.

The Council requests that the Portfolio Holder for Community Development approaches the Business Improvement District and the local Voluntary sector organisations, to encourage a joint initiative to develop an enhanced network of collection points for food donation across the town centre.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was lost.

- vi) 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 below:

“The County Council is responsible for on street parking charges in the Town Centre and the Borough Council is responsible for the parking charges in the car parks that it operates.

This Council believes that Car Parking charges are a factor in the vitality and prosperity of the Town Centre.

The County Council has initiated consultation with the Public and Stakeholders regarding the increases that it is proposing but it unfortunately ends on the 5<sup>th</sup> September.

This council believes that it should formally respond to the County Council consultation and request that they accept a late submission from the Borough Council.

The council agrees that it wishes to express concern and opposition to the proposed increases as it believes that it will have a detrimental effect on the Town Centre economy at a time when this council is trying to address the downturn in footfall and look for ways of investing in the Town Centre in support of its long term prosperity.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

### **13. 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 9:48 pm

# Agenda Item 7

## Report of the Leader of the Council

### Northampton Borough Council

Monday 4th November 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**

Further activity has been taking place with regards to the work on Future Northants (the new collective name for the Unitary activity). The Leaders' Oversight Board has met monthly in both September and October and at these meetings a regular update is received from colleagues from the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) as well as for them to hear progress on our activity. Discussions have centred around the Structural Changes Order and the timing of when that will be laid in Parliament. We have been updated at both meetings that plans are in place for this to be finalised before Christmas.

The importance of the integration of Health and Social Care is a key strand of the work programme and further updates have been provided to the Leaders Oversight Board on progress with regards to this, as well as wider meetings with the 7 MP's across the County.

Work activity relating to the wider programme is now starting to increase and I was among a number of Leaders that attended a Discovery & Design workshop aimed at getting the views of Elected Members at an early stage into the design of both engagement with communities across the County as well as the high level structure design for Corporate Services.

The Chief Executive and I also met with Tony McArdle, one of the two Commissioners based at the County Council, and it was helpful to hear first-hand of progress being made as well as some of the work that still needs to be done between now and April 2021. The regular Cross Party Working Group has continued to meet and an all-Member briefing was also provided on the work so far in mid-September.

I have also been actively involved in the Community Governance Review, although more detail of this is contained in the Deputy Leader's report and it was a pleasure to attend the AGM of Northants County Association of Local Councils, the body that represents around 200 parish councils across the county, where a guest speaker from Cornwall, who had experienced the transfer to unitary there, seemed to support the view that there will be an increasingly important role for parish & community councils post-unitary.

#### **Economic Development**

There have been a number of Northampton Forward Board meetings in the last few weeks. Outcomes of the consultation were presented back and similarly how these have been reflected into the final Masterplan for the town. There was a further meeting of the cross-party Town Centre Regeneration Working Group on the details of the consultation and this all culminated in the Cabinet paper that formally signed off the Masterplan and the results of the consultation on the 16th October. The Masterplan is an 'indicative' plan, that is to say that it represents the ambitions that we have for the town, and reflects the changes that it is felt will be good for the town, including the views of residents and businesses. It does not contain yet much of the specific details of the schemes and projects that it describes, as these will each need more work to develop them further, and there will be a need for more consultation. However, it was important to take the Masterplan to Cabinet, as it's being adopted as a council



document not only adds weight to its importance and to our funding bids, but will allow it to be referred to in planning policy.

A full project team of professional advisers is now in place to cover the necessary skills and disciplines needed to develop the strategic business case, and to identify the priority areas that will need to be considered as part of the Future High Street Fund bid. The work cost of this team is largely being met by the initial design and development funds provided by the Government as part of the Future High Streets support. The timelines have been extended, with the outline Business Case needing to be sent to MHCLG by the middle of January, and the full Business Case submitted by the end of April, with an announcement expected in the summer of 2020.

The masterplan identifies five Opportunity Areas, one of which is Greyfriars. In the last few weeks, following a detailed feasibility study done on the site by property specialists Montagu Evans, we have publicised the outcomes of their report as well as providing a Member Briefing on the findings of the report. Whilst the report has identified that the site is challenging if we want to make it an area that really adds to the town, it remains a key opportunity area to be developed out as part of the wider masterplan work.

The council has a vital role to play in delivering the masterplan and improving the town, but cannot do this on its own, and so, as well as the work of partners through the Northampton Forward Board, it was great to visit a private sector project that is a part of delivering the ambitions of more residential accommodation in the Eastgate area, and to see the lovely apartments that GCS Construction have created at the top of Abington Street. By converting the first and second floors of a building (space that had been unused for thirty years since it was in use as a shoe factory), they have created great living spaces that retain many of the shoe heritage features of the former factory, such as wheels and pulleys, to create attractive homes consistent with our aims in the masterplan for this part of town.

It was wonderful to join a number of colleagues from the Business sector as well as the County Council, the University and colleagues from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport at the City Fibre launch on the 22nd October, and to describe how increased connectivity fits with our plans and aspirations for residents and businesses across the town. City Fibre's work to invest £40m into Northampton has already started, and over the next 2 years Northampton will be one of the best-connected towns in the UK, further enhancing its appeal as a place to live and do business in. I also visited a number of the locations where their cabling work is underway, to understand how this will be rolled out across the town, and to see how disruption can be kept to a minimum.

I have also held meetings with Paul Griffiths, Chief Executive of the Business Chamber, as we continue to work closely with them, ensuring that we stay well connected and networked with the wider Business community, and that through its membership of the Chamber, NBC continues to show support. Discussions have also taken place on the future provision of services that could be provided in the Guildhall Road Block. I am pleased that we have been able to support NN Contemporary, as they have to move out of their current location, with a short term lease, and we are keen to strengthen the cultural offer by utilising the building to the best of its ability, complementing the ongoing works at both the Museum and Art Gallery and Vulcan Works.

Investment in the town continues, and I met recently with Palace Capital, owners of Sol Central, and discussions included the new leisure operator that they have attracted, Gravity, who will be occupying 23,000 square feet at Sol, and whose indoor family activities include trampolining, indoor golf and climbing walls.

The Secretary of State recently announced the approval of the Roxhill Northampton Gateway Rail Terminal project at junction 15 of the M1, and following this I joined local groups and others at a meeting coordinated by Andrea Leadsom MP on next steps in relation to the project, with particular focus on minimising any negative impact on traffic and air quality.

### **Other activity**

I have been fortunate enough to attend a number of civic, celebratory events and AGMs over the last few weeks. Of note were the Northampton Partnership Homes AGM in which I was able to receive the reports from their last full financial year, but also to hear of the positive housing developments that have both taken place and are proposed, over the next few years. I was also able to attend the Lowdown AGM, the Mayor's Charity, and to hear of the wonderful work that they have been undertaking in Northampton over a number of years. It was wonderful to be present at the Diwali Festival of Lights recently, as well as the Britain in Bloom celebrations that were held here at the Guildhall and the Leisure Trust Sports Awards. All wonderful celebrations of what is great in Northampton. The open day at Al Jamatul Muslimin of Bangladesh Mosque in St George's Street was a very enjoyable and informative event to attend, enabling myself and other councillors, along with a variety of organisations and civic leaders from across the county, to enjoy a tour of the building and to gain a deeper understanding of Muslim faith and worship, and as with the Northamptonshire Police Annual Community Supper, this showed that the various communities of Northampton are, in fact, one very strong community. I was also honoured to be amongst those councillors who represented the Council at the Mayor's Civic Service recently.

The Voluntary sector forum, hosted by Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire, was well attended, and a good opportunity for me to answer questions from voluntary organisations regarding unitary. I also made sure that I reiterated thanks on behalf of the whole council for the work that the sector does, and sought to reassure that the council, across all parties, sees the role of the sector as being vital to Northampton, both now and in the future.

Following a similar session earlier this year for last year's students, it was a pleasure to welcome the university's new MBA students to the Guildhall, along with the Mayor and the Chief Executive. Although the key function of these visits is to give the students an insight into local government operations and strategy, and to make them aware of a little of our proud history, we also ensured that we demonstrated the strong case for Northampton as a place to live and to do business, as these students represent a great source of talent that the town would benefit greatly from retaining.

Brackmills Industrial Estate is an important part of our economic geography in the town and I was pleased to sit down with Brackmills businesses recently to work through the parking challenges that have been experienced there, as well as separately meeting with colleagues from the County Council in relation to the recent on-street parking consultation.

Finally, on a wider sub-regional level, I am now attending East Midlands Councils' board meetings in addition to attendance at the South East Midland Local Enterprise Partnership Leaders Board meetings, ensuring that the voice of Northampton is heard, as wider, long-term strategic plans are put in place for the future growth of the region.

**Councillor Jonathan Nunn**  
**Leader of the Council**

**Report of the Deputy Leader of the Council**  
**Northampton Borough Council**  
**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

As Deputy Leader of the Council, I have continued to play an active role in the establishment of a Unitary Council and the transition to it, while continuing to support the Leader and Cabinet colleagues across a variety of areas within the council. I can report on some of my specific responsibilities as below.

**Market**

We are preparing the Market for the Christmas season. On 23<sup>rd</sup> November we have the Christmas lights switch on. The Frost Fair, that is nearly sold out, will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> December, with the usual parade and entertainment. There will also be entertainment on the Market Square on Saturdays throughout December, except for the last Saturday before Christmas.

**Councillor Development Group**

The Councillor Development Group met on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019.

- Councillors have requested a further briefing on Islamophobia, but potential / identified providers have not advised their availability or scope of work.
- Councillors and Officers attended the East Midlands Scrutiny Conference in October 2019.
- The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Gangs and Knife Crime Scrutiny Working Group are attending a national conference on this topic in December 2019.
- Councillors and an Officer are attending the National Centre for Public Scrutiny Conference in December 2019.

Further training sessions discussed by the Councillor Development Group are currently being investigated:

- S106 – What it is and how Members can become involved and engaged.
- Gangs and Knife Crime – information and video material shown to schools by the police to be provided to Members.
- An information session on LGBTQ.
- An information session on Building Control / Planning Enforcement and the services provided.

Since the last meeting of this Council training / briefing sessions have been held regarding Local Government Reorganisation, Greyfriars, and the Report It app.

**Further briefing sessions that have been arranged are as follows:**

- **28/11/19 - Town Centre Master Plan** - Member briefing to be delivered by relevant officers. One session at 6pm in the Jeffery Room.
- **12/12/19 – Local Government Reorganisation** – to be delivered by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive. One session at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room.
- **18/03/20 – Local Government Reorganisation** – to be delivered by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive. One session at 6.00 pm in the Jeffery Room.

***Sessions have been scheduled on a three-monthly basis.***

Can Members wishing to attend any of these events please inform Tracy Tiff as soon as possible.

**Borough Secretary - Legal Department**

Our Legal Services successfully resisted two judicial review applications and an appeal to the High Court in relation to benefit disputes involving one vexatious litigant.

Legal also secured a two-year extension to the vexatious litigants General Civil Restraint Order, meaning that if they want to commence any civil proceedings before June 2021 in any Court they must get the permission of a specific High Court Judge.

**Street Lighting**

At the time of writing, the contract with Balfour Beatty Street Lighting Ltd to undertake a scheme of column replacements and lamp renewals to this Councils street lighting assets across the Borough is being finalised within Balfour Beatty. Once finalised the materials to complete the works will be ordered and works will commence as soon as possible thereafter.

**Rail Issues**

The East West Rail Consortium met on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019 in Cambridge.

The Transport & Works Act Order for the Western Section of East / West Rail is imminent. Some planning applications relative to the development of the section have been submitted. Issues raised by Natural England are being addressed and resolved. The Bletchley Flyover has been stripped of all its railway assets - track, signalling and ballast - and engineers are assessing the structure for its future use. Buckinghamshire County Council have secured land for the Winslow Station Car Park. The full business case for the section is planned to be completed and submitted in the first quarter of 2020. Relationships between HS2 and East / West Rail are excellent.

Timetable modelling is continuing. However, while Northampton is featuring much more on the agenda as a destination and on the routes being discussed, Network Rail aren't modelling Northampton into routes as DfT have not specified that East / West Rail is to serve the town. Consequently, I'm trying to arrange a meeting with DfT and Network Rail.

Work on the Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Strategy is continuing, and in terms of inter-regional connections, the study supports direct services to Bristol, Swindon and Northampton as a means of improving connectivity.

Bedford Borough Council presented the meeting of the Consortium with a paper setting out how that council sees the economic benefits of the links / connectivity between East / West Rail and the Midland Main Line. The paper discusses developing Bedford Station into an Interchange Hub connecting the North & East Midlands with the South West & East Anglia. Bedford Borough has a strategy to make the most it can of the opportunities East / West Rail has to offer, but I'm afraid Northamptonshire doesn't. We've therefore met with an officer of the County Council, the Transport Authority, offering to assist and work with them in developing a strategy.

Now that Roxhill has been granted permission to develop a Rail Freight Terminal at M1 J15, we will need to consider how we respond to the consultation on the Rail Central application, when it is re-submitted, regarding rail freight capacity relative to the increased passenger services we seek for Northampton.

I and an officer will be attending an event of the West Coast Partnership, a partnership established by the new franchisee, First Trenitalia, operating main line services on the West Coast Main Line replacing Virgin Trains. The event is in Birmingham on 8<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Governance Review**

The second round of consultation relating to the Community Governance Review and the proposal to create a Town Council for Northampton Borough Council began on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September and will run for 6 weeks, concluding on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November.

Two options are laid out in a supporting document, which anyone wishing to respond should read first. There is also a link on the Borough Council's website to the questionnaire. Anyone can respond and an independent firm (Opinion Research Service) have been commissioned to do the work which also includes a residents' telephone survey as part of the wider consultation.

Full details can be found at:

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200024/consultation-and-feedback/2406/northampton-town-council-consultation>

Running separate to the Community Governance Review is a separate consultation on proposals to create Community Councils in Far Cotton and Delapre, Kingsthorpe, and an extension to the existing Duston Parish Council. This consultation is being done via individual letter drops to residents living in those respective areas and full details were delivered to peoples' homes on the weekend of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of October. Residents have until 15<sup>th</sup> November to either send their views in using a pre-paid envelope, or via a dedicated email address.

The outcomes of both consultations will be shared at a future Cross-party Working Group meeting, before a final report comes back to Council before Christmas.

**Councillor Phil Larratt**  
**Deputy Leader of the Council**



## Cabinet Member Report for Housing and Wellbeing

### Northampton Borough Council

4<sup>th</sup> November 2019

#### **Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy**

On 15<sup>th</sup> November, the Housing and Wellbeing Service will hold the last of three multi agency workshops to help shape the development of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The drafting of the new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy is due to be completed by the end of December and will be followed by a 28 day consultation commencing on 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

#### **Single Homelessness Forum**

Northampton's Single Homelessness Forum – which was attended by a broad cross-section of services and organisations – had its first quarterly meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

During the meeting, the Single Homelessness Forum considered a wide range of issues, including the rough sleeping strategy, the annual rough sleepers count, the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP), the establishment of an 'alternative giving' scheme and a public petition calling on the Council to establish a 'safe area' for rough sleepers in the town centre.

At the end of the meeting, the Forum appointed the Revd Sue Faulkner (Vicar of St Mary's Church, Dallington and St James' Church, Northampton) as its Independent Chair.

#### **Annual Rough Sleepers Count**

During the second half of November, we will be carrying out our annual borough-wide rough sleepers count on one night between Midnight and 3.00am.

Last November, 36 volunteers (representing a broad range of organisations, including the Council, Northamptonshire Police and local support agencies) took part in the Count.

When the results of the 2019 Rough Sleepers Count are published, the Single Homelessness Forum will include a position statement confirming the number of people who are believed to be sleeping rough in Northampton on any one night. This will ensure that the number of people found 'bedded down' on the night of the Count will be set in context.

#### **Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)**

Members of the Single Homelessness Forum are very supportive of the idea of changing the criteria that is used to determine when SWEP is triggered.

If there is enough support from the faith and community groups and we can attract enough volunteers, SWEP will be activated when the Met Office forecasts that the 'feels like' temperature (taking into account windchill) will be 0°C or below for at least three consecutive nights.

#### **Restructure of the Housing Advice & Options Service**

Since my last report, we have advertised all of the vacant posts and are hoping that most of the new staff will be in post by the beginning of January.

The restructure will improve the effectiveness of the Service, support the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, increase the number of households prevented from becoming homeless, and cut rough sleeping and the use and cost of temporary accommodation.

## **Designation of an Additional HMO Licensing Scheme**

On 16 October, the Cabinet considered the results of the comprehensive 10 week consultation exercise and approved the designation of a five year Additional HMO licensing scheme.

The new scheme will come into effect on 1 February 2020.

## **A robust, multi-agency approach to housing enforcement**

The appointment of a new Housing Enforcement Manager at the end of August 2019 has resulted in a marked increase in the amount of housing enforcement activity that is being taken against criminal, rogue and irresponsible landlords in the borough.

The Housing Enforcement Team is working very closely with the Police, Fire Service, Gangmasters, Trading Standards and Immigration in order to provide a targeted, joined up approach and ensure that criminal landlords do not derive any financial benefit from their offences.

In recent weeks, the Housing Enforcement Team has undertaken joint visits with the Police Intelligence Team to properties where intelligence has indicated that they are licensable HMOs operating without an HMO licence and there are credible links to modern slavery. Visits have also been requested by the Fire & Rescue Service.

As a result of these visits, it has been possible to identify unlicensed and overcrowded HMOs, and basements that have no natural lighting or fire safety. Prohibition orders have been imposed and, where appropriate, landlords will be prosecuted or receive a civil penalty,

## **Northampton Landlord Forum**

The next meeting of the Landlord Forum is on 19 November and will focus on the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme, the Article 4 Direction and fire safety.

## **Outstanding feedback for Call Care**

Call Care's annual audit by the Telecare Services Association (TSA) has gone extremely well and will result in the team retaining accreditation by the leading Telecare services accrediting body.

During the two day audit, the TSA auditor observed the team, attended an installation, interviewed staff and customers, and assessed Call Care against the TSA's new Quality Standards Framework.

The feedback from the audit was that the Call Care team is outstanding, with strong, supportive and innovative leadership. The team has been asked to be a reference site and an example of best practice in a number of areas, including performance management and training.

## **Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH)**

### NCC's Supported Living Projects

Since Cabinet approval of NPH's involvement in the schemes, the Eleanor Lodge lease has been executed and planning applications have been submitted to deliver the two new build schemes at Moray Lodge and Billing Brook Road, Thorplands.

I am pleased to report that planning approval has been given for Moray Lodge and planning approval for Thorplands is awaiting finalisation of the flood risk assessment.

Works will commence on site at Moray Lodge later this month.



### Council House New Build Programme

Planning approval has been granted for 'The Roof Gardens', the demolition of Berkeley House and St Mary's Court, and the construction of a new build scheme of 124 homes.

A report will be submitted to Cabinet in November, detailing the proposal and requesting final approval to proceed with the scheme.

### Belgrave House

The proposal to convert Belgrave House (a former office block) in Northampton Town Centre into the Clock House to provide 126 homes is progressing.

To enable NPH to complete the design and de-risk the scheme, invasive investigation works are being carried to the structure and fabric of the building,

### Planned Investment Programme

Planned investment works have commenced and are well underway at Lings, Lumbertubs, Lakeview and Blackthorn. Good, positive feedback is being received from tenants.

### NPH Community Bus 'Daphne'

Following its launch on the Market Square in July, NPH's new "neighbourhood community bus" is now in full operation and is being well received by residents.

This new initiative has enabled NPH to take housing services direct to tenants in their neighbourhood. Tenants said they wanted NPH to spend more time in their neighbourhoods and, in response, NPH has fitted out a community bus. This will help residents meet Housing Officers to discuss what is affecting their homes. It will bring the Officers to them and provides an opportunity for Councillors to join the bus to meet tenants when it is out and about in their Wards.

**Councillor Stephen Hibbert**  
**Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing**



## **Planning Policy**

Work is continuing the next steps in the process of producing the Northampton Local Plan Part 2.

Public consultation draft Supplementary Planning Documents about Houses in Multiple Occupation, Specialist Housing and Parking Standards finished on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019. The team is now analysing representations received and will make changes to those documents as appropriate.

A proposal for an Article 4 Direction taking away the permitted development rights for converting dwelling houses (Use Class C3) to houses in multiple occupation for three to six people (Use Class C4) was approved at the 16<sup>th</sup> October meeting of Cabinet.

## **Development Management**

Reserved matters application N/2019/1082 for the development of 188 beds student accommodation at the University of Northampton Waterside Campus has been received on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

Reserved matters application N/2019/1083 for the development of 3 no. academic buildings (15,918 sqm) at the University of Northampton Waterside Campus has been received on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

Reserved matters application N/2019/1145 for the development of 3 no. office buildings (19,414 sqm) at the University of Northampton Waterside Campus has been received on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

Development Management has maintained 100% performance standard in terms of major, minor and other applications in August and September 2019.

## **Heritage**

Works are soon to conclude on the sensitive repair of the Queen Eleanor Cross.

The Local List Panel is continuing to have regular meetings and is working towards a full set of recommendations.

## **Building Control**

### **Received NPH applications for:**

Moray Lodge Peveril Road, 20 No dwelling units (**FP/2019/7408**)

### **Other Applications:**

33 Rawley Crescent, Erection of a three-bedroom detached dwelling (**FP/2019/7404**).

**Completion certificates issued 36 including:**

Overslade House, 11 Overslade Close, Removal of roof and forming new third floor with 10 flats, installation of a lift and enclosure, balconies, window replacements, internal structural alterations, fit out of ground, first and second floor flats. **(FP/2018/714)**

**Commencements of work 84 including:**

Demolition of existing garages and construction of 2 new dwellings **(FP/2019/32)**  
Demolition of garages and construction of 20no new dwellings, Keswick Drive **(FP/2019/373)**

**Received and investigated 6 unauthorised works including:**

Loft Conversion, 28 Briar Hill Road **(UW/2019/613)**  
Single storey extension, 123 Southampton Road **(UW/2019/600)**  
1No bed bungalow in back garden **(UW/2019/618)**

**Building Control carried out 390 Building Regulation related site inspections**

**Councillor James Hill**  
**Cabinet Member for Planning**



### **Environmental Services Contract**

The Environmental Service delivery continues to improve, the number of service requests is down and complaint levels have reduced significantly, recycling rates continue to improve, missed bin collections continue to decrease and nearly 50 engagement and education activities have taken place since June 2019.

Street cleansing standards continue to improve and improvements in the weed spraying operation is now beginning to be noticeable.

The warm and wet weather is still causing the grass to grow and therefore having an effect on the grass cutting operations but this is now slowing and preparations for the winter maintenance programme are now commencing.

We are currently also preparing to transfer approximately 3,000 properties from sacks to bins in October/November – this will introduce wheeled bins to those properties that were previously not included in the bin roll out under the previous contractor.

Work is also underway on producing both a Cemeteries and graveyard and refuse/recycling collection policy.

### **Parks and Open Spaces**

The MUGA at Victoria Park has been re-lined, as the basketball and football markings had worn off. Also, the adjacent tarmacked area has had a children's train track and hopscotch game permanently marked out.

Victoria Park has also had new "Welcome" signs installed at the main entrances.

The Racecourse has had a replacement bird's nest swing installed after the original one was damaged.

St Crispin's Allotment – A low level fence and gate has been erected within the allotment to create an enclosure adjacent to the residential home. This is so the gardening group with in the home are able to be part of the allotment. The works also include a new footpath.

Thornton Park has had a new footpath at the entrance A508/Harborough Road and Welcome signs have now been installed.

Upgraded swings in Abington Park including new safety surface.

## **Neighbourhood Wardens**

The Neighbourhood Wardens are still as busy as ever and have carried out the following:

- They have investigated 124 incidents
- They have issued 189 Statutory notices
- Issued 13 Community Protection Notices
- Issued 13 Fixed penalty notices for fly-tipping
- Issued 5 fixed penalty notices to businesses under the Environmental Protection Act - Duty of Care, for not having the appropriate documentation for their waste disposal
- They have removed 23 illegal vehicles off the road

## **Environmental Enforcement Contract**

During September and October the environmental enforcement officers issued a total of .... Fixed penalty were issued.

## **Use of CCTV**

At the Scrutiny meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> September, I was able to brief scrutiny on the trial of a new CCTV camera that we have been trialling in the Borough. The camera has a long life battery so does not need to be wired into mains electricity and whilst the location it is deployed here has clear signage saying CCTV is use to capture potential fly-tipping offenders – the camera itself cannot be seen. Following an analysis of the trial, we have now moved into purchasing extra cameras with funding coming from our contractor Veolia, we will be updating our policy and procedure to ensure compliance with current legal requirements, offenders caught will now be prosecuted and we are looking at potential other locations within the Borough to extend the use of this type of technology in tackling fly-tipping. During September the top three areas for reported fly tips outside of Castle ward are Talavera 126, Billing 60 and Semilong 60.

## **Climate Change Forum**

The next meeting of the Climate Change Forum is booked for the 12<sup>th</sup> November at 5.30pm. An officer forum has also been established when any interested officers can come together and discuss ways in which we can achieve our overall objective.

Work is being progressed with the installation of the electric vehicle charging points with surveys being undertaken to determine which potential sites have suitable power supplies available and key milestones agreed with the Project Team.

Air Quality – The Annual Status Report (ASR) for 2019 has been uploaded to the Councils website as per the motion passed at the last full council meeting. The report has now been appraised by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and formal feedback has been provided. I am happy to advise that DEFRA are satisfied with the overall findings of the report and have approved the actions we are currently taking to improve air quality within the borough.

Raw nitrogen dioxide data up to the month of August has been uploaded onto the Councils website.

**Councillor Mike Hallam**  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**



## **Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement & Community Safety**

**Northampton Borough Council**

**4 November 2019**

### **Councillor Community Fund**

Since 1 April 2019, a total of £87,582.65 has been spent by councillors on supporting the delivery of positive outcomes in their wards.

### **Partnership Support**

Since 1 April 2019, a total of £32,806.96 has been spent through the small grants process, supporting 14 organisations and projects, delivering positive outcomes for the community.

### **Forums**

11 October – International Coming Out Day bake sale held by LGBTQ staff & allies network, raised more than £100 for local charity Q Space.

14 – 18 October – National Hate Crime Week. Supporting Northampton Partnership Homes and Northants Police to raise awareness amongst the community, what is hate crime and how to report it. Presence throughout the week at high footfall areas, including the Market Square and Weston Favell Shopping Centre.

New intake of youth forum members, all secondary schools in the Borough written to. The majority have nominated two attendees to represent their school at the youth forum. We have more than 15 committed, regular attending representatives.

7 November – UK Parliament Week Question Time event with Cllrs, the High Sheriff and young people from the youth forum.

29 November – I'm Still Me- LGBTQ schools conference for teachers to be held, training and raising awareness amongst our school teachers.

Planning underway for International Day of People with Disabilities (event to be held on 4 October) in partnership with Deafconnect and Northants Police.

### **Events**

The half marathon on Sunday 29 September was well supported with hundreds of runners taking to our streets around the town centre and finishing at Delapre Park.

The Diwali light celebrations lit up the town centre on Saturday 19 October with stage entertainment on the Market Square and the wonderful parade along Abington Street, St Giles Street and around All Saints.

The Street Fair visited the town centre streets from Saturday 26 to Tuesday 29 October providing entertainment for families.

The annual Fireworks Display took place on the Racecourse on Sunday 3 November and thousands of families entertained with music, a glow show and a magical firework display.

Looking forward we have Remembrance Day Service and Parade in the town centre on Sunday 10 November followed by the Christmas Light Switch-on on Saturday 23 November on the

Market Square with the Frost Fair and parade on Sunday 1 December. There will be entertainment on the Market Square and three Saturday's 30 November, 7 and 14 December.

We supported Northampton Indian Hindu Organisation to deliver Northampton Diwali Parade on the 19th October.

Schools had the opportunity to take part in workshops prior to the parade and make lanterns to display on the day.

### **Culture & Heritage**

Abington Park Museum continues to offer a wide range of exhibitions, activities and events which are appealing to young and old alike.

September saw the exhibition 'Death on Two Legs' open – Northampton artist, Aasen Stephenson has been creating work using traditional paper cutting techniques for many years and first started experimenting with Abington Park's fallen sycamore leaves in 2012. His delicate cuts transform something discarded into something prized. The exhibition is proving popular with visitors.

The museum was the venue for the annual Northampton Heritage Fair during September which attracted over 800 visitors. Exhibitors included the Northampton & District Model Railway Club, Jeyes of Earls Barton, Northampton Transport Heritage and more.

The second in a series of Italian food workshops led by Italian cook and author Carmela Sereno Hayes was enjoyed by 16 adults. The autumn season kicked off with a Food Fair which attracted over 30 county and regional food & traders. Tours of Abington Park Museum led by museum volunteers sold out in September and October, attracting 24 attendees. The first of the autumn series of Over 60s talks sold out to 70 adults. A study day in early October sold out to over 70 adults - a number of speakers including historian and author of 'Eleanor of Castille The Shadow Queen' explored the well-known Northampton Queen Eleanor Cross and the story of Eleanor of Castille, the Queen of Edward 1.

During October the museum was hired out to Northamptonshire Partnership Homes for a Garden Competition, two paranormal events and four Ghost Tours led by the Looking Glass Theatre.

The museum benefited from a recent acquisition of an oil painting by Thomas William Rutter of the interior of the parish church of St Denis, Faxton before it became a ruin. Rutter attended the Northampton School of Art in Abington Street c.1916 and was a member of the Northampton Town & County Art Society. The painting was part of a bequest from Peter Perry, who was up until his retirement, a director of Ward White shoe manufacturers in Higham Ferrers.

### **Museum Expansion Project**

Work on utilities is almost complete, with the electric meter installed and power now live. Gas pipes have been installed and new meter about to go in.

Externally completion of curtain wall, cladding and installation of roof glazing has been completed. Work has begun on the installation of the courtyard paving. Works to the roof are complete and final work is underway on the façade of the building.

Internally the new goods lift is completed and awaiting final testing the timber floors to the Central Hall, Atrium, and shop is complete. Concrete floor to the shoe gallery is complete. Installation has begun on the café and kitchen fit out and appointment made of the operator who will run and manage the café. The exhibition fit out contractor has begun installing networks and cases.

## Customer Services

We have been working with NPH to promote Daphne the bus. There is a recording on the Housing Officer line promoting the Rota and community engagement sessions. We have started to see a reduction in the appointments that the contact centre are booking in for the housing officer and hope this will start to reduce contact and extend outreach.

We recently delivered a councillor development session focussing on the new 'Report it' tool and benefits and future development in relation to tracking cases. The session also covered reporting out of hours.

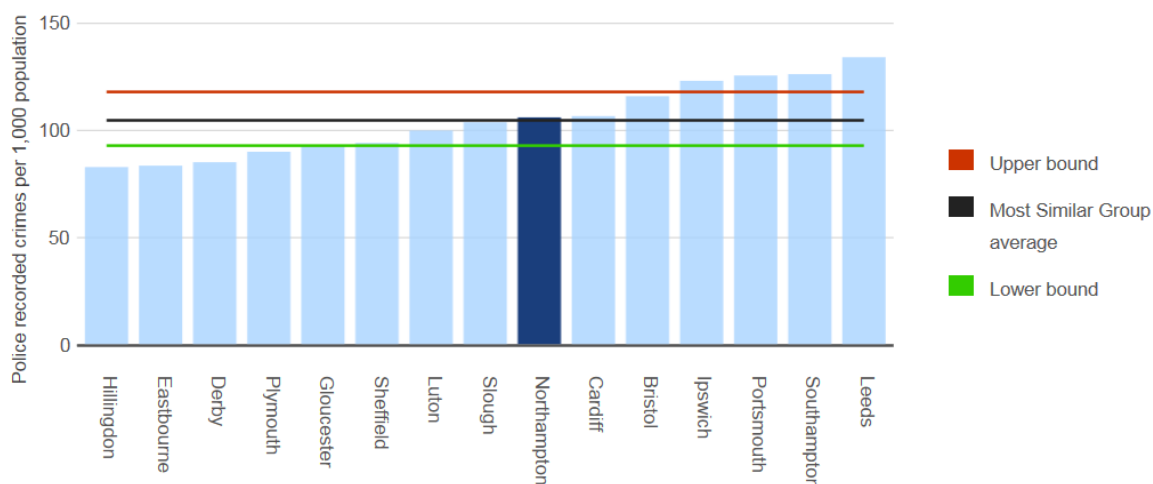
National Customer Service Week took place from 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October and was very well supported, showcasing and celebrating customer excellence. During the week the customer service team held an awards ceremony and recognised colleagues for a range of attributes including attendance, most conscientious, role models and also customer satisfaction. They were judged on a range of factors including customer feedback.

## Community Safety

Over the past two months July and August 2019, (in comparison to the same two months last year, 2018), there has been a reduction in overall crime by 13% (698 crimes) in Northampton.

Further data can be accessed via [www.police.co.uk](http://www.police.co.uk) which provides a statistical breakdown of area (North East, Central and South West) and crime type

In the year ending December 2018, the crime rate in Northampton was about the same as the average crime rate across similar areas.



27 September - Supported University of Northampton Fresher's week, promoting personal safety and nights out campaign.

16 October, primary school community safety event held at the Deco Theatre, more than 180 year 6 students attended during the day to learn more from our experts, through workshops and theatre performances and films about important issues such as knife crime, gangs, online safety, child sexual exploitation, rail safety, hate crime and anti-social behaviour.

21 October – Burglary Week of Action delivered in 4 of our identified hotspot areas across the Borough. The week's activity included environmental improvement work, awareness raising and direct safety messages with targeted information put through the doors of properties. The messages coincided with the clocks going back and the darker evenings.



25 October and 4 November – bike marking events carried out in partnership with the police at Waterside and Northampton General Hospital.

Planning underway for our first secondary schools event. To be held at the Deco theatre in November. 540 year 8 and 9 students will attend our community safety awareness event, to hear key community safety messages. Expert speakers, performers and presenters will cover key topics such as healthy relationships, knife and gang crime, personal safety, online safety, grooming, cyber bullying and hate crime.

10 new police officers assigned to town centre for operation lily.

New initiative introduced by superintendent Chris Hilary.  
Very positive results. 18 arrests in first 2 weeks.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Supported the Retail Crime initiative and the BID, with the launch of the new anti-social behaviour reporting software for local businesses in the Town Centre (NTARS).

Training for two new police officers regarding the current ASB legislation and what tools and measures we have to tackle ASB delivered.

Our third Cuckooing specific injunction is being complied, ready to be presented in court imminently.

An aggressive and abusive neighbour dispute has been dealt with by issuing all 5 adults involved in the dispute with CPW's.

Two CPN's issued for shoplifting and aggressive behaviour.

**Councillor Anna King**  
**Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety**



## **Finance**

The Council continues to suffer additional cost pressure around housing and homelessness the Corporate Management Board are working with that service area to assist with the management and mitigation the impact on budgets in the current year.

Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board have met to consider the challenges for next year and future years. Officers are considering and developing proposals for Cabinet to consider to develop the budget for 2020/21 and the NBC Medium Term Financial Plan contribution to the new Unitary Council. The recent announcement to cap Council Tax increases to 1.99% has impacted on our assumptions.

Having lifted the cap on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) borrowing, Treasury announced without warning in October that it would add 1% to all Public Works Loan Board loans. This will not stop the plans we have to build more homes, but will make the business cases more challenging.

The Statement of Accounts for 2017/18 were signed off by KPMG, we now await full engagement with Ernst Young (EY) to plan and deliver the Accounts for 2018/19.

## **REVENUES & BENEFITS**

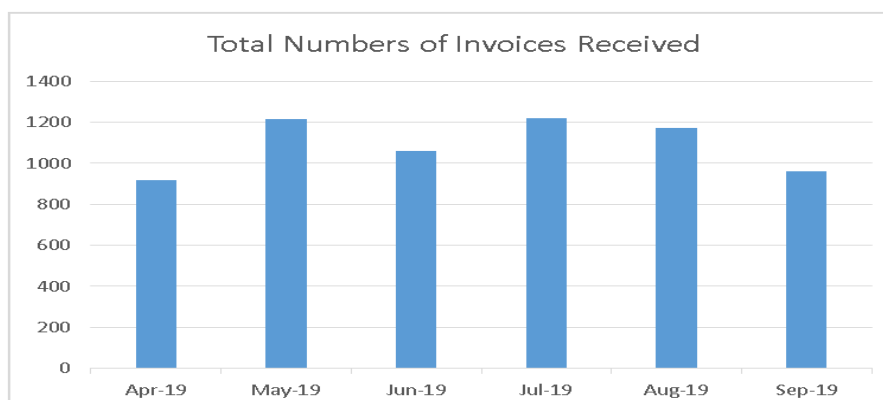
**Collection Rates** – The year has started with on target performance in respect of billing and initial collection rates, there is a need to re-profile the monthly collection values due to the high volume moving from 10 month direct debits to 12 months.

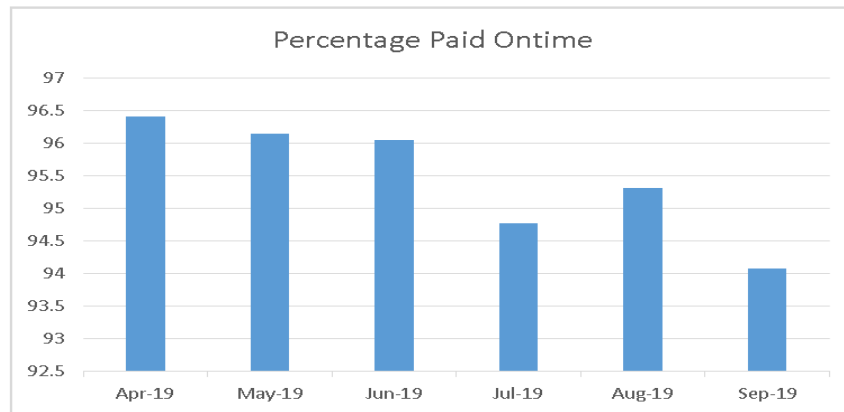
**Business Rates** – The service continues to run well, with continued monitoring of business volatility and risk.

**Benefits** – The service is working with NCC to agree a scheme to review Single Person Discount to ensure that those entitled receive the benefit and remind those whose circumstances have changed that failure to inform the Council may risk recovery action .

## **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE / RECEIVABLE**

The table below reflect that 6552 Invoices were received in the first six months of the year, the average paid on time is 95.5% for that period





In respect of recorded sundry debt As at the end of S there was a total of September £1,869,721 on the sundry debtors system of which £ 1,635,692 was older than 61 days. The largest service area debt is Asset Management with £485,937 of debt, which is a reduction from the prior reported figure. The CFO Governance Team continues to work with the Asset Management Team to improve processes, procedures and debt management to reduce the level of aged debt.

## **FACILITIES**

### **Guildhall Office**

Facilities Management hosted 7 Wedding Ceremonies and 3 Reception. The Guildhall has also been the venue of choice for National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Question Time & Public Board Meeting for an all-day meeting, with approx.. 150 people attending throughout the day.

Hosted all day conference for Historic England, Heritage Day and Civic Sunday, have secured confirmed bookings worth £7361.50 for 2019 and 2020 bookings

Statistics include:

- Scanning accuracy – 99.75%
- 1,300 incoming Revs and Bens documents indexed
- Indexing accuracy – 100%
- 3079 incoming Revs and Bens e-mails indexed

**Councillor Brandon Eldred**  
**Cabinet Member for Finance**



## **Town Centre Operations**

The lift refurbishment works to two lifts in the Mayorhold MSCP are complete and lifts have been reopened to the public. The refurbishment works to the four lifts in St Johns MSCP are progressing on programme should be completed before Christmas.

The daily ticket parking figures for the April – September showed 1,212,405 visitors using the council's car parks which is an increase of 21% in comparison with the same period in 2018.

The overall footfall figures for the January – September 2019 period for the town centre is 1,115,523 which is a fall of 1,490,328 (-11%) in comparison with the same period in 2018.

The footfall figures for September 2019 across the town centre is 102,1312 which is fall of 15% in comparison with the same period in 2018.

## **Economic Growth and Regeneration**

- Work continues to develop the Business Case for the next stage of the Future High Street Fund submission. A draft is required to be submitted in January 2020 with the final business case submission required in April 2020. Designs for the projects to be included within the bid are progressing with consultation on a number of these proposals. The previous dates were November and February and these revised dates are very welcome in view of the work involved.
- Work on a new Masterplan setting the vision for the transformation of Northampton Town Centre has now been completed. Its creation and development has been overseen by Northampton Forward and it went to Cabinet for consideration 16 October. The masterplan will form a major strand of the Councils Corporate Plan, be used as a consideration for future planning applications and will inform emerging planning policy.
- It was announced in September that Northampton has been selected as one of the towns to receive up to £25m from the governments Towns Fund. The fund will be focused on improved transport, culture, skills and broadband connectivity aimed at improving the economic growth prospects of towns. We are currently awaiting further guidance before developing our submission into this fund.
- The Vulcan Works project continues to progress with the careful refurbishment of the listed buildings and new build extensions to the site. A report on the procurement of an operator for the centre will be taken to Cabinet in November in order to get an operator appointed in the spring of 2020.

- Work on Upton Country Park Phase 2 continues with the major elements of earthworks and hard landscaping all to be completed by the end of October. This project continues on time and within budget.
- The delivery of the Museum continues with the main build now entering into its final stages, the work on the interior is due to start imminently.

## **Asset Management**

- The Restoration of Billing Brook Lakes to create new wetland habitats, reed beds and islands for wildlife is underway. The project, in partnership with Growing Together, the Environment Agency, the National Lottery Community Fund and the Mick George Community Fund, is progressing on time and to budget. It scheduled to complete by December 2019
- Emergency works were required to the Califoriers at Mounts baths with these needing to be replaced. Work on this is currently underway and the project is progressing well and on schedule. It is expected to be complete before the New Year.
- Plans for the extension of the Rectory Farm Community Centre have been approved and a contractor has been appointed to undertake the works. Work is scheduled to commence in Oct 19 and be complete in Apr 20.
- Following Cabinet approval to improve street lighting owned by NBC across the Borough to LED lighting we have now concluded contract discussions with the contractor for this work. This project will reduce carbon emissions and improve public safety. Work is expected to commence in December and take around 6 months to complete
- Emergency works to replace the sprinklers in the Royal and Derngate is now complete.

**Councillor Tim Hadland**  
**Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning**