

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 23 April 2018 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

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

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the Council meetings held on the 5th and 12th March 2018 were agreed and signed by the Mayor following a correction to the minutes (of the 12th March 2018) on Motion iii) which incorrectly stated that the motion had been carried when it had been lost.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Cali, Patel, Kilby-Shaw, Culbard and Davenport.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor announced that earlier in the day there had been a flag raising event for St George's Day with representatives from Northampton Interfaith Forum (NIFF) and noted the importance of showing solidarity and unity to send out a positive message.

The Mayor announced that on the 24th and 25th March 2018 he had attended a number of events to commemorate the life of Sir Walter Tull. He further announced that the Mayoress had attended a Tree Planting ceremony at Dallington Park and thanked the 'Friends of Dallington Park' for the donation of a bench.

The Mayor noted the Heart of the Community Awards were to be held on the 030th April 2018 and announced that on the 5th May 2018 an LGBTQ event would be held and a video link would be in place to share the event with the Mayor of Massachusetts.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Ms Dagma King addressed Council and commented that she had undertaken her own homelessness survey and questioned what facilities were available to homeless

people during the day; she noted that provisions were made for homeless people and rough sleepers at night but asked that provisions be made for people during the day and to provide them with the facilities to support them during the day.

Mr Thomas Appleyard commented that the Kingsthorpe Road system had not changed since 1874 and the current level of traffic and pollution was getting increasingly worse and would continue to do so when impacted by the Orbital Road. He stated that the relief road would funnel more traffic through Kingsthorpe especially with the relocation of the University.

Mr Brian Hoare reported that he was pleased that there was cross party support for Northampton Unitary based on extended boundaries. He questioned what plans and processes were in place to gather information to report back to the Government Minister by the deadline of 27th July 2018. He further reported that there was a real need for public support for the chosen proposal and questioned how they would engage with the public. Lastly, he requested that the private Cabinet meeting to be held on the 25th April 2018 be held in public.

Mr Tony Mallard commented that there were extensive problems with homelessness and rough sleepers and this could be attributed to many different causes. He noted that there were a number of shelters in Northampton that were run by volunteer groups but were exclusively for men. He commented that homeless people were sleeping in tents, erected on the street, and referred to it as a disease of society.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that 12 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 (including in an updated agenda on the Council's website) unless where stated, supplementary questions were asked as detailed below.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 1, Councillor Hadland stated that the building were not in fact empty and that part of it was inhabited by long term commercial tenants and explained that conversion costs to turn the building into a residential building, to accommodate homeless people, was not financially viable.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 2, Councillor Hibbert commented that the impact of Unitary Authorities on Arms Lengths Management Companies was unknown and it was too early in the process to speculate.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 5, Councillor Eldred reported that the Administration would continue to work with all companies, both big and small, and noted that procedures were in place to ensure that affordable agreements were in place and noted that work was being undertaken to ensure businesses would prosper and thrive in the long term.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 12, Councillor Nunn stated that there was very limited time for campaigning and stated that there was not much scope for expanding the boundary. He reported that the Council had very limited control over the process to support the two unitary proposal and they were forced to work to the Government timelines.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

Councillor Nunn, as the Leader of the Council submitted his report and elaborated thereon. He commented that he had not received much encouragement or reassurance on debt provision following the section 114 notice served on the County Council. He explained that Leaders of District and Borough Councils and Chief Officers had been in joint discussions on future proposals regarding Unitary status and noted that a solution was needed to best serve the residents of Northampton. He noted that none of the district leaders were content with the prospect of taking on the County Council debt. He updated Council that the first round of interviews for the Independent Chair of Audit Committee had taken place and the shortlisted candidates would be interviewed in May 2018.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Nunn stated that whilst he was not against a public campaign on the matter of Unitary Councils there was a need to ensure that the best option be put together in order to submit a coherent and supported report to Government. He stated that he had some concerns about the limited time and welcomed any cross party support that was offered in order to achieve the best outcome for the residents and agreed with the suggestion that the Government steer on 2 Unitary Councils both having a minimum population of 300,000 was arbitrary. However there was a need for NBC to actively contribute to proposal being prepared which followed the Government's Inspector recommendation of a 2 unitary option and noted that the Borough Council represented 42% of the Northamptonshire County Council Social Care. Councillor Nunn commented that there would be further Councillor briefing sessions on the topic and asked that there be unity between all of the groups in support of future proposals.

Councillor Larratt submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated further and noted that a date had been set for the Constitution Working Group meeting. He reported that he had been on a site visit to Norwich Market and noted that it had been transformed following a significant public survey and referred to a proposal to have a customer-driven survey and consultation to establish what provisions the customers would want in order to improve the market square in Northampton.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Larratt explained that he would look at options with regards to having heaters outside the market food vans. He further reported that there was a need to revamp the market and commented that it would be necessary for traders and trailer owners to be on board; English Heritage would need to be consulted prior to any material changes and noted that the responsibility of each stall would be down to the market holders.

Councillor Eldred elaborated on his Cabinet Member report and explained that there was a need to ensure that the correct financial package with regards to unitary status would be provided. He explained that he had attended the LGSS Joint Revs and

Bens Committee which had gone very well and congratulated the Revs and Bens team on being a leading force.

In response to questions asked, Councillor Eldred explained there had been a few minor errors still outstanding and noted that the accounts were with the auditors and that he was waiting for their response. He further explained that staff were working hard on getting the 2017/18 accounts completed and noted that whilst the County Council financial position had affected the residents of Northampton, it had not had an adverse impact on the Borough Councils budgets. He reported that there had been ongoing work to attract and entice people to work at the Borough Council which included a 2% increase in pay.

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Joyce stated that there had been ongoing issues with trees in his area of Eastfield and that the much of the machinery and works that had been carried out had been damaging to the environment and that some of the tree cuttings had not been cleared and left to turn into mulch, which degraded the area. He further noted that there were people, including families in his Ward who were struggling financially and housing concerns further exacerbated their suffering and questioned what would happen should the local volunteer Church group not provide a food bank service.

Councillor Nunn, in response, stated that every Councillor had experienced problems with the AMEY contractors who were responsible for the environment and commented that there had been issues with small parcels of land that had been missed. He reported that housing issues could be a challenge to Members but noted that the Council did have a housing allocations policy and explained that he would be happy to have individual discussions with those concerned.

Councillor Joyce commented that he felt as though some Labour Councillors were being ignored and left behind in ward areas that were perceived to be less desirable.

9. CHANGES TO OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Stone proposed a report which sought a change to the appointment to outside bodies.

Councillor Birch seconded the recommendations:

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Joyce replace Councillor Birch as the Councils' representative on the Outside Body – Northampton Leisure Trust Board

10. HONORARY RECORDER

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought the appointment of an Honorary Recorder for the Borough of Northampton.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That Council approved the appointment of HHJ Mayo as Honorary Recorder for Northampton Borough Council

11. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought approval of the 2018/19 Pay Policy Statement.

Councillor Eldred seconded the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Russell commented that whilst the introduction of the Living Wage was beneficial, questions should be asked about the Councils agreement to move away from the National Pay Agreement.

Councillor Nunn commented that he was not familiar with the National Pay Agreement but noted that the administration were looking at ways to improve staff conditions.

RESOLVED:

That the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2018/19 attached at Appendix 1 of the report be approved.

**12. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS - HUNSBURY MEADOWS PARISH.
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Councillor Larratt proposed a report to consider the responses to the first stage of the public consultation carried out having regard to the law and guidance on such Reviews issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the local Government Boundary Commission

Cllr Oldham seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Pineham Housing Development be moved into Hunsbury Meadows Parish
- b) That the boundary between Upton Parish and Hunsbury Meadows Parish follow the River Nene include the polling district SNUP2 as outlined in at Appendix 1 of the report)

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

- i) Councillor Smith accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Russell:

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“This Council notes the success of the night shelter in tackling rough sleeping in Northampton.

We are aware that concerns remain with rough sleeping and hidden homelessness, and we are aware that women in this situation are particularly vulnerable.

This Council therefore commits to:

- Successfully implementing “TOGETHER we change lives”, the borough’s 10-point multi-agency strategy for ending the need for people to sleep rough in Northampton;
- Exploring the options for establishing a permanent emergency nightshelter that has the capacity and facilities to provide men and women with shelter and support;
- Persuading local groups and services to do everything they can to help and encourage people to engage with local services and accept the help that they need in order to come off the streets and rebuild their lives;
- Considering the role that ‘Housing First’ can play in reducing rough sleeping in the borough;
- Working with partners to establish the true extent of hidden homelessness in Northampton and the way in which people with protected characteristics, physical and mental disability, addiction, forensic history and immigration are affected by hidden homelessness; and
- Ensuring that everyone who is homeless is provided with a personal housing plan, and that the homelessness service is a two-way process with service users fully consulted and involved with the provision of the services they use.

Council discussed the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

- ii) Councillor Birch accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Haque:

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“There is national concern about keeping our communities safe and the concern is widespread in Northampton. We are seeing alarming rates of crime, with increases in violent crime, sexual crime, trafficking, vehicle thefts, burglary and drug related crime. We are particularly concerned that young children and young people are being exploited and sometimes also drawn into crime. We have a duty of care to our citizens and we must do all we can to keep them safe. This Council will therefore take the following actions:

- Continue to work with the Police to receive regular performance information from the Police that drives our activity, supports our multi-agency approach and enables this Council to have a good understanding of the crime and anti-social behaviour issues in the town.
- Actively contribute to and support the Community Safety Partnership, which includes the Police and Police Crime Commissioner's Office, and the three – year community safety strategy, including the following identified priorities:
 - Reduce Crime
 - Reduce ASB and Hate Crime
 - Support Vulnerable People
 - Build Stronger and Resilient Communities
 - Safety in the Night-Time Economy

The full strategy can be found at

<https://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/file/10006/ncsp-2017---2020>

- Support the Government and the Home Secretary in delivering the new Serious Violence Strategy, including improving policing and visible policing, to break the deadly cycle of violence that devastates the lives of individuals, families and communities.

Council debated the altered motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

iii) Councillor Larratt proposed and Councillor Hill seconded:

Northampton Borough Council calls for the continued support of our local market and market traders. Consequently, this Council is proud that our market participates in the Love Your Local Market campaign organised by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA).

Love Your Local Market is an international initiative and the UK's largest annual celebration to promote retail and wholesale markets across the country.

To coincide with this year's initiative, and together with the Northampton Town Centre BID, the Council is organising workshops, street entertainment and other activities. This Council is delighted to be able to contribute to celebrating our town's history, innovation, experience, entrepreneurship, food and culture in a festival of market activities and events running from 17th to 31st May, and urges the public to support these events and our towns market offer".

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded an amendment:

Amended motion to read:

"Northampton Borough Council commits to the continued support of our local market and market traders. Consequently, this Council is proud that our market participates

in the Love Your Local Market campaign organised by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA).

Love Your Local Market is an international initiative and the UK's largest annual celebration to promote retail and wholesale markets across the country.

This council congratulates the Northampton Town Centre BID, the Council in organising workshops, street entertainment and other activities. This Council is delighted to be able to contribute to celebrating our town's history, innovation, experience, entrepreneurship, food and culture in a festival of market activities and events running from 17th to 31st May. We will publicise and encourage the public to support these events and our towns market offer. We commit to a longer term plan to develop the market square in consultation with the traders, retailers, the bid and the public".

The proposed amendment was lost and Council debated the substantive motion:

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

iv) Councillor King proposed and Councillor Graystone seconded:

"Northampton Borough Council welcomes the Government's Serious Violence Strategy launched this week by the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd. The strategy stresses the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes of serious violence and steer young people away from crime in the first place, while ensuring the police continue to have the tools and support they need to tackle violent crime.

This Council has recognised the great importance of engaging with our young people early to help prevent them from being drawn into crime.

This motion, therefore, calls for support of this Council's collaborative work with the Police, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Youth Offending Service, University and Free to Talk in developing a training and awareness package that will be offered to schools, during our school's event in October, youth clubs and youth groups. The package will include a video, drama production and training, as well as educational awareness packs".

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded an amendment:

Amended motion to read:

"Northampton Borough Council welcomes the Government's Serious Violence Strategy launched this week by the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd. The strategy stresses the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes of serious violence and steer young people away from crime in the first place, while ensuring the police continue to have the tools and support they need to tackle violent crime.

This Council has recognised the great importance of engaging with our young people early to help prevent them from being drawn into crime.

This motion, therefore, calls for support of this Council's collaborative work with the Police, East Midlands Ambulance Service, Youth Offending Service, University and Free to Talk in developing a training and awareness package that will be offered to schools, during our school's event in October, youth clubs and youth groups. The package will include a video, drama production and training, as well as educational awareness packs. We recognise youth work in the town needs resourcing and commit the Council to finding a budget to do this".

The proposed amendment was lost and Council debated the substantive motion:

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

v) Councillor King proposed and Councillor Hibbert seconded:

"'Cuckooing' is where gangs travel to towns and befriend vulnerable people in order to take over their home and use it to deal drugs.

Northampton Borough Council recognised the seriousness of this problem and has so far, through its Case Management Meetings for Cuckooing, arranged two training sessions for 40 frontline officers across NBC, Adult Social Care, Probation and the Police. Further two sessions have also been fully booked, which will train additional 40 officers.

This Council, working closely with the Police, calls on the public to help tackle the increasing problem of 'cuckooing' by looking for signs that their neighbours and friends are being abused. These can include the householder having new associates and increased visitors throughout the day and night, an increased number of vehicles outside the property including taxis or hire cars and bags of clothing or bedding around their property or other signs that people may be staying at the address.

The support of the community is crucial for pursuing 'cuckooing' drug dealers and those who choose to engage themselves in the illegal supply of drugs and associated antisocial behaviour".

Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Birch seconded an amendment:

Amended motion to read:

"'Cuckooing' is where gangs travel to towns and befriend vulnerable people in order to take over their home and use it to deal drugs.

Northampton Borough Council recognised the seriousness of this problem and has so far, through its Case Management Meetings for Cuckooing, arranged two training sessions for 40 frontline officers across NBC, Adult Social Care, Probation and the Police. Further two sessions have also been fully booked, which will train additional 40 officers.

This Council, working closely with the Police, will run an awareness campaign for the public so they can help tackle the increasing problem of 'cuckooing'.

The support of the community is crucial for pursuing 'cuckooing' drug dealers and those who choose to engage themselves in the illegal supply of drugs and associated antisocial behaviour and for this, commits to setting up a hot line for anonymous reporting of any suspicious activity".

The proposed amendment was lost and Council debated the substantive motion:

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

14. 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 9.31pm