

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 12 March 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, Cali, Choudary, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, T Eales, Eldred, Golby, Graystone, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, B Markham, M Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Kilby-Shaw, Smith, Stone and Walker

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Caswell, Chunga, Flavell and Hallam.

3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that a flag had been raised for "Shine a Light on Tibet" and the Commonwealth Flag had been raised on 12 March 2018. He referred to his recent visit to Marburg and commented that the towns would soon be celebrating their 25 year twinning milestone. He went on to advise full Council of forthcoming events – Walter Tull commemoration on 24 May 2018, the Mayoress' tree planting on 6 April and Northampton and Massachusetts LGBT event on 5 May 2018 for any Councillors who wished to attend.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Thomas Appleyard addressed Council and commented on litter, highlighting the need for a Litter Strategy. He suggested that it would be beneficial to involve schools in developing their own Action Plans. Mr Appleyard added that Council must lead on a Littering Strategy; he acknowledged it had a number of plans but none for littering.

Arthur Newbury, as Chair of the Northampton Federation of Residents' Association, addressed Council and also referred to the problem of littering, dog fouling and HIMOs. He expressed concerns regarding fly-tipping.

Tony Mallard, a member of the Northampton Federation of Residents' Association, addressed Council and conveyed his concerns regarding daily road congestion, pollution, carbon emissions. He went on to refer to unitary status commenting that in his opinion this was the way forward.

Andrew Gunton addressed full Council also referring to pollution, which he felt is worse

than in London on certain days. He stated that the town had lower wages than the national average and the highest levels of personal debt in the country. Mr Gunton further stated that neighbouring local authorities were expanding at the expense of the borough and felt that there were calls for support for unitary status, with bigger boundaries.

5. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that fifteen questions had been received from Councillors and members of the public and the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions and answers were given as tabled unless where stated, supplementary questions were asked as detailed below.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 2, Councillor Hadland stated that Kingsthorpe High Street was mainly residential and there were no shops in that area.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 12, Councillor Hadland advised that there were regular health and safety checks undertaken at Northgate bus station.

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 14, Councillor King stated that comprehensive equality impact assessments were carried out for each application.

6. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

Councillor Nunn submitted his report as Leader of the Council and thanked all those Members who had attended the Deloitte Members' briefing on 23 January. It had proved to be an extremely valuable opportunity for Councillors to discuss the issue of unitary status. He reported that the vacancy of Independent Chair to the Audit Committee had been re-advertised and had attracted a good response. He further reported that Delapre Abbey was set to open on 17 March. The Leader of the Council advised that the new Chief Executive would be formally appointed at a later agenda item and he conveyed his thanks to the Interim Chief Executive.

In response to questions the Leader responded that unanimous support had been given to the appointment of an Independent Chair of Audit Committee and stated the need to create a sustainable authority.

Councillor Larratt submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon, highlighting that the IT "Caseworker" trial would commence following the training session scheduled for 16 April 2018. He confirmed that a briefing on FGM awareness had been set for 16 July 2018 with two identical sessions; one at 2pm and one at 6pm.

In response to questions the Deputy Leader advised that it was still the intention of the Council to introduce webcasting.

Councillor Hibbert submitted his Cabinet Member report and thanked all those who had participated in the arrangements for providing homeless people with emergency

overnight shelter during severe weather. SWEPE had been activated on 22 February 2018. The One Stop Shop had been open over the weekend of 27 and 28 February for homeless people and he thanked all those involved in making this happen.

Councillor King submitted her Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon, highlighting that £108,967.19 had supported community fund applications. Councillor King advised that on 5 May 2018 an LGBTQ event would be held. She further advised that partnership work was ongoing with the Park Management Forum regarding “Keep Britain Tidy.”

At this juncture the Mayor advised that the allocated time for Cabinet Member presentations had been reached.

7. APPOINTMENT OF A PERMANENT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

Councillor Nunn proposed a report that sought Council’s approval to appoint a permanent Head of Paid Service and Chief Executive.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of George Candler as the Council’s Head of Paid Service from 13 March 2018 and Chief Executive from 30 April 2018 be approved.

8. CHANGES TO OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Larratt proposed a change to appointments to outside bodies, that being Councillor Hadland replaces Councillor Bottwood as the Council’s representative on the Outside Body – Delapre Preservation Trust (DAPT).

Councillor Patel seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Hadland replaces Councillor Bottwood as the Council’s representative on the Outside Body – Delapre Preservation Trust (DAPT).

9. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Councillor Patel presented for approval the Meetings Cycle for 2018/2019 which was seconded by Councillor Oldham.

RESOLVED: That the Meetings Cycle for 2018/2019 be approved.

10. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Russell made a statement on Unitary Status. She stated that Unitary Status was the way forward and that it would make substantial financial savings. She went

on to quote statistics that showed Northampton to have the lowest wages and the highest personal debt in the country. She referred to the budgetary situation of Northamptonshire County Council and stated that Government funding cuts were the cause.

Councillor Nunn in response advised that Northampton Borough Council was the only Council to hold discussions and workshops regarding Unitary Status. He referred to funding issues regarding social care and Unitary Status.

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

- i) Councillor Duffy proposed and Councillor Culbard seconded:

“This council recognises that sexual harassment happens where there are imbalances of power and can happen in Local Authorities at Member level and staffing levels.

This council therefore commits to developing a sexual harassment policy for Members and staff in consultation with representatives of both, and in consultation with the voluntary sector services that support victims of sexual harassment.”

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote the motion was lost.

- ii) Councillor Davenport 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 which was debated below:

“This council recognises that more can be done to encourage recycling. To this end, and working with our new Environmental Services Contractor, this Council resolves to investigate and recommend innovative models for the recycling of cans and bottles that can be available in locations across the Borough. In doing so this Council recognises that young people are encouraged to collect and recycle cans and bottles for a small remuneration. The model recommended should educate, entertain and encourage the process of recycling.”

Members debated the motion.

Upon a vote the motion was carried.

- iii) Councillor Birch proposed and Councillor Beardsworth seconded:

“This council recognises that there is a public dissatisfaction around the delivery of an efficient and safe bus service for the residents of Northampton from Northgate Bus Station.

This council therefore commits to commissioning an independent Health and Safety

inspection to look at the Bus Station in terms of pedestrian safety, congestion in the surrounding street, air quality and turning circle requirements.”

There voted for the Motion:

Councillors Ashraf, Beardsworth, Birch, Cali, Choudary, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, T Eales, Haque, Joyce, B Markham, Marriott, McCutcheon, Meredith Russell, Smith and Stone.

There voted against the Motion:

Councillors Ansell, Aziz, Bottwood, Eldred, Golby, Graystone, Hadland, Hibbert, Hill, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, Malpas, M Markham, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Sargeant and Walker.

There abstained the Mayor and Councillor Kilby-Shaw.

Upon a vote, the motion was lost.

iv) Councillor Hadland propose and Councillor Nunn seconded:

“The administration has always been committed to enhancing and promoting the heritage of our town.

Never was this more clearly demonstrated than with the opening of Delapre Abbey to the public next weekend for the first time in 900 years after a multi-million pound restoration programme.

The Abbey takes its place as a jewel in the crown of our historic town, a fitting tribute to all those organisations and individuals who have supported the project.

The administration has maintained its commitment as difficulties arose and were overcome, creating and working with the Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust to ensure that we have something to make us all proud.

This Council congratulates and thanks everyone who has been involved, and wished the Trust and its volunteers every good wish for an exciting and successful future.”

Members debated the motion.

Upon a vote the motion was carried.

v) Councillor Larratt proposed and Councillor Hill seconded:

“This Council recognises that our town has been let down by the current Environmental Services provider. According to the biggest and most successful consultation that this Council has ever undertaken, a higher quality of cleanliness delivering cleaner streets and a cleaner environment, and quality grounds maintenance are top priorities for residents of our Borough.

This Council is therefore delighted that our new contractor won the bid primarily due to the quality of service it was offering. This Council is making a significant additional investment in this contract and looks forward to working with Veolia to raise the standard of cleanliness and grounds maintenance right across Northampton – something that our town has long been crying out for.

This Council also very much welcomes the new Enforcement Contract and the zero-tolerance approach to littering and fly-tipping. We call on our enforcement provider to continue to strenuously enforce legislation with regard to littering and fly-tipping, especially through using fixed penalty notices for those people who litter our streets.

With the help, hard work, and commitment of our community volunteers, this Council will continue to provide local communities with clean, well maintained and safe open spaces. Council therefore proudly commits to provide continued support to community groups, initiatives and projects, including Residents Associations, Parish Council's, Summer Bloom, Green Flag and Friends of Parks Groups.”

Members debated the motion.

Upon a vote the motion was carried.

12. 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 9:18 pm