

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL 3 - NORTHAMPTON POST UNITARY

Monday, 25 March 2019

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Brian Sargeant (Chair), Councillor Paul Joyce (Deputy Chair); Councillors Aziz, Sam Kilby-Shaw and Jamie Lane

CO-OPTED MEMBER: Lee Mason
Morcea Walker

Witnesses Ken Howlett

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Danielle Stone.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

There were none.

3. DEPUTATIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2019 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

5. WITNESS EVIDENCE

(A) CHAIR, NIFF

Ken Howlett, Chair, NIFF presented the written response of NIFF to the Scrutiny Panel.

The Scrutiny Panel made comment, asked questions and heard:

Mr Howlett highlighted the importance of the Town Show and asked that it is brought back.

In response to a question how NIFF markets religious ceremonies, the Scrutiny Panel heard that seven faiths work together to promote friendship and understanding. For example: "We are Human" project – five primary schools have signed up. NIFF promotes

itself through the media and word of mouth. NIFF does not put any religious ceremonies on the NBC website.

A potential recommendation of the Scrutiny Panel was suggested “that information relating to NIFF and its events is promoted on NBC’s website”. It was commented that NIFF could help to promote civic pride.

- Northampton has a diverse population. It is aimed to promote Northampton as city of culture.
- It was suggested that a Unitary website could present events across the county – wider promotion.
- It was commented that assets would be protected by Town Council.
- The Scrutiny Panel suggested a final recommendation of its final report “It is important that the Town Council should be located in the Guildhall and the mayoralty and it’s regalia too.”
- The Scrutiny Panel suggested that it would ask Councillor King for status of Museum Trust.

Mr Howlett was thanked for his address and written information.

6. REVIEW OF EVIDENCE RECEIVED TO DATE

The Chair circulated a precis of information and evidence that this Review had received today that gave further details of potential conclusions and recommendations that the Panel had suggested at previous meetings.

The Scrutiny Panel made further comment:

- It was expected that the Mayoralty would be protected by a Town Council.
- It was reported that Town Twinning feels very strongly about keeping the Mayoralty and civic events
- A further potential recommendation was suggested as “ it is our aspiration is to be city of culture by 2025”
- The Scrutiny Panel suggested that the Chair writes to the MPs and ask for their response to the core questions and opinions.
- It was commented that it is important that the Mayoralty remains and remains in the Guildhall
- Northampton has incredible history
- It was noted that not many places have Mayors going back 800 years.

AGREED: That the information provided informs the evidence base of this Scrutiny Review.

The meeting concluded at 6:40 pm