

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held at The Jeffrey Room,  
The Guildhall, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE on  
20 February 2020 at 6pm

**George Candler**  
**Chief Executive**

If you need any advice or information regarding this agenda please phone Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, telephone 01604 837408 (direct dial), email [ttiff@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:ttiff@northampton.gov.uk) who will be able to assist with your enquiry. For further information regarding **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** please visit the website [www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny)

**Members of the Committee**

Chair	Councillor Jamie Lane
Deputy-Chair	Councillor Graham Walker
Committee Members	Councillor Tony Ansell Councillor Rufia Ashraf Councillor Mohammed Azizur Rahman ( Aziz) Councillor Janice Duffy Councillor Gareth Eales Councillor Penelope Flavell Councillor Luke Graystone Councillor Samuel Kilby-Shaw Councillor Dennis Meredith Councillor Emma Roberts Councillor Cathrine Russell Councillor Brian W Sargeant Councillor Zoe Smith

**Calendar of meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Room</b>
20 April 2020 6:00 pm 8 June 13 July 7 September 9 November 11 January 2021 15 February	All meetings to be held in the Jeffery Room at the Guildhall unless otherwise stated

# Northampton Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee

## Agenda

Item No and Time	Title	Pages	Action required
<b>1</b> <b>6:00pm</b>	<b>Apologies</b>		Members to note any apologies and substitution
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>1 - 8</b>	Members to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2020.
<b>3</b>	<b>Deputations/Public Addresses</b>		<p>The Chair to note public address requests.</p> <p>The public can speak on any agenda item for a maximum of three minutes per speaker per item. You are not required to register your intention to speak in advance but should arrive at the meeting a few minutes early, complete a <a href="#">Public Address Protocol</a> and notify the Scrutiny Officer of your intention to speak.</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest (Including Whipping)</b>		Members to state any interests.
<b>5</b> <b>6:05pm</b>	<b>Northampton Forward</b>	<b>9 - 10</b>	
<b>6</b> <b>6:25pm</b>	<b>Pre Decision Scrutiny - Trial of buy back properties</b>		The Committee to undertake pre decision scrutiny on the Trial of buy back properties.
<b>7</b> <b>6:45pm</b>	<b>CSP Performance</b>	<b>11 - 16</b>	The Committee to review the CSP Performance report.
<b>8</b> <b>7:00pm</b>	<b>Performance Management Scrutiny</b>	<b>17</b>	The Committee to undertake Performance Management Scrutiny on KPI PP22 – Percentage of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles inspected which comply with regulations
<b>9</b> <b>7:15pm</b>	<b>Tree Maintenance Policy</b>	<b>19 - 33</b>	The Committee to receive a briefing on the Tree Maintenance Policy.
<b>10</b>	<b>Monitoring of O&amp;S Reports</b>		
<b>10 (a)</b> <b>7:30pm</b>	<b>Cemeteries</b>	<b>35 - 44</b>	
<b>11</b>	<b>Scrutiny Panels</b>		The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive a progress report from the three Scrutiny Panels.

## Northampton Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee

<b>11 (a) 7:45pm</b>	<b>Scrutiny Panel 1</b>	<b>45</b>	
<b>11 (b) 7:50pm</b>	<b>Gangs and Knife Crime Working Group</b>	<b>47</b>	
<b>12 7:55pm</b>	<b>Potential future pre decision scrutiny.</b>		The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider any potential issues for future pre decision scrutiny.
<b>13 8:00pm</b>	<b>Urgent Items</b>		This issue is for business that by reasons of the special circumstances to be specified, the Chair is of the opinion is of sufficient urgency to consider. Members or Officers that wish to raise urgent items are to inform the Chair in advance.

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## NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 9 January 2020

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair); Councillor Graham Walker (Deputy Chair); Councillors Tony Ansell, Aziz, Janice Duffy, Terrie Eales (Substitute for Councillor Gareth Eales), Dennis Meredith, Emma Roberts, Cathrine Russell and Zoe Smith

Councillor Jonathan Nunn – Leader of the Council  
Councillor Phil Larratt – Deputy Leader of the Council  
Councillor Stephen Hibbert – Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing  
Councillor Brandon Eldred – Cabinet Member for Finance  
Councillor Tim Hadland – Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise  
Councillor Anna King – Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Engagement  
Councillor J Hill – Cabinet Member for Planning  
George Candler – Chief Executive  
Francis Fernandes – Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer  
Stuart McGregor – Chief Finance Officer  
Phil Harris – Head of Housing and Wellbeing  
Peter Baguley – Head of Planning  
Kevin Langley – Economic Growth & Regeneration Manager  
Shelley Parker – Regeneration Manager  
Tracy Tiff – Democratic and Member Services Manager  
Ian Redfern – Managing Director, NLT

Councillor Sally Beardsworth – addressed the Committee at agenda item 6

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashraf, G Eales (T Eales – substitute) and Sargeant.

#### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

#### 3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Councillor Beardsworth addressed the Committee on agenda item 5 Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Reporting and Monitoring Working Group.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)**

Councillor Smith declared an interest in agenda item 6 – Sports Policy as a Board Member of NLT.

At this point the Chair agreed to re-order the agenda and take item 6 before item 5.

#### **5. SPORTS POLICY**

Ian Redfern, Managing Director, NLT, and Councillor Phil Larratt, Deputy Leader of the Council, presented a written briefing note in relation to the Sports Policy Motion that had been carried at full Council on 11 March 2019. Salient points:

- It is important for Northampton to have a Sports Policy; Daventry and South Northants both have such a Strategy. There is a need for one strategy for West Northamptonshire; going forward into Unitary.
- It was proposed that Officers of NLT would draft a Sports Policy for Northampton and will have dialogue with the Head of Customers and Communities and the Deputy Leader of the Council, NBC.

The Chair highlighted that it was important that Overview and Scrutiny undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Sports Policy.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- In response to a query regarding assurances that facilities such as small parks and small skate parks were included, Ian Redfern confirmed that consultations would take place and it would be aimed that all such facilities would be included. Parish Councils would be included.

Ian Redfern and Councillor Larratt were thanked for their address

AGREED: That Overview and Scrutiny undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the Sports Strategy at the appropriate time.

#### **6. REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTING AND MONITORING WORKING GROUP - GENERAL FUND MTFP 2020/2021 AND DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS**

Councillor Beardsworth addressed the Committee conveying her concerns regarding budget cuts to the Voluntary Sector; in her opinion, she felt it would be better for the Councillor Empowerment Fund to be cut to zero for each Councillor. She noted the budgetary pressures in respect of homelessness. In response to a query from the Committee, Councillor Beardsworth suggested that £90,000 should be allocated to the Voluntary sector; there is a need for people to receive the right care and treatment.

Councillor Beardsworth was concerned that charges for the collection of green waste would be implemented and heard that this had been resolved at full Council in February 2019 to be implemented in 2020.

Councillor Beardsworth raised concern regarding the number of households in temporary accommodation of 348. This was felt to be a big number. She commented that a number of staff had been employed to deal with this and help the homeless but there are not the homes available for them. There is a need to look at different ways to acquire temporary accommodation

Councillor Beardsworth was thanked for her contribution.

The Chair advised that the O&S Working Group had met recently and considered the draft budget in detail and had proposed six items from the draft budget for the Committee to budget-scrutinise, three of which a written response was received. He highlighted the Committee would not be scrutinising the proposed budget in its entirety at this meeting.

Councillor Eldred, Cabinet Member for Finance, advised that a consultation drop in session on the budget is scheduled for 27 January 2020 and all are welcome to attend.

### **Housing – Temporary accommodation and income streams**

The Committee heard that temporary accommodation is a serious issue and puts a strain on the budget; if required, funds would be used from reserves. Officers are investigating options for temporary accommodation such as “buy back” of former Right to Buy properties that have come back onto the market. One bedded bed and breakfast accommodation that is used as temporary accommodation costs around £12,500 per year; should NBC have its own accommodation this cost would reduce to £5,000. Borrowing would need to take place to acquire such buildings.

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing, and Phil Harris, Head of Housing and Wellbeing, addressed the Committee commenting that temporary accommodation and homelessness is a massive challenge. Families in temporary accommodation has increased by 6%. Regular updates are produced and there is a detailed action plan.

It was noted that 100 less affordable houses had become available than had been forecasted. NBC is working with NPH regarding acquiring the first 22 ex-right to buy homes for homeless families. These are additional homes to those that are already being purchased.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

In response to a query whether temporary prefab accommodation could be used; Phil Harris advised that this had been previously investigated but there was a need for more

permanent solutions to be looked at. A summary of choices and cost benefits would be produced for a future scrutiny meeting.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the increase in temporary accommodation of 6% and how it would be endeavoured to reduce this. The Committee further commented that planning decisions with less than 35% affordable housing is making an impact.

Councillor Hibbert confirmed that preventing homelessness is a successful area of work since the new team has been appointed. Phil Harris added that it is a priority to prevent homelessness where possible. £500,000 has been invested into the restructure of housing, money and advice services. The lack of affordable housing does have an impact.

The Committee further commented that 130 properties were sold under the right to buy scheme in the last 12 months and queried what impact this had made on affordable housing and whether right to buy could be prevented. In response, the Committee heard that Rent Plus and other affordable rent options are being investigated, there is a real benefit for there to be a variety of affordable housing models. Belgrade House will be for 120 key worker homes, under a lease agreement.

NBC is purchasing former Council homes that NBC and NPH is aware of the history of and are already in an NPH maintenance area. The first 24 homes have been purchased successfully. Other housing stock will also be investigated. Each purchase is looked at on a case by case basis. A trial is in place. The Committee suggested that it undertakes scrutiny of this trial and a report is submitted to a future meeting.

Regarding Right to Buys, the Committee heard that the receipt of these are split 30% to the local authority and 70% to central Government.

In response to a query regarding Women's Refuges, the Committee heard that NBC gave support and funding to EVE; a local church has also opened a Women's Shelter.

In response to a query regarding meeting the budget next year, Phil Harris advised that he was confident that the Action Plan would set out to achieve its targets. However, more people had come for help and presented as homeless than expected.

## **Unitary – Budget of £2.4 million**

The Chair confirmed that the Committee has asked for information how the budget of £2.4 million for Unitary would be monitored.

Councillor Jonathan Nunn, Leader of the Council, advised that the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee had met on 7 January 2020 and received an update on the entire budget for Unitary which was £43.5 million; which includes NCC's transformation budget, Business Rates Uplift monies (Kettering act as accountable body) and funding from all 8 local authorities (Daventry act as accountable body). Adult Social Care and Children's Services are being transformed. Savings of £80 million per year are being aimed for.

A Member Briefing is scheduled for 27 January 2020, all Members have been invited to attend, this briefing will include details regarding the budget.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:



- In response to a query, the budget of £2.4 million for Unitary had been put together following a lot of detailed planning and estimating. £1 million had previously been set aside for Unitary and £1.4 million is included in the forthcoming proposed budget for 2020/2021. Budget monitoring will take place.
- In answer to a query regarding the transformation period, the Committee heard that this was the biggest change exercise for any Council to go through.
- The Committee was advised that major change creates uncertainty but there is also positivity. George Chandler, Chief Executive, advised that one of his roles is to ensure communication to staff and Members stays consistent and upbeat. The next 15 months will be very busy and there will be real opportunities.
- £500,000 has been spent so far. The initial budget estimate of £1 million required from each local authority was incredibly low and it has been refined. It is a programmed budget over a 2-3 year period and not an annualised budget; it is possible there may be the need for virements between individual budgets as the work progresses. A further report will be considered by the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee at its meeting in February 2020.

## **Staff and Resources – Capacity and Sustainability**

George Candler, Chief Executive, advised that there is always an element of risk in relation to retention of staff and resources during a period of change such as local government reorganisation. Currently there are 322 FTEs employed at NBC; there is always a level of vacancies, and some areas are proving difficult to recruit to. 42 employees left in 2019/2020. Exit Interviews are undertaken and based on analysis from the last 12 months the majority of staff leave due to promotion, sometimes outside local government. A small number leave because they are not happy in the role. No one stated they were leaving due to Unitary. It is understood, however, that employees want certainties and may look for another job during this period of change. It is important to make sure that regular, consistent and honest dialogue takes place with staff. There will also be regular briefings on the programme and newsletters will shortly be coming out for all staff and elected members. Training and development is key for staff and succession planning has also been identified to ensure long term continuity for roles. The Chief Executive concluded stating he felt, based on previous experience, that the majority of Officers will have roles in the new Unitary Authority.

The Committee heard that there will be a challenge to deliver BAU, Unitary and 'sprint to the line' work which may lead to a need to prioritise workloads.

At this point clarification of the charge for green waste collection was provided. This had been approved in the budget for 2019/2020 and the charge will come into effect in April 2020; it had originally been anticipated that it would come into force in January 2020.

The Chair thanked Officers for the written responses on the following, the contents of which were noted.

- EAC – Maintenance budgets
- Sustainability issues
- Councillor Empowerment Fund

AGREED: That:

- (1) The Committee was content with the responses and information provided regarding the 3 issues and the written responses provided to the three further issues.
- (2) The Committee undertakes pre decision scrutiny on the trial of the buy back scheme.

## **7. AIR QUALITY AND MANAGEMENT CHANGE WORKING GROUP**

The Chair advised that a meeting of this Group had not taken place recently.

## **8. MONITORING OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS**

### **(A) HOMELESSNESS**

Councillor Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing and Phil Harris, Head of Housing and Wellbeing, presented the monitoring Action Plan to the Committee, highlighting the salient points.

In response to a query regarding the Homeless Forum, it was confirmed that this Forum had met and an Independent Chair appointed. The Forum will meet quarterly with the next meeting set for January 2020. A Family Homeless Forum will also be established.

AGREED: That monitoring is complete.

### **(B) CULTURE AND TOURISM**

The Committee considered the Action Plan for accepted recommendations contained in the Scrutiny Report - Culture and Tourism.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- Work is being carried out regarding blue plaques. The Committee was advised who was included on the potential list for a blue plaque; however, there would be a consultation process undertaken and the public invited to put forward suggestions. A Panel would then make the final decision.
- In response to a query regarding the impact the transformation programme could have on this project, the Committee heard that it would be aimed.
- The Committee commented that some residents are keen to host a street party of VE Day in May and queried what the Council would be doing in this respect.

- It was confirmed that the Museum would consist of a coffee shop and Tourist Information Centre.

AGREED: That further monitoring takes place at the meeting of the Committee on 20 April 2020.

## **9. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee considered the Corporate Performance All Measures Report – September 2019. The Chair commented that there was concern regarding the number of people living in temporary accommodation and that it would be useful for this issue to be put forward for a potential Scrutiny Review for 2020/2021.

Concern was raised regarding KPI PP22 – Percentage of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles inspected which comply with regulations.

AGREED: (1) That it be suggested to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programming event for 2020/2021 that temporary accommodation is considered as a Scrutiny review for this year.

(2) That the Committee undertakes performance management Scrutiny on KPI PP22 – Percentage of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles inspected which comply with regulations at its next meeting.

## **10. SCRUTINY PANELS**

### **11. SCRUTINY PANEL 1**

The update was noted.

### **12. GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME WORKING GROUP**

The update was noted.

### **13. POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE DECISION SCRUTINY.**

The Committee confirmed that it would undertake pre-decision scrutiny on the following items:

Draft Sports Policy – at the appropriate time

Trial - Buy Back Scheme of properties – 20 February 2020 meeting

At this point the Chair confirmed that not enough Members had expressed an interest into becoming a Member of the Tree Maintenance Policy Working Group, therefore, the Cabinet Member for Environment had been asked to provide a written brief to the next meeting. The Chair confirmed he would also contact the Committee again, inviting Members to express an interest to join this Working Group.

#### **14. URGENT ITEMS**

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 8:00 pm



**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**20 FEBRUARY 2020**

#### **BRIEFING NOTE:**

#### **Northampton Forward**

#### **1 UPDATE**

- 1.1 Since the update provided at the O&SC meeting 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 Northampton Forward have continued to meet to provide overview to the Future High Street Fund Full Business Case (FBC) development. Northampton Forward Board meetings have taken place on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 17<sup>th</sup> December and 14<sup>th</sup> January.
- 1.2 The main focus in this time was preparing the FBC for its draft submission on 15<sup>th</sup> January ahead of the full submission being made by 30<sup>th</sup> April. The FBC needs to be set out in the HM Treasury's five case business case model which details the Strategic, Economic, Financial, Commercial and Management cases. Grant Thornton are being used to support the council in compiling this business case.
- 1.3 Draft versions of each of the five business case sections have been presented to the Northampton Forward Board over these meetings and ahead of the draft submission. The business case requests funding to enable delivery of interventions that have been drawn from the Northampton Town Centre Masterplan.
- 1.4 The draft FBC was submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on January 15<sup>th</sup>. We have been informed that we will receive feedback in 6-8 weeks of submission, as such we expect to receive this in early March.
- 1.5 The design development for the selected schemes continues to be progressed to inform the final business case submission. As part of the design development a 6-week consultation on the design of the Market Square took place between late November and early January. The results of this have been analysed and will be fed back to Gillespies (Land scape Architects) to inform the next stage of designs. Design development on the proposed schemes will conclude at the end of February so that the revised costs and outputs can be calculated and fed into the final business case submission.
- 1.6 Sitting alongside this work is the development of a Place Marketing Strategy for the town with the first phase of work currently under development. The place marketing tender has subsequently been developed and was reviewed by the

Northampton Forward Board and ahead of this being advertised. Seven companies were invited to bid for this first stage of work with the deadline for tender submissions being the 14<sup>th</sup> February.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the progress report is noted, and further updates are provided as requested by the committee.

Author: George Candler, Chief Executive, on behalf of Councillor Jonathan Nunn, Chair of Northampton Forward Project Board

10 February 2020



## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Trial 'Buy Back' Scheme</b>
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**Meeting Date:** 20 February 2020

**Accountable Cabinet Member:** Councillor Stephen Hibbert

### 1. Purpose of this Briefing

- 1.1 During its meeting on 9 January 2020, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of a trial scheme that Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) is operating, on the Council's behalf, to 'buy back' former council homes and let them to homeless households living in temporary accommodation.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Briefing is to provide the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with information about the 'Buy Back' scheme and the impact it is likely to have on the households that are rehoused and the Council's use of temporary accommodation.

### 2. The 'Buy Back' arrangements

- 2.1 When a council home is sold under the 'Right To Buy', a covenant is applied to the property, requiring the purchaser to offer the Council (for a period of eight weeks) the right of first refusal to purchase the property if they wish to sell it within 10 years.
- 2.2 Internet searches of property websites (such as Rightmove) have made it easier to identify former council homes that are being sold on the open market. NPH is also actively searching the housing market for suitable former council homes to purchase.
- 2.3 In recent years, provision has been made – within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme – for the Council to buy former council homes under the 'Buy Back Scheme. These homes have been added to the Council's housing stock.

### **3. Reducing the use and cost of temporary accommodation**

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- 3.1 In April 2019, Cabinet approved an Action Plan that was designed to reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation (TA) and minimise the number of households living in expensive, nightly-purchased TA.
- 3.2 Unfortunately, despite all of the action that has been taken to reduce the Council's use of temporary accommodation, the number of households moving into TA has continued to exceed the number of households moving out of TA.
- 3.3 The main reasons for this are the high levels of homelessness, the severe shortage of suitable move-on accommodation and the lower than expected number of council and housing association homes that have become available for letting in 2019/20.

### **4. Purchase and repair of former council homes**

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- 4.1 In order to reduce the number of households in expensive, nightly-purchased TA, the Council commissioned NPH to purchase and repair an initial tranche of former council homes (flats and houses) that were on the market and were situated in neighbourhoods that already contain homes which are owned by the Council and managed by NPH.
- 4.2 NPH has now developed a pipeline of 24 properties that it is purchasing through the Housing Revenue Account at a total cost of approximately £4.2m:
  - 4 x one-bedroom flats
  - 2 x two-bedroom house
  - 5 x two-bedroom flats
  - 1 x three-bedroom maisonettes
  - 10 x three-bedroom house
  - 1 x 4-bedroom house
  - 1 x five-bedroom house
- 4.3 Although 3 of these 24 properties – a two-bedroom flat, a two-bedroom house and a three-bedroom house – will be used as temporary accommodation, 21 of them will be let as permanent accommodation, at affordable rents (but capped at LHA rates), to homeless households that have spent longest in expensive, nightly-purchased TA.
- 4.4 By 19 February 2020, NPH had completed the purchase of 11 of the 24 homes and, of those that had been completed, 3 had been let to homeless households and 8 were undergoing repairs and/or refurbishment.

### **5. Financial benefits of NPH's acquisition of the 24 former council homes**

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- 5.1 An evaluation is currently being carried out to determine the financial benefits of NPH's acquisition of the 24 homes for homeless households living in TA.
- 5.2 However, it is estimated that, by purchasing the 24 homes and using them in a way that enables 24 homeless households to move out of expensive, nightly-purchased TA, the Council will be able to avoid TA costs equivalent to around £123,000 per annum.
- 5.3 On completion of the evaluation, consideration will be given to the impact that further acquisitions will have on the amount of money the Council spends on TA.

**Phil Harris**  
**Director of Housing and Wellbeing**  
**01604 837871**



# Agenda Item 7

## Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



### Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 February 2020

### Briefing Note – Crime & Disorder, Overview & Scrutiny

#### Summary

On the 3 February 2011 it was agreed that as part of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee role, that in meeting their responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, an annual report from the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) would be provided. The report would focus on the levels of CSP performance and whether crime has increased in the light of reduced resources, and if so what measures have been taken to meet any shortfall in performance. The report was to advise the Committee of work undertaken, thereby informing Overview and Scrutiny of further review or scrutiny that may be required.

#### Community Safety Partnership – Performance Overview

The principle aim of the CSP remains; ‘deliver a safe, confident Northampton by working together to improve the quality of life for local people’.

The following priorities have been identified by the CSP;

1. Reduce Crime – reduce property crime, specifically residential burglary and vehicle crime and support those at risk of becoming victims of crime.
2. Reduce Anti-Social Behaviour & Hate Crime – prevent and tackle incidents of anti-social behaviour, utilising enforcement and working with partners to provide positive interventions. Deliver targeted interventions to raise awareness of anti-social behaviour and hate crime and encourage reporting.
3. Support Vulnerable People – Co-ordinate partnership activity to reduce incidents of domestic and sexual abuse, work with partners to tackle serious organised crime including; child sexual exploitation, human trafficking and modern day slavery. Reduce harm caused by alcohol and substance misuse and use national days and weeks of celebration and commemoration to bring partners, including the community and voluntary sector together, to raise awareness and offer support to the most vulnerable people in our communities.
4. Build Stronger & resilient Communities – improve community confidence and resilience using different forms of engagement, including weeks of action and community forums, identify opportunities for undertaking restorative justice methods, continue to utilise community payback, volunteers and community and

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voluntary organisations to address environmental issues in priority areas.

5. Safety in the Night-Time Economy - reducing violent incidents, alcohol and drug misuse and other negative behaviour that is linked to the night-time economy.

## Actual Performance

The Home Office places Community Safety Partnerships in groups considered to have enough similar characteristics to allow a meaningful comparison of their crime rates: this is known as the Most Similar Group and the fourteen other partnerships which currently make up our Group, include; Hillingdon, Gloucester, Sheffield, Slough, Derby, Luton, Cardiff, Eastbourne, Plymouth, Bristol, Ipswich, Portsmouth, Southampton and Leeds . Using data obtained from the Home Office iQuanta system we are able to produce the table below.

There are thirteen crime types on the table and a headline category of all crime. The Current Position column tells us whether performance is In line with, Above or Below the upper and lower control limits from the average for the Group; the Distance column gives the difference between our crime rate and that average, with the arrow indicating whether this distance has improved or worsened compared to the year-end figure. Next we have our Rank within the Group, with lower numbers indicating better comparative crime figures. The final column shows the current Crime Rate per 1,000 head of population and the same measure at the 2018/19 year-end.

Crime Type	Most Similar Group			Crime Rate (per 1,000)	
	Current Position	Distance from Average	Rank	Current	Year-end
All Crime	Inline	3.0% ▼	10	109.99	108.81
Robbery	Inline	22.2% ▲	11	1.99	1.72
Theft from Vehicle	Above	44.5% ▼	13	8.90	10.40
Theft of Vehicle	Below	-24.0% ▼	6	1.66	2.01
Theft from the Person	Inline	-14.3% ▼	6	1.28	1.55
Shoplifting	Inline	-13.7% ▲	7	7.30	6.89
All Other Theft	Inline	-13.5% ▼	4	7.94	8.42
Violent Crime	Inline	-2.6% ▲	10	43.50	39.41
Sexual Offences	Above	27.9% ▲	13	4.29	4.12
Racially Aggravated Offences	Inline	-12.7% ▲	6	1.27	1.14
Drug Offences	Inline	-4.8% ▼	5	3.38	3.68
Criminal Damage	Inline	2.3% ▲	10	10.92	10.90
Burglary - Residential	Inline	12.4% ▼	10	15.99	18.33
Burglary - Business/Community	Above	70.0% ▲	15	3.68	3.33

The picture from this table is mixed: the all crime rate for the Partnership is moving towards the average for our Most Similar Group, which reflects a stronger performance than our comparator partnerships in a time of rising crime levels. There are seven red arrows for distance from the average for the Group, but in three of those cases the Partnership is below (or significantly below) that average.

The overall picture is positive with decreases from the figures at the same point in 2018/19 in many categories; violent offences including public disorder, are the notable exceptions. Violent crime accounts for 36.0% of the crime recorded in the area, making it the most

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# Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny

significant category: recorded violent offences for the year to December have risen by 16.5% for the Partnership.

While recorded crime continues to rise, the Partnership's distance above the Group average remains below the average for our Most Similar Group, although the trend is towards that average.

Violent crime breaks down as 45.8% without injury, 34.8% with injury and 19.4% stalking and harassment. Stalking and harassment is a significant factor in the rise in recorded crime: without injury offences are up by 16.0% and with injury offences are up 5.7%, but offences of stalking and harassment are up by 45.0%.

Domestic violence accounts for 32.7% of all violent offences reported in the 12 months covered by this report. Offences with a domestic flag rose by 12.1% in the year to the end of December, while the figures for other violent offences increased by 16.5%.

Incidents of anti-social behaviour recorded by Northamptonshire Police fell by 15.5% in the year to the end of December. The reduction was seen in the majority of the wards across the area: only four wards showed any increase in reported incidents, with none of these being significant.

A secondary measure for anti-social behaviour is criminal damage: figures for the Partnership decreased by 2.5% when compared with the same period a year ago.

## **Specific pieces of work that have taken place in the last twelve months include:**

- Delivered and supported several community engagement events throughout the year, bringing our communities together, including; Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBTQ History month, International Women's Day, Northampton Pride, IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia), Refugee Week, International Youth Day, Love Parks Week, Srebrenica, International Men's Day and International Day of People with Disabilities.
- Just short of £1,000,000 administered through the Cllrs Community Fund, Small Grants Fund and the Partnership Grant distributed to the community and voluntary organisations across the borough who are delivering positive outcomes to improve the quality of life of our residents living in the Town, many of which have an impact on reducing crime and improving community safety.
- Six personal safety events held at Northampton University, the Grosvenor Centre and Wellingborough Road.
- Three primary school community safety events held at the Deco theatre, we have engaged 12 of our priority primary schools, more than 500 year 6 students, attended during the day to learn more from our experts, through workshops, theatre performances and films about important issues such as knife crime, gangs, online safety, child sexual exploitation, railway safety, hate crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Held our first secondary school's community safety awareness raising event held at

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# Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny

the Deco theatre. 540 year 8 and 9 students attended from Weston Favell Academy to hear key community safety messages. Expert speakers, performers and presenters covered topics such as healthy relationships, knife and gang crime, personal safety, online safety, grooming, cyber bullying and hate crime.

- I'm Still Me conference – education conference provided teachers and other school staff with the skills, confidence and information to support LGBTQ students in primary and secondary schools in the county.
- Fifteen Community Days of Action, focused on environmental improvements, clear ups, community engagement, recycling, fly tipping, drops ins and surgeries held in Blackthorn, Bouverie, Semilong, Town Centre, Outer Central, Briar Hill, Rye Hill and Kings Heath.
- Six bike marking events delivered, in high footfall areas including; outside McDonald's, NGH, University of Northampton and Midsummer Meadow.
- Community Safety focussed Weeks of Action delivered across the Town, focused on Knife Crime, Burglary and Hate Crime.
- Target hardening of vulnerable victims properties continues.
- 16 Days of Activism – working with the domestic abuse and sexual violence charities in the Borough to provide pop up, support cafes across businesses and organisations in the Town. Posters, baubles and leaflets handed out to businesses, including restaurants, cafes, and shops across the borough.
- Two Police Officers funded during the six-week summer holidays, resulted in; 576 extra patrol hours, high visibility foot patrols, 154 seizures of alcohol, 24 arrests (relating to violence, shoplifting, drugs, domestic assaults and prostitution) and 88 warnings and words of advice given to cyclists who were riding through the Town on bikes.
- Through the funding secured from the Home Office's Trusted Relationships Fund, Free2Talk continue to deliver youth services in three of our priority neighbourhood areas, increasing the support available to the town's most vulnerable young people. Delivering interventions and mentoring to young people most at risk of getting involved in knife crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Street Sports continued in hot spot locations.
- School Pastors continue to operate at Northampton Academy and Weston Favell Academy, with regular patrols taking place on Thursday's and Friday's with pastoral support being provided as and when required.
- Street Pastor Scheme continues to operate in the Town Centre, on bank holidays and pay weekends.
- Taxi Marshal Scheme launched, two taxi marshals providing cover 11pm-5am,

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# Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny

Friday and Saturday evenings, pay weekends and bank holidays.

- Purple Flag for the Town Centre achieved.
- The media campaign focusing on the night time economy, 'Nights Out Northampton' continues. Key messages of the campaign focusing on personal safety, alcohol awareness and 'safer routes home' working closely with University of Northampton.
- Jeyes Jetty Public Spaces Protection Order approved
- Our Anti-Social Behaviour Officers are working in partnership with the local policing team, in tackling anti-social behaviour, serious organised crime, and begging and youth violence, they have achieved the following:
  - 50 CPW's (community protection warnings) issued for threatening behaviour, smoking cannabis, neighbour disputes, harassment
  - 8 CPN's (community protection notices)
  - 7 CBO's (criminal behaviour orders) issued for shoplifting, nuisance behaviour and street drinking,
  - 3 Cuckooing Injunctions for offenders who are targeting vulnerable people and their properties to deal drugs

## Specific pieces of work that will take place in the next six months:

- Two Primary School Community Safety Conferences planned, working with partners, including Fire Service, Northants Police, Network Rail and the Youth Offending Service. More than 300 year 5 and 6 students will be in attendance. The event will involve workshops, drama productions and presentations covering our community safety issues for young people in the town, specifically; railway safety, child sexual exploitation, knife crime, personal safety and anti-social behaviour.
- Two Secondary School Community Safety Conferences to be delivered to more than 1,000 year 8 and 9 students.
- Planning with partners a range of activity, focusing on anti-violence messages and activity to coincide with the arrival of the knife angel in June 2020.
- Continue to work with partners to provide youth provision and develop youth spaces in the Town, including the 'Basement' in the Town Centre and an identified space on the East.

## Conclusion

Northampton's crime statistics, when compared to other areas of a similar demographic, are no better or worse. Although we have seen a slight increase in overall crime in the Town, for many of the individual specific crime types, there has been an improvement in comparison to the previous year's performance.

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# Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny

The CSP continues to work closely with partner agencies, particularly the Police, the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Youth Offending Service, University of Northampton and Community and Voluntary Organisations to deliver activities that will tackle our key issues. There are a number of initiatives being implemented that should have a positive impact and ensure that an effective multi-agency approach will be taken in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

The CSP is currently reviewing its strategy and action plan, there will be a new strategy and action plan in place to cover the next two years 2020-2022.

Brief Author: Vicki Rockall, Community Safety & Engagement Manager on behalf of Councillor Anna King, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Engagement – February 2020



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20 February 2020

### Performance Management Scrutiny KPI PP22 Percentage of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles inspected which comply with regulations

This indicator was established with the purpose of providing an indication of both the standards of safety and the compliance with licence requirements being demonstrated by licensed hackney carriages and private hire vehicles operating in Northampton. The licence requirement encompass both vehicle safety requirements and some more procedural licence conditions such as the requirement to carry a copy of the licence condition booklet and display no smoking signage.

Data for the indicator is provided from routine vehicle checks that are undertaken by licensing enforcement officers and from the results of specific operations which are carried out with the Police and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.

The target for the indicator is that 70% of vehicles tested should be compliant with the required standards. During 2019/20 performance on this indicator has not met the required standard. Due to staff absence within the licensing team, there has been a significant reduction in the number of both routine vehicle checks and in the number of specific operations. The ability to carry out vehicle checking operations is dependent upon the availability of partner agencies. The Police must be present to stop the vehicles and the specialist inspectors from DVSA must be present to carry out some of the specific safety checks. There have been a small number of occasions when planned operations have been cancelled due to these partner agencies not being able to provide enough staff. In addition, the operations that have been carried out, have been targeted with the aim of checking vehicles which visually appear to be in poor condition to determine whether they are safe to be on the road.

As a result of the smaller number of vehicles tested and the targeting of the testing, the indicator has been reported on a quarterly basis. In the April – June quarter no tests were undertaken. In the quarter to September 40 vehicles were tested. 23 were compliant with standards and 8 had a safety defect. In the quarter to December 39 vehicles were tested, 30 of these were compliant and 9 had defects.

Whilst these figures give some cause for concern, it should be remembered that many of the tests were targeted at vehicle which appeared to be in poor condition. In addition, where safety defects were found, the DVSA took appropriate enforcement action, requiring the vehicles were taken off the road until the defects were remedied.

Work is currently under way to review the definition of this indicator and it is planned to report data which enables the impact of enforcement action to be judged. This will be in place from April 2020 onwards.

The Licensing team are now back up to full strength so going forward we will also ensure that tests are undertaken during each quarter to support effective monitoring.

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## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**20 FEBRUARY 2020**

#### **BRIEFING NOTE: Tree Policy – Updated January 2020**

##### **Briefing note - Tree Policy – Updated January 2020**

Northampton Borough Councils Tree Policy was first published in 2016 and is reviewed on a regular basis.

These reviews ensure that the policy is in line with the council's legal responsibilities under various acts and current legislation and also corresponds with the specification in the council's Environmental Services Contract with Veolia. The Veolia contract began in June 2018 for an initial term of ten years.

Arboriculture is an expensive service, therefore this policy gives residents and stakeholders a clear understanding of what the council is responsible for and an explanation of the service standards that residents can expect.

The policy was reviewed prior to the retendering of the Environmental Services Contract and a number of improvements were introduced to the specification, these include improved service level agreements and decreased response times to reported issues though it should be noted that this service element of the contract is input based and is not an output based specification.

Veolia are providing a good service from both a proactive and reactive point of view, they provide a detailed breakdown of all service requests, services provided in response to those service requests, an ongoing tree survey and the enhanced tree works service. The service is monitored against the 2016 policy and also the key performance indicators in the 2018 contract.

The enhanced tree work programme has been developed to service the Borough geographically by dividing the Borough into five geographic zones and a five year programme of works.

The enhanced tree programme has been allocated an additional £100,000 per annum over a five year period, Veolia are currently in year four of the five year programme and are coordinating all service requests, relevant tree survey results and any comments arising from consultation undertaken with the relevant stakeholders. This data then creates and prioritises the schedule of works, which is typically undertaken between September/October and February/March, outside of the bird nesting period. This extra money has allowed for additional works to be completed over and above the basic specification requirements.

It should also be noted that the core budget is for tree maintenance and not for the planting of additional trees. These would be managed as individual projects which would require sources of funding to be identified. The Climate Change Forum could look at identifying areas where additional trees could be planted and identifying suitable sources of funding.

A number of service requests are received from residents stating trees should be removed because they are dropping seeds or leaves or where they are blocking light. The existing tree policy enables us to ensure that healthy trees are not removed. It should be noted that some of these unfulfilled requests will remain contentious as the council will not remove healthy trees for reasons outside of the policy.

A schedule of works is available and is circulated to stakeholders such as Parish Councils and community groups for discussion in their regular meetings.

The Environment Services client team and Veolia have been working with stakeholders, residents groups and councillors on a variety of projects including locating and identifying past mayoral trees and also replacing street trees in some areas, for example, a recent project has seen ten highway trees replaced in Far Cotton. This request originally came from residents but was funded and implemented by a project group made up of Northampton Street Trees (a resident led group), Northampton County Council staff, Northampton Borough Councillors and the Woodland Trust. The trees were planted in December 2019 and early signs are that they are flourishing and the scheme considered so successful that another Northampton Borough Councillor is now looking to replicate the scheme.

The Environmental Services client team continue to monitor all elements of the Environmental Services Contract against the agreed service level agreements and the council has seen wholesale improvements in services provided over that of the previous service specification.

**CC February 2020**

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

As Amended 2020

## **CONTENTS**

### **1. TREES IN TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS**

### **2. PURPOSES AND AIMS OF TREE POLICY**

- 2.1 Trees in Towns
- 2.2 Scope of Policy
- 2.3 Aims of Policy
- 2.4 Biodiversity

### **3. TREE MAINTENANCE POLICY**

- 3.1 Common Law Rights
- 3.2 Emergency Procedures for Dangerous Trees

### **4. TREE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 Tree Survey
- 4.2 Administration and financial management
- 4.3 Standard of Work
- 4.4 Quality of Service

### **5. TREES IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

- 5.1 Damage to property
- 5.2 Right to Light
- 5.3 Television and reception
- 5.4 Bird Droppings
- 5.5 Blossom and Fruit
- 5.6 Insects
- 5.7 Leaves

### **6. TREE PLANTING, ESTABLISHMENT AND DESIGN**

- 6.1 Tree Replacement
- 6.2 Species and site selection
- 6.3 Highways Trees

## **1. TREES IN TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS**

Trees play an important role in enhancing the urban environment and bring many benefits as they:

- Screen unsightly structures and activities.
- Give privacy.
- Soften the hard lines of buildings.
- Bring colour and contrasts into the urban environment.
- Improve air quality by acting as natural air filters removing dust, smoke and fumes from the atmosphere.
- Reduce the 'greenhouse' effect by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen.
- Act as an effective sound barrier and can limit noise pollution.
- Help to reduce the stress of modern life.
- Provide habitats for native ground flora such as bluebells and fauna, particularly birds, bats and invertebrates.

Despite all of these benefits that trees bring to our urban areas, this environment is often a hostile one for a variety of reasons:

- Many urban trees show signs of stress, grow slowly and become more prone to disease.
- They are subjected to a variety of pollutants such as car fumes, herbicides, salt and other de-icing agents from roads.
- Vandals rip off branches, strip bark and even set fire to trees.
- Urban trees are more susceptible to drought. Many of the surfaces that they grow in are impervious to water and air; because the soil is compacted and any excess rainwater is drained away.
- Tree roots are frequently severed during installation of underground services or to allow for construction work. This can lead to the premature death of trees.

Even under the guise of tree care there can be subconscious acts of vandalism. For example, tree ties that are left in place can strangle the tree that they were once intended to support. Also, incorrect pruning can leave unsightly trees struggling to survive.

## **2. PURPOSES AND AIMS OF TREE POLICY**

### **2.1 Trees in Northampton**

This document has been created, as there is a need for regular inspections and careful planning of: Pruning, Felling, Planting and the encouragement of private landowners to manage their trees appropriately.

### **2.2 Scope of Policy**

Much of the policy is aimed at the management of Northampton's 'Urban Trees'. These are classed as trees that are within built up areas of the town. This definition includes trees adjacent to the highways, in residential and commercial areas as well as parks and open spaces.

The policy also provides for the management of Northampton's rural trees and woodlands in its control. In order to find out if a tree is owned by Northampton Borough Council please contact [enquiries@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northampton.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 330 7000.

### **2.3 Aims of Policy**

The aims of the tree policy are addressed in the following five sections:

1. To ensure the management of trees contributes to making Northampton Borough's environment attractive and healthy for people who visit, live and work in the Borough.
2. To ensure trees enhance the environment.
3. To ensure the efficient management and sustainability of the trees.
4. To ensure an increasing and varied tree population within the borough which is in harmony with other land uses.
5. To promote awareness of the importance and value of trees to the residents of Northampton.

### **2.4 Biodiversity**

Is the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable by not removing the wood from site after taking a tree down assists with Biodiversity by

- 1) Reducing our carbon footprint as we do not have to move the material about.
- 2) Woodchip is beneficial to the surrounding area, nutrients are able to go back into the soil.
- 3) Woodpiles and standing timber are ideal habitats for insects, birds and bats.

### **3. TREE MAINTENANCE POLICY**

#### **3.1 Common Law Right**

You have a common law right to remove nuisance with trees infringing onto your property. If this were the case, we would advise the following:

- You can only remove any parts of a tree that overhang your property. You have no legal right to remove anything that does not overhang the boundary of your property.
- A tree surgeon should be consulted when pruning back any part of a tree that overhangs your property, unless the pruning can be reasonably carried out with hand secateurs.
- To find out if the trees are owned by Northampton Borough Council please contact [enquiries@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northampton.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 330 7000.
- You should find out if the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order or are in a Designated Conservation Area. In order to do this please contact [enquiries@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northampton.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 330 7000.
- If the trees are protected then you will need to gain consent by making an application and giving notice to the council. Guidance on next steps can be accessed at the email address/ telephone number above.
- You should speak with your neighbour before pruning any overhanging branches, and offer to return any that are pruned back to your neighbour, as legally you do not own them. It is most likely that your neighbour will ask that you dispose of them yourself but it is good practice to ask them first.
- If the overhanging branches belong to a Council owned tree then you should dispose of the prunings yourself and not return them to Council owned land.

#### **3.2 Emergency Procedures For Dangerous Trees**

The Council will remove trees that are posing a hazard and make safe trees that are imminently dangerous. To notify us of an emergency situation please contact [enquiries@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northampton.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 330 7000.

## **4. TREE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Tree surveys**

NBC aims to establish an on-going maintenance plan to assess their current tree stock, with a long-term view to improving public spaces. The plan will establish high quality trees and with the expertise of approved contractors, works carried out will focus on improving the existing tree stock, using various types of Arboricultural practices to achieve this (see section 5-Maintenance Plan).

### **4.2 Standard of work**

The council will:

- Appoint private arboricultural contractors through a tendering process.
- Regularly review the specifications in the contract to ensure that they are precise and meet with currently accepted standards (British Standard 3998:2010 'Tree Work- Recommendations').
- Supporting the development and training of all arboricultural staff involved in Council tree work.

### **4.3 Timeline of service**

The council will;

- Support a policy that allows residents to request work on a Council owned tree
- Inspect the aforementioned tree and specify work required.
- Ensure that if work is required, money is allocated from the appropriate budget and work is issued to a contractor.

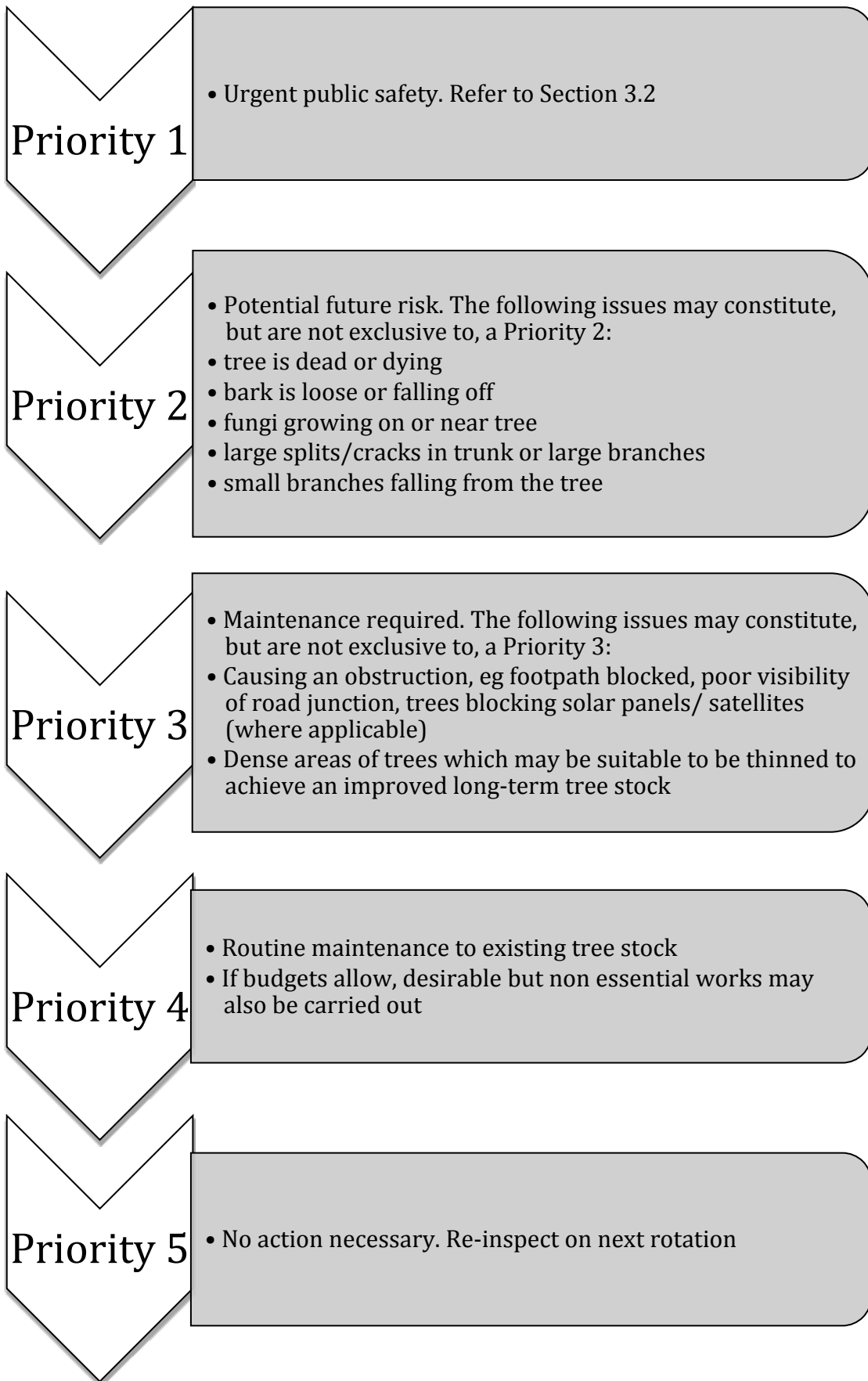
### **4.4 Tree Work Priorities**

Priority work levels are split into 5 separate areas. These areas are established and structured around the defect with the chosen tree/s. With each area an action and reason can be given for such works and this will correspond with the arboricultural work levels described below.

It should be noted that the final decision on works to be carried out fall with Northampton Borough Council for the approval of work.



The issues and actions below are a guide and may be subject to change depending on the severity of the issue. If a tree is subject to adverse weather conditions this may affect the condition of the tree, so the priorities act as a guideline only.



#### 4.5 Arboricultural Work Levels

When works are carried out, it is the contractors' responsibility to carry out these works in accordance with current legal practices statute and common where applicable. Ensuring that the highest possible levels of work standards and safety are adhered to, this should include but is not limited to:

- British Standards BS3998: 2010 'Tree Work- Recommendations.'
- Wildlife and Country Act 1981 as Amended.
- Habitat and Species Regulations 2007 Amended.
- Tree Preservation Orders (Town and Country Planning Act)
- Designated Conservation Areas.
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000.

##### 1) Tree Planting- establishing new trees to an existing site:

- Appropriate species needs to be carefully considered, taking into account; growth rate, size water demand, soil conditions, exposure of the site, long term maintenance of the chosen species etc.
- Formative pruning of new trees.

##### 2) Light Pruning Operations- minor works that include:

- Lifting tree crowns to 2.4m over footpaths.
- Lifting tree crowns to 3m in Parks and Open Spaces (where appropriate)).
- Lifting tree crowns to 4m over car bays (where possible).
- Lifting tree crowns to 5.2m over highways.
- Clearing lamp column heads by 1m to give adequate light splay.
- Removal of secondary limbs to achieve lighting requirements.

##### 3) Selective Pruning Operations- works on individual trees:

- Removal or reduction of selected branches.

##### 4) Major Pruning Operations- major works that include:

- Full crown reduction.
- Crown thinning.
- Removal of primary limbs to achieve lighting requirements.

##### 5) Minor Tree Removal

- Removal of young trees.
- Removal of understory growth.
- Coppicing of young trees.
- Selecting best specimen trees for retention.

##### 6) Major Tree Removal

- Removal of semi mature to mature trees.
- Coppicing of mature trees.
- Selecting best specimen trees for retention.

## **5. TREES IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT**

This section looks at some of the most common conflicts that the Council's urban trees cause and how these can be mitigated or overcome without felling or excessive pruning. It is important to strike a balance between removing problem trees and retaining trees in good health.

### **5.1 Damage to Property**

The council takes into account the long term effects of planting trees near buildings when designing planting schemes referring to current relevant guidance such as NHBC Standards Chapter 4.2 'Building Near Trees' and British Standard 5837: 2012 'Trees in relation to construction.'

Should you have concerns about tree-related property damage you should first contact your insurance provider to seek advice.

Should you, or anyone acting on your behalf, wish to make a claim for damage or formally notify the council of concerns about future damage then you should contact us at [enquiries@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northampton.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 330 7000.

### **5.2 Light**

NBC aims to manage its trees so that they contribute to making the environment attractive and healthy. Equally NBC aim to keep locality reasonably safe and ensure that trees do not cause an excessive nuisance.

A common complaint about urban trees within housing estates, open spaces and parks is that the available daytime light to properties and footpaths is being blocked.

This also relates to night-time with urban trees blocking lamp columns creating excessive shade in public areas. No one has a direct right to natural light in common law. However works can be carried out to clear lamp columns and other light sources, by 1m as per NBC policy.

You can also exercise your Common Law Right to cut back any nuisance branches/ foliage to the boundary of your property. See 3.1 for more details.

### **5.3 Television and Satellite Reception**

The Council requests that you contact your satellite or TV provider who should be able to provide a solution to any problems with reception issues. This will most likely be relocating the satellite dish/ TV aerial or boosting the signal.

You can also exercise your Common Law Right to cut back any nuisance branches/ foliage to the boundary of your property. See 3.1 for more details.

### **5.4 Bird Droppings**

This Council will not fell or prune any trees that cause minor nuisances but strive to find alternative solutions. Bird droppings can be a nuisance but are not considered sufficient reason to carry out pruning works on/ felling a tree. Bird droppings can be removed with warm water and soap.

Nesting birds are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended, which means that it is illegal to carry out tree works where there are nesting birds.

### **5.5 Blossom And Fruits**

This Council will not fell or prune any trees that cause minor nuisances but strive to find alternative solutions. Tree blossom and fruits are a natural occurrence and cannot be prevented with pruning.

Roads and pavements are swept regularly to prevent build-up of blossom or fruit as part of normal cleaning cycles. If you would like to request a street cleaning please contact [enquiries@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northampton.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 330 7000.

You can also exercise your Common Law Right to cut back any nuisance branches/ foliage to the boundary of your property. See 3.1 for more details.

## **5.6 Insects**

This Council will not fell or prune any trees that cause minor nuisances but strive to find alternative solutions. It should be noted that bees are a protected species so advice should be sought before considering removal. You can also exercise your Common Law Right to cut back any nuisance branches/ foliage to the boundary of your property. See 3.1 for more details.

Honeydew can occur as a result of aphids feeding on a tree. The aphids then excrete honeydew, which is a sugary sap. Honeydew is a natural and seasonal problem. Pruning will only offer temporary relief and the regrowth has potential to be colonized by an increased number of aphids, exacerbating the problem. Any cars affected should be washed with warm and soapy water to remove the honeydew.

## **5.7 Leaves**

This Council will not fell or prune any trees that cause minor nuisances but strive to find alternative solutions. The falling of leaves is part of the natural cycle that occurs each autumn and cannot be avoided by pruning.

Property owners are encouraged to regularly maintain their gutters to avoid blockages. Guards can be fitted where regular blockages of gutters occur.

Roads and pavements are swept regularly to prevent build-up of blossom or fruit as part of normal cleaning cycles. If you would like to request a street cleaning please contact [enquiries@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@northampton.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 330 7000.

You can also exercise your Common Law Right to cut back any nuisance branches/ foliage to the boundary of your property. See 3.1 for more details.

## **6. TREE PLANTING, ESTABLISHMENT AND DESIGN**

The Council aims to improve the quality of life and the environment in Northamptonshire through proactive and appropriate tree planting. Our aim is to get the right tree in the right location so that urban trees are in harmony with the environment and community.

### **6.1 Tree Replacement**

The Council will endeavour to plant at least one tree of a suitable species and size at the most appropriate site in the locality. Should this not be possible then an alternative site will be sought.

### **6.2 Species And Site Selection**

The Council aims to reduce conflicts between trees and the urban environment by agreeing to:

- Plant trees that will grow to a size appropriate for their location.
- Plant a variety of species to help avoid the environmental damage of disease.
- Plant tree species, which are native to Britain where conservation and biodiversity are a priority as they hold the greatest wildlife value. However, the Council will plant a variety of native and non-native species throughout the Borough to ensure they select the most appropriate tree for the location.
- All works are to be carried out the standards set out in BS8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape.
- Work with developers to advise on trees and sites on new housing developments within the Borough.

### **6.3 Highways Trees**

If you have an issue regarding a Highways Tree please contact Street Doctor <http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/northamptonshire-highways/roads-and-streets/Pages/report-highway-problem.aspx>

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## NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

#### **ACTION PLAN: SCRUTINY PANEL – Cemeteries – Recommendations Completed**

Response and Action Plan in response to the Recommendations from Scrutiny Panel

#### **Proposed dates for monitoring implementation of accepted recommendations**

Report received by Cabinet	Monitoring activity	Monitoring complete		
June 2018	30 April 2019	Date to be added by O&S Committee when agreed monitoring is completed		
<b>Recommendation 1:</b> Some of the large trees located in the town’s cemeteries that have been planted on or outside the burial plot investigated for removal as soon as possible.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
To remove trees and hedges where practical to do so, but ensuring minimal damage to grave stones and	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customers and Communities  Environmental Services	Resources were made available and suitable contractors were identified	Completed	Completed 2018

headstones.	Partnership Unit, Asset Management and Parks & Open Spaces			
<b>Recommendation 2:</b> The water tanks located in the extension at Duston Cemetery are plumbed in as soon as practicable.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Investigate the practicalities and costs involved of installing a new water supply and tanks	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise  Head of Economy, Assets and Culture  Head of Customers and Communities  Asset Management & Parks & Open Spaces	Investigating consultants and budget still to be identified. Anglian Water Authority will be required and therefore timescales will be dependent on their availability.	2019/20 financial year	Asset Management property services contractor visited the site and the trough was full and no leaks found
<b>Recommendation 3:</b> The trees that are obscuring the sign at the entrance to Duston Cemetery are pruned as soon as possible.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
To arrange the cut back of the trees with the Environmental Services Contractor	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customers and Communities	Resource within the Environmental Services Contract	Completed	Completed 2018

	Environmental Services Partnership Unit			
<b>Recommendation 4:</b> Litter and recycling bins in situ within the cemeteries are replaced with modern bins, including recycling bins, uniformed throughout all cemeteries, where appropriate.				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Resources required/available</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Achievement/Completed</b>
Survey the open cemeteries for the types and numbers of the litterbins available onsite	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customers and Communities  Environmental Services Partnership Unit Contract and Parks & Open Spaces		Completed	The current wire baskets are suitable for the nature of the waste, which included wet organic matter such as dead flowers and wreaths. Wire baskets that are damaged and unrepairable will be replaced.
<b>Recommendation 6:</b> The tops of the vaults are made secure.				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Resources required/available</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Achievement/Completed</b>
The tops of the Vaults to be surveyed	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customers and Communities  Environmental Services Partnership Unit & Veolia	Resource within the Environmental Services Contract	Completed	Inspection was completed in January 2019 and all vaults were found to be secure.

<b>Recommendation 7:</b> The sign located at the entrance to Dallington Cemetery is cleaned and fresh signage placed behind the glass cabinet.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Assess the sign and carry out the required actions	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise  Head of Economy, Assets and Culture  Asset Management and Parks & Open Spaces	Officer time	Completed	Completed
<b>Recommendation 8:</b> Signs be erected in cemeteries “Dogs to be kept on a leash at all times” “Please clean up after your dog.”				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Survey open and closed cemeteries and assess requirements	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customer and Communities  Parks & Open Spaces	Officer time	Completed	Signs are in the process of being erected in Kingsthorpe, Dallington and Billing Road cemeteries following the survey.

<b>Recommendation 12:</b> The Scrutiny Panel welcomed and noted the pristine condition of the war graves.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Compliment noted	Northampton Borough Council			
<b>Recommendation 13:</b> Consideration is given to the issuing to Funeral Directors based in the borough of Northampton, key passes, to the chapels in Towcester Road and Kingsthorpe cemeteries.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Examine existing policies and procedures and amend where required	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customers and Communities  Environmental Services Partnership Unit & Veolia	Officer and Contractor time		This recommendation was explored but is not possible due to security and safety issues. The keys are given out by the staff onsite and this system is working well.
<b>Recommendation 14:</b> The facility of the chapels at Kingsthorpe and Towcester Road cemeteries are promoted.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Examine existing promotional policies and procedures and amend where required	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customers and Communities  Environmental Services	Officer and Contractor time	ongoing	Promotional activity is taking place and has resulted in increased usage for a variety of purposes including remembrance and

	Partnership Unit & Veolia			commemorative events.
<b>Recommendation 15:</b> The lack of burial space is addressed and potential new sites are investigated, for example, consideration is given to re-categorising the borough owned land (currently categorised as commercial land) that edges the cemetery at Dallington as further cemetery land.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Enzygo environmental consultants have completed a study identifying the town's burial requirements.	<p>Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning</p> <p>Head of Planning, Head of Customers and Communities</p> <p>A new Cemeteries Group has been set up to examine the consultant's report and its findings.</p> <p>A number of trees have been removed at Towcester Road Cemetery to create extra space, which can be used in two years' time (to allow for the soil to settle)</p>	Officer time	Complete	Additional land has been identified at Dallington Cemetery, as a possible burial site. Two cemeteries working groups have been established – one looking at operational issues and one looking at strategic issues including future burial requirements and space.



## NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

#### ACTION PLAN: SCRUTINY PANEL – Cemeteries – Recommendations in Progress

Response and Action Plan in response to the Recommendations from Scrutiny Panel

#### Proposed dates for monitoring implementation of accepted recommendations

Report received by Cabinet	Monitoring activity	Monitoring complete		
June 2018	30 April 2019	Date to be added by O&S Committee when agreed monitoring is completed		
<b>Recommendation 5:</b> The footpaths and roadways in Kingsthorpe Cemetery that are in need of repair, are repaired as soon as possible.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
The footpaths to be surveyed	Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning  Head of Customers and Communities  Parks & Open Spaces	GF Capital	2019/20	This is part of the ongoing Borough Wide Cemeteries Policy Planning <b>Update Feb 2020</b> A major pothole has been repaired and inspections are ongoing to identify if

				further repairs are required
<b>Recommendation 9:</b> All signs erected within the borough's cemeteries are of the same style and standard as other Borough signage.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Survey open and closed cemeteries and assess requirements	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise  Head of Planning, Asset Management and Parks & Open Spaces	Officer time. Budget still to be identified	2020/21	This has been paused pending agreement on signage, branding and style and budget.  Update Feb 2020  This will now form part of the Unitary preparations
<b>Recommendation 10:</b> Information regarding the usage and disposal of plastic bottles in cemeteries is produced for users. The information could be included within a Regulations Guidance booklet for users of cemeteries. All Funeral Directors are provided with a copy of the booklet.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Investigate cemeteries that may require this amount of waste segregation.	Cabinet Member for Environment  Head of Customers and Communities  Environmental Services Partnership Unit & Veolia	Officer & Contractor time	December 2019	<b>Update Feb 2020</b> This and other forms of waste diversion (including organic waste such as flowers etc) has also been raised by the cemeteries forum and options to implement a trial are currently being investigated by Veolia/Idverde, a



				proposal is being prepared for the next meeting of the Cemeteries Forum in April 2020
<b>Recommendation 11:</b> The Policies and procedures for the usage of cemeteries within the borough are tightened up and a zero tolerance approach is applied.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Examine existing policies and procedures and amend where required	Cabinet Member for Environment Head of Customers and Communities Environmental Services Partnership Unit & Veolia	Officer and Contractor time	December 2019	A comprehensive A4 Booklet is currently being designed and produced and will be available for all users and Funeral Directors. Producing this guidance booklet has been very complex and we have experienced delays due to wanting to ensure that all stakeholders, including the cemeteries working group and cemeteries forum are able to input. <b>Update Feb 2020</b> The guide is currently with the cemeteries forum for review and will be finalised and implemented fully by 5 <sup>th</sup> June
<b>Recommendation 12:</b> The Scrutiny Panel welcomed and noted the pristine condition of the war graves.				

Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Compliment noted	Northampton Borough Council			
<b>Recommendation 16:</b> A feasibility study is undertaken into the requirement of a new large crematorium and cemetery for the town that offers the required services and facilities.				
Action	Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Responsible Officer	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
Keep findings from feasibility under review.	Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning  Head of Planning, Head of Customers and Communities		Ongoing	Work is currently underway - a strategic working group has been established with representatives from the relevant service areas. <b>Update Feb 2020</b> This action will now form part of the Unitary preparations.



**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**20 FEBRUARY 2020**

#### **BRIEFING NOTE:**

#### **SCRUTINY PANEL 1 – FOOD POVERTY**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned Scrutiny Panel 1 to undertake comprehensive Scrutiny activity regarding food poverty
- 1.2 Membership of the Scrutiny Panel comprises Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair); Councillor Cathrine Russell (Deputy Chair); Councillors Bottwood, Roberts and Smith. There are two co-optees to the Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.3 The scope of the Review was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and evidence gathering has continued.

### **2 UPDATE**

- 2.1 Since the last meeting of this Committee, the Scrutiny Panel has held one evidence gathering meetings with further meetings scheduled. At its January 2020 meeting the Scrutiny Panel received a responses to its core questions from a number of key expert advisors and received information on Statutory and Social Overcrowding.
- 2.2 The next evidence gathering meeting is scheduled for 2 March 2020.
- 2.3 In accordance with the Scrutiny Panel Protocol, the Chair of this Scrutiny Panel will provide written progress reports to future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.

### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the progress report is noted.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, on behalf of Councillor Dennis Meredith, Chair, Scrutiny Panel 1 – Food Poverty

6 February 2020

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**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**19 FEBRUARY 2020**

#### **BRIEFING NOTE:**

#### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group to undertake comprehensive Scrutiny activity regarding gangs and knife crime
- 1.2 Membership of the Scrutiny Panel comprises Councillor Graham Walker (Chair); Councillor Jane Birch (Deputy Chair); Councillors Aziz, Lane and Russell.
- 1.3 The scope of the Review was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and evidence gathering has continued.

### **2 UPDATE**

- 2.1 The Working Group has held an evidence gathering meeting since the January 2020 meeting of this Committee.
- 2.2 At this meeting the Working Group heard from a variety of expert advisors and received a comprehensive report regarding the National Conference – Gangs and Knife Crime. At the end of the meeting the Working Group watch a short film, produced by Free2Talk - 'Knives End Lives.'
- 2.3 In accordance with the Scrutiny Panel Protocol, the Chair of this Scrutiny Panel will provide written progress reports to future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.

### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the progress report is noted.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, on behalf of Councillor Graham Walker, Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Working Group – Gangs and Knife Crime

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