

Appendices

0



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Cabinet response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Report: Northampton Post Unitary
---------------------	--

AGENDA STATUS

PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	20 January 2021
Key Decision:	NO
Within Policy:	YES
Policy Document:	NO
Service Area:	Borough Secretary
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor Phil Larratt, Deputy Leader of the Council
Ward(s)	All - Borough-wide

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet's response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee pre-decision Scrutiny report on the situation with regard to the Mayoralty and all the regalia associated with it and its long history.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet gives careful consideration to the Overview and Scrutiny recommendations detailed below:-
- 2.1.1 The Mayor of Northampton is retained and if necessary a Charitable Trust is set up for the Mayoralty. The Mayoralty is also retained at the Guildhall to protect Civic traditions and to promote our heritage.
- 2.1.2 A Civic Quarter is created that includes our Civic assets.

- 2.1.3 Should a Town Council be established, the Town Council should be located in the Guildhall, along with Mayoralty and its regalia to ensure the secure protection of the historic assets of the Borough Council.
- 2.1.4 To protect civic pride in a wider Northampton area and consider that the proposed Unitary Council for the West of Northamptonshire should be called the Greater Northampton Council.
- 2.1.5 It is ensured that the Maces, known as North, South, East and West, are retained in Northampton's Museum, in the borough and that all silver assets are made secure.
- 2.1.6 Oak Apple day is a Borough Council tradition and it should be recaptured by the Borough. This would be the opportune time to reintroduce some of the civic events that have over time disappeared, for example May Day celebrations and celebrate other cultural celebrations.
- 2.1.7 Other key roles of the Mayoralty must be protected, including:
- The Mayor is the Chair of the Housebound Fund
 - The Mayor is the President of Town Twinning
 - The Mayor is the President for St John's Home
 - Honorary Freeman take place just once every civic term
 - Hereditary Freeman take the oath from the Mayor
- 2.1.8 The re-establishment of the roles of Major's Serjeant and Town Serjeant, as Honorary roles, for example the office of Alderman or former Councillor are investigated and introduced.
- 2.1.9 Publicity and marketing of the Mayoralty is good; but it should be widened further to include proactive use of leaflets at locations such as the train station and libraries and more use of social media. 2.1.10 Cabinet is informed that it is the aspiration of the Scrutiny Panel that Northampton is a City of Culture by 2025.

nb. Cabinet should note that the Mayoralty and all the attached regalia were transferred by the relevant Statutory Order of the 24th February, 2020 to the new Northampton Town Council to take effect on the 1st April, 2021.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 One of the purposes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was to ensure that on local government reorganisation in 2021 the position of the Mayoralty and all its accompanying regalia etc. would be safeguarded for the benefit of all the future generations living in the area of the former proud and historic Northampton Borough Council.
- 3.1.2 Members of Cabinet and indeed, the Council will be aware that the Council's Cross Party Working Group has been working hard to ensure that the Mayoralty and all its historic regalia are safeguarded for the future by

ensuring that in partnership with Full Council this high civic office and its regalia along with all the relevant muniments are transferred to the new Northampton Town Council. This was given effect by The Northampton Borough Council [Reorganisation of Community Governance] No. 1 [Northampton Parish Council] Order 2020. The said Order was dated the 24th February, 2020. While the support and concerns of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee are well appreciated and welcomed, the Borough Council has ensured that the necessary legal provisions are in place to safeguard the Mayoralty for future generations.

- 3.1.3 Cabinet should also note that it is intended that all the Mayoral civic events and ceremonies including the famous Oak Apple Day will be preserved and continued. In addition, we now have the Shadow Town Council set -up and holding meetings to determine the future of the new Northampton Town Council and in the process of appointing its first Town Clerk.
- 3.1.4 Cabinet is therefore recommended not to consider setting up a charitable trust to safeguard the Mayoralty as the relevant statutory provisions are in place to achieve this aim which is jointly supported by both Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.1.5 Since the making of the Statutory Orders in February ,2020 considerable progress has been made with the setting-up of the new Northampton Town Council which has culminated in the decisions made by Full Council on the 18th.January ,2021 .At this meeting the Council agreed a suggested precept to be recommended to the Shadow Town Council when it meets to consider its precept for 2021-2022 and Council also accepted a report on the future occupation of the Guild Hall by the Shadow Northampton Town Council. Both these issues will be considered by the Town Council and as stated will culminate in an agreed precept and by the 31st March ,2021 an agreement , in consultation with West Northants Council, of a lease for their office accommodation at the Guild Hall. Following a national recruitment process a Town Clerk has also been recommended to be appointed to the Northampton Town Council and this person will commence her full time official duties at the beginning of April of this year, subject to Town Council ratification at their next meeting on 27th January 2021.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 Cabinet may choose to agree to any or all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations in full or in part.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 Cabinet may choose to agree to any or all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations in full or in part.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 There are no Policy implications at this stage.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 There are costs involved in the setting -up of the new town council and the two new parish councils which are being overseen by the Cross Party Working Group.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 There are no legal implications at this stage.

4.4 Equality and Health

4.4.1 These will be taken into account in the development of the new Town Council.

4.4.2 A range of stakeholders have been consulted as part of the Community Governance process.

4.4.3 The new Northampton Town Council will formally be in place on the 1st April , 2021 with elections for the new town councillors in May, 2021.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 A range of stakeholders were consulted with as part of the overview and scrutiny review.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.6.1 This will deliver against our objective within the Corporate plan :

Exceptional services to be proud of.

4.7 Environmental Implications (including climate change issues)

4.7.1 There are none at this stage.

4.8 Other Implications

4.7.1 None.

5. Background Papers

- Overview and Scrutiny Report: Northampton Post Unitary 2019
- Report to Cabinet – 24 July 2019 – Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Northampton Post Unitary

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Cabinet's response to this Overview and Scrutiny Report will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 15 February 2021. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will then monitor the implementation of the accepted recommendations.

Laurie Gould
Deputy Monitoring Officer
lgould@northampton.gov.uk