NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



COUNCIL

Monday, 10 March 2014

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, 10 MARCH 2014 UPON THE RISING OF THE ADJOURNED COUNCIL MEETING OF THE 24TH FEBRUARY 2014, WHEN THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS IS PROPOSED TO BE TRANSACTED:

- 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
- 2. APOLOGIES
- 3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS
- 5. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
- 6. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

(Copy herewith)

7. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Palethorpe to make a statement on "Current Regeneration Issues".

8. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

(Copy herewith)

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

i) Councillor Beardsworth to propose and Councillor Conroy to second:

This Council notes the good work done by the administration and members of the opposition in developing the "Arm's Length Management Organisation" that is intended to take control of the Borough's Housing Stock, with a target date of 1st January 2015. The relationship between the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund is important aspect of delivering cost effective services to Northampton council tax payers. It is important that the Council has a detailed understanding of the support provided by the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account, and the reverse. Council therefore requests that Scrutiny undertakes a detail review of the services provided and cost associated with the change between the two budgets presenting their findings in time for the ALMO start up and the preparation of the 2015/16 budget.

ii) Councillor Glynane to propose and Councillor Meredith to second:

The Council notes that low air quality can have serious consequences for the health of people and of the environment, making good air quality fundamental for the ongoing good of our town.

Given plans to reopen Abington Street to traffic, it is therefore essential that current air quality levels are established, so any changes in them can be properly managed in the future, and the health of residents, town centre users and the environment can be assured. Council resolves to establish and publish air quality levels at a number of points along the stretch of Abington Street between St. Giles Terrace and Wellington Street before any work begins, and regularly afterward, so that any changes can be clearly identified and mitigated.

iii) Cllr Mackintosh to propose and Councillor Hadland to second:

"This Council recognises the importance of the St Edmund's site as a key gateway to the town.

"It is regrettable that the buildings have fallen into a state of disrepair, but Council welcomes the fact that this Administration is working with the developers of the site and English Heritage to drive forward the renovation of the buildings and bring them back into an appropriate use.

"Council looks forward to a planning application being submitted later this year and will keep all options open to ensure that the site is properly redeveloped."

10. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

Public Participation

1. Comments and Petitions

1.1 A member of the public (or an accredited representative of a business ratepayer of the Borough) may make a comment or present a petition on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers. A comment or presentation of a petition shall be for no more than three minutes. No notice of the nature of the comment to be made or of the petition is required except for the need to register to speak by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

(Public comments and petitions will not be taken and the Annual Council Meeting or other civic or ceremonial meetings.)

NOTES

- i. Comments may be on one or more subjects but each person has no longer than three minutes to have their say.
- ii. The same person may make a comment and present a petition on different subjects. In such instances that person will have three minutes to make their comment and a separate three minutes to present a petition.

2. Member and Public Questions

- 2.1 A member of the public (or business ratepayer of the Borough) may ask a maximum of two written questions at each meeting, each limited to a maximum of 50 words, on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers. Each question shall:
 - be submitted in writing and delivered, faxed or e-mailed to Democratic Services no later than 10.00am seven calendar days before the day of the meeting; and
 - include the name and address of the questioner and the name of the Cabinet member/Committee Chair to whom the question is put.
- 2.2 At the meeting, copies of all questions and the responses to them from the public and Members will be made available to the public and press. The Mayor may allow one supplementary question, without notice, that arises directly from the original question or response.

(Questions will not be taken at the Annual Council Meeting or at civic or ceremonial meetings or meetings called to deal with specific items of business.)

NOTES

In respect of paragraph 2.1 above, questions may be rejected on certain grounds that are set out on page 4-12 of the Council's Constitution and which may be viewed at www.northampton.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=1919 or by seeking advice using the contact details below.

3. Motions

3.1 A member of the public may register to speak to a motion under the 'Notices of Motion' item on the agenda. Registration to speak must be made to Democratic Services by 12 noon on the day to the meeting. Speaking to a motion is restricted to three minutes per person.

(The 'Notices of Motion' item will not be taken at the Annual Council meeting or meetings called for civic or ceremonial purposes.)

4. General

A member of the public may make a comment, present a petition, ask a question or speak to a motion at the same meeting subject to the restrictions set out above.

5. Contacts

Democratic Services: e-mail democraticservices@northampton.gov.uk

Tel 01604 837722

Mail Democratic Services
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton NN1 1DE

Question 1

Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Conroy

Given the substantial sum of money set aside for the "Boris Bike" type scheme, and the obvious differences between Northampton and London, Paris and other cities that have implemented this type of scheme – has a business case been developed to ensure that this spend is good value for money?

Response

The London scheme is on a totally different scale to Northampton's 'pilot' scheme and the costs of set-up and running the schemes is vastly different. The Northampton Scheme reflects the needs of the local area and the hub locations have been strategically chosen to maximise take up and allow for growth into the future.

In terms of developing the scheme, partners have used business intelligence from other similar schemes in the country with similar demographic profiles to do, for example, income modelling and predicted take up rates.

Question 2

Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Conroy

What level of usage will be required to consider the bike scheme a success? Are there KPIs for the scheme?

Response

NCC are developing a set of success measures for the scheme. NCC will use business intelligence from other schemes and monitor usage figures going forward. The scheme will target its marketing to ensure maximum take up.

Question 3

Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Conroy

Given the inherent dangers cyclists face on our increasingly busy roads, has there been a safety survey produced for the Bike Scheme that identifies and mitigates potential risks?

Response

Placement of Bike Hire Bays and the impacts these have on the cycle network will have a thorough risk assessment which will be undertaken by the expert resources that NCC have as the project lead. NCC do cycle audits on all new routes and auditing and assessment of new infrastructure on the network is a matter for Northamptonshire Highways.

NCC publish the Northampton Cycle Map, which we will promote to users of the scheme as part of the marketing campaign. The map shows all of the roads in Northampton graded by how suitable they are for cycling on in a easy to understand format. Users of the scheme can, therefore, use the map to make their own assessment of which routes to take depending on how confident they feel cycling. NCC continually strive to build and maintain health and safety risk assessments to a high standard, but they do not compromise safety in terms of design and build. Health and safety is also a personal responsibility of any Bike hire user and it is recommended that users wear a cycle helmet.

Question 4

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Meredith

Now that the administration has finally seen sense and decided not to turf 13 successful businesses out of their premises, and has ensured the owners of their ongoing security – what plans are being made to improve the facilities at this Borough Council business site?

Response

We will work with the businesses on their future plans and we will keep the ward councillor fully informed.

Question 5

Question to Councillor Markham from Councillor Meredith

What quality control measures are in place to ensure that work done, including work done under the "Decent Homes Standard", on the Borough's Housing stock is done to a satisfactory quality, in a satisfactory timeframe and in such a way as to have the least negative impact on tenants?

Response

We have introduced a robust and rigorous system of checks on all capital works undertaken on our tenants' homes. Under the revamped Decent Homes Contracts each contractor is assessed on both quality and timeliness in completing works to the tenants' satisfaction and to the technical specification set out in the project brief. Where contractors fall short of our expected standards we take appropriate action within the terms of the contract to address the problem.

Question 6

Question to Councillor Markham from Councillor Meredith

How many complaints has the Council received per year for the last 3 years from tenants about work done, or not done, to the Council's housing stock?

Response

In 2011 the Council received 46 complaints about capital works including the Decent Homes programme and 191 about response repairs. In 2012 the Council received 108 complaints about capital works and the Decent Homes programme and 267 about responsive repairs. In 2013 the Council received 232 complaints about the capital works and Decent Homes programme and 458 complaints about responsive repairs. In context the Council has increased expenditure on capital works and Decent Homes to over £17m per year from 2012/13 and confirmed ambitious plans to bring all homes up to the Decent Homes Standard by March 2015. We are now working with our tenants to improve our levels of service and satisfaction through the Repairs & Voids Service Improvement Panel and the newly created Decent Homes Service Improvement Panel, and will continue to use complaints as a learning tool to help us improve and not just as a means of collecting data.

Question 7

<u>Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor</u> <u>Beardsworth</u>

Now that the leader has finally been cajoled into publishing the Consultation Responses to the plans to reopen Abington Street – can he please explain in what way this consultation was taken into account when finalising plans, given that 75% of responses were objections?

Response

The responses were considered as part of the overall decision making process. This process included, of course, the Cabinet meeting in July 2013 where Cllr Beardsworth did not raise any concerns.

Question 8

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Beardsworth

After the discovery of a significant amount of Asbestos in the Greyfriars bus station – what are the implications for the demolition of the building, in terms of cost and timeframe for completion?

Response

The Council is aware there was asbestos used in the construction of the Greyfriars Bus Station. To ascertain the extent of its usage the Borough Council is currently undertaking detailed surveys of the vacated building.

It is not considered there will be an impact on the project in terms of the delivery and the timescale for the programme. Detailed tenders are currently being analysed and the results of the asbestos survey will be part of this process.

Question 9

Question to Councillor Markham from Mr Norman Adams

In your report on Toms Close about the council's intentions for the 16 "Airey" type properties. My current understanding is that nine are council stock, which means seven would have been or will need to be purchased from the property owner.

Question:

- a) Will the new homes be social rent?
- b) Will the new development be council owned?

Response

The council has yet to decide the future mix, tenure and ownership of the replacement dwellings in Toms Close but I can confirm that the land will be used for new housing and no other purpose.

Question 10

Question to Councillor Markham from Mr McNabb

In light of the ongoing Decent Homes Scandal, is there a huge apology and compensation pot ready?

Response

Our Decent Homes contractors are robustly supervised and managed but in a programme of over 8,000 homes and £50m of expenditure it is not possible to get it right all the time and every time. Where our contractors don't get it right we ensure that we work with them and the tenant to resolve the problem and establish if any compensation is appropriate. Where compensation is appropriate it is usually the responsibility of the contractor to pay it.

Question 11

Question to Councillor Eldred from Councillor Stone

Why was information about International Women's day so late in being made public?

Response

Information was circulated on the same timescale as other events. Councillor Stone may have missed this as I understand she has been on holiday to Bangladesh.

Question 12

Question to Councillor Eldred from Councillor Stone

Who appoints chairs to the forums and using what criteria?

Response

The Leader of the Council appoints chairs to the forums based on his judgement.

Question 13

Question to Councillor Eldred from Councillor Stone

Has there been any monitoring of the spending of the Councillor Community Fund? For example, the impact it is having across the town.

Response

Decisions on spending of the Councillor Community Fund is a matter for each individual councillor based on their priorities and community knowledge within their ward.

Question 14

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor N Choudary

It is going to cost 20p to use the public lavatories in the new bus interchange.

- 1. How much revenue is this predicted to raise?
- 2. What will the revenue be used for?
- 3. Will it have the effect of excluding some of our citizens?

Response

- 1. We have budgeted that the charges will raise £15,000 per annum.
- The income from the charges for using the public toilets, together with the charges paid by bus operators and rental income from the retail unit, café concession and travel centre is collectively used to meet the operational costs of running the facility.
- 3. Those with disabilities have access to better free facilities than existed previously at Greyfriars or indeed generally in the Town Centre before the North Gate Bus Station was opened. Many towns make small charges to use public toilets and this has been found to discourage vandalism and abuse of facilities as well as generating income to help meet the cost of keeping them in a good condition. It is not considered that making a small charge will exclude local people from using the facilities.

Agenda Item 6



Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

10th March 2014

On 1st March I had the honour of attending the opening the new North Gate Bus Station. The new facility will give a fitting welcome to people visiting our town by bus and is another piece of the regeneration jigsaw in place. With the North Gate Bus Station open and operational, Greyfriars has been closed and work has begun on the demolition of the site. Once completed the significant piece of land it currently occupies will be freed up for further development.

Traffic is once again flowing in both directions on Bridge Street. From 14th February the scaffolding and hoardings were moved back from the road outside of the old Angel Hotel following talks between the Borough Council and the building's owners. We hope that this will not only relieve some of the traffic pressures in the area and make it easier for businesses on Bridge Street to conduct their business.

On 24th February, Full Council passed the budget for 2014/2015, which will see even more money set aside for the regeneration of our town and help boost the local economy. Measures include financial assistance for businesses, extended free parking to help attract more shoppers in to the town and an extra £13 million for regeneration and infrastructure. This Administration is committed to doing all it can to attract inward investment, create jobs and support our local economy for the benefit of local residents, and this year's budget will help us further fulfil that commitment.

The Borough Council has received a planning application from Cosworth for the expansion of their facilities in the Enterprise Zone. Cosworth are a local company with a global reputation, and their application is a real vote of confidence in the future of our town and all we are doing to make it a success. This has included lots of discussion with Government and the company to make this happen.

The first two acts for this year's Alive at Delapre have now been announced. We are very pleased to be hosting Boyzone on 20th July, and Simple Minds on 18th July. Alive at Delapre is just one of many exciting events to be held across Northampton this summer, more of which will be announced over the coming weeks.

Local community groups, school children and councillors gathered at The Guildhall on 27th January to reflect on the millions of people killed during the Second World War under Nazi persecution and subsequent genocides. The ceremony took place in The Guildhall's Great Hall and there were a number of speakers and performances, including contributions by children and young people from Briar Hill Primary School, Abbeyfield Secondary School and the Borough Council's Northampton Youth Forum. There was also a short flower laying ceremony at the Holocaust Memorial Stone in The Courtyard at The Guildhall earlier in the day.

Community Safety

On 1st February the Police 'enquiry desk' was opened at The Guildhall. It is an opportunity to bring together the service currently provided by police staff at Campbell Square with other local services offered by the Borough Council. All enquiries from the public, including reporting crime, producing driving documents or reporting lost property, will be made at The Guildhall. We want the Town Centre to be a pleasant and welcoming place for people to shop and enjoy themselves, so it is important that visitors feel safe here. Tax payers expect public bodies to work closely together and this is a simple thing we can do to help increase the Police presence in our town centre. The new office will be open seven days a week, from 8am to 8pm Monday to Saturday and 10am to 4pm on Sunday.

All Crime, Violence and Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) continues its downward trend and exceeds the annual Community Safety Partnership (CSP) targets. To date there has been a 15.2% reduction in overall crime and a 16.2% reduction in violence, again exceeding the annual target. SAC continues on its downward trend with 21.2% reduction. Police recorded Anti-Social Behaviour has increased by 1.9% to date and Criminal Damage has reduced by 15% exceeding the annual target.

Multi-Agency Weeks of Action are continuing in priority locations, the most recent being held in Far Cotton and Spencer/St James. A further Week of Action has been launched in Spring Boroughs/Semilong. Engagement with the local communities has been excellent, with a wide range of agencies providing advice and support.

Councillor David Mackintosh Leader of the Council



Cabinet Member Report for Housing Northampton Borough Council

10th March 2014

ALMO

The work programme for the creation of the ALMO is now being finalised. The Programme sets out the key stages and milestones on the way to delivering the ALMO on 5th January 2015. The Tenant Panel has been boosted by a number of additional attendees and reflects the growing emphasis we are putting on engaging with tenants and leaseholders. The Tenant Panel will select the tenants to join the ALMO Implementation Board. The Employee Focus Group will also nominate employees to sit on the Implementation Board.

Decent Homes Programme

The Programme for 2014/15 is currently being prepared. The total programme value will increase by over 100% in the next financial year, moving from £17m to £39m to reflect this administration's commitment to the programme.

Service Improvement

The department management team has now started the Employment Briefing sessions for all housing employees. The first session was principally for the teams in Landlord Services but future sessions will include all housing department employees, including those based at The Guildhall. The initial focus will be on service improvement, cultural change and customer focus.

Toms Close

The 16 "Airey" type properties in Toms Close are to be decommissioned so that we can create a cleared site for the development of new homes. Airey properties were built immediately after the Second World War using aluminium frames from military vehicles for the main structural elements and pre-cast concrete panels for the infill walls. The properties are extremely thermally inefficient and hard to heat and to bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard and give them a further 20-25 year's lifespan is estimated to cost in excess of £80,000 per dwelling. Every tenant and property owner has been contacted by our housing officers and all our tenants have now either registered with us for a transfer or have indicated that they will make their own arrangements for somewhere else to live.

Councillor Mary MarkhamCabinet Member for Housing

Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Northampton Borough Council

10th March 2014

Town Centre

On 14th February the last of the scaffolding and protective hoardings were removed from the carriageway in Bridge Street, and traffic is now able to flow in both directions. Following the intervention of the Borough Council the owners of the former Angel Hotel agreed to scale back the protective scaffolding that has partially closed Bridge Street for two years. The repair and restoration of the Grade II listed building will continue, with a smaller amount of protective hoardings and scaffolding. Northamptonshire County Council has also removed the Traffic Order restricting two-way traffic, and the relevant signage and road markings have been changed.

Work to remodel the Market Square fountain began on 20th January. The first phase of work involved upgrading the underground systems serving the fountain. The area has been fenced off and this fencing around the compound will remain throughout the works. The new fountain is due to be turned on in the spring.

Regeneration

This year's budget, which was approved by Full Council on 24th February, was a further commitment from this administration to regenerate the Town Centre, support local businesses and help boost the local economy. Free parking has been extended to help attract more visitors and shoppers into the town, and £13 million was set aside for infrastructure and regeneration projects in Northampton.

From April we will also be supporting local businesses through a Business Incentive scheme that will help to fill empty properties and support small businesses through a range of grants. In addition, the new Business Rate Rebate scheme will give qualifying retail businesses up to £1,000 in Business Rate Relief.

An official ceremony on 1st March marked the opening of the new North Gate Bus Station. The project was completed on time and on budget, and is a great credit to out Regeneration Team and the contractors and advisors. The new facility is a key part of the regeneration of the Town Centre that will improve access and give visitors arriving by bus a suitable welcome to our town. Bus services began operating from the station on 2nd March, which marked the successful completion of another major regeneration project by this Administration.

We are asking people to comment on plans to protect the historic site of the Battle of Northampton and surrounding area. In 1460 Northampton witnessed one of the major conflicts in the War of the Roses. The Battle of Northampton and its aftermath is seen as a significant event, not just in our town's history but as part of the story of our nation. This year we are celebrating the rich and interesting story of Northampton, so it seems only fitting that we are looking carefully at how we can protect the site of one of the most significant battles fought on English soil.

The plan looks at seven key areas:

- Battlefield location and protection
- Historic landscape
- Nature conservation
- Access and interpretation
- Public use and events
- Landscape
- Management and maintenance

The Consultation closes on 27th March.

New play and activity equipment has been installed at Hunsbury Hill Country Park. The play area now includes a slide for younger children, fitness points and an extended adventure trail, including a double rope swing, which is suitable for all ages. The investment came in response to calls from local people who wanted more activities for children and young people in this increasingly popular park. The equipment has been paid for with £31,500 of s106 fund contributions from a local housing development.

Planning

Plans to enhance the facilities at the County Ground have been approved by the Borough Council. Earlier this year Northamptonshire County Cricket Club submitted plans to replace 1,200 temporary seats with a new 900 seat permanent stand. Last year Northants Cricket enjoyed one of their most successful seasons in recent years, competing in all three formats of the sport. The club finished an impressive season that saw the Steelbacks win the Friends Life T20 and earn promotion to the top division of the LV= County Championship. The new permanent grandstand will be situated to the right-hand side of the indoor cricket school, as viewed from the cricket pitch, and has been designed to be more sympathetic to the area and neighbouring properties.

The planning application for the expansion of Cosworth's Northampton factory is now available online for the public to view and comment on. The world famous high performance technology specialists will be expanding their existing operations to increase Cosworth's engine assembly and manufacturing capacity. This follows Cosworth's plans for a centre of excellence were announced last year at a Northampton Alive event. The application supports the development of a key site within Northampton's Enterprise Zone and will bring forward the new production facility. The planning application has been submitted and the full proposal has been published online. The proposals includes details of a 38,000sq ft facility, located on the southern part of St James Mill Road joining Cosworth's existing site. If approved, construction of the new facility is expected to be completed by August this year.

The Public Examination of the Joint Core Strategy for West Northamptonshire resumes next week, following an adjournment from last July to allow further work on housing and job numbers to be completed. The Borough Council has objected to the proposed modifications and will be represented at the hearings.

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Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement

Northampton Borough Council

10th March 2014

Events

Simple Minds are the second act we have announced will be playing at Alive at Delapre this year on 18th July. Simple Minds' performance at Alive at Delapre in Northampton will coincide with the release of their latest album, 'Celebrate – The Greatest Hits', which marks their 35 years as one of Britain's most successful bands.

The first act we confirmed would be playing at the three day event were Irish pop legends Boyzone, who will be performing on 20th July.

Culture & Heritage

The Council has published an updated version of the tourist brochure in February. The 64 page book features all the great things our town has to offer, including events and culture, history and key tourist destinations and venues. The guide is available at several locations, including the Tourist Information centre at George Row and Northampton Museum & Art Gallery, and can also be viewed online at: www.northampton.gov.uk/northampton-guide

As 2014 marks 100 years since the start of the First World War (1914-1918), Northampton Museum and Art Gallery is hosting an exhibition of artworks selected from its collection that date from the Golden Age leading up to the war. The Northampton exhibition entitled The Golden Age offers a glimpse into the mood of nation during that time. Rarely seen artworks include The Bullring by Charles Conder (1868-1909), Great Expectations by Eric Forbes-Robertson (1865-1935), Kew Bridge by Walter Greaves (1846-1930), The Little Rogue by Edward Samuel Harper (1854-1941), The Pity of It by Harold Speed (1872-1957) and Sketch for a Meeting by Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956). The Golden Age is showing at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery from 11th January until 23rd March, admission is free.

We are making great progress in developing our collaborative project with The Royal and Derngate for a range of activities to commemorate the anniversary of World War One. The activities will include our summer exhibition "A shoemaker goes to war" and a Family Open Day in Guildhall Road on 30th August. The Heritage Lottery have awarded us £73,000 to take this forward.

Our programme of music, dance and drama got off to a good start on 14th January when The Royal and Derngate's community group, The Actors Company, presented an ambitious series of short plays.

Councillor Community Fund

Applications for the Councillor Community Fund continue to be received. There has been a total of 119 applications received so far for 2013/14, which equates to £81,653 of the funding being spent. The funding is being allocated by elected members with the community, focusing on projects that are delivering positive outcomes in their wards.

Partnership Support

The grant application process closed on 21st February and the evaluation of applications will take place on 28th and 29th March. Applicants will then be notified of the outcome during the first week of April. Changes to this year's bid process includes:

- Outcome focussed bids, which are aligned to NBC's corporate plan
- Encouragement of partnerships
- Evaluation process (scoring matrix to be applied) CEFAP panel will make recommendations for sign off by Cabinet member and Director

Forums

Our forums have seen an increase in attendance both by service users and service providers. Improvements to the forums include:

- Code of Conduct developed and published, applied across all forums
- Events Calendar produced to co-ordinate activity across the forums
- Website information updated across the forums, information added to promote the Women's Forum
- Publicity plan, being developed with the communications team, to further increase attendance

Customer Services

From 1st February the One Stop Shop became home to a Police enquiry desk. The move to The Guildhall is an opportunity to bring together the service currently provided by Police staff at Campbell Square with other local services offered by the Borough Council and enhance the services we are able to offer here at The Guildhall

A range of free and subsidised adult learning sessions and social events have been taking place in community rooms across Northampton. The events have been coordinated by the Borough Council to help bring communities together and improve people's wellbeing and health. Computer courses, advice surgeries, arts and crafts sessions, keep fit and indoor kurling were just some of the activities offered.

Councillor Brandon Eldred

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement



Cabinet Member Report for the Environment Northampton Borough Council

10th March 2014

Environmental Services

The Borough Council is continuing to work with Enterprise to monitor the collection of refuse bags. There continues to be some small areas of poor compliance, and Environmental Protection are considering enforcement action in appropriate cases. Planning is now in underway for the distribution of the next supply of green bags in the areas where they are still in use. Where possible, the Borough Council is working to have bulk bins installed at blocks of flats for the collection of bagged waste. Our Neighbourhood Wardens are continuing to help with education and enforcement to assist with the changes to refuse collections.

Parks

Work to lay a new cross park pathway through Eastfield Park is currently underway. The 400 metre long path will run through the middle of the park, connecting one side of the park to the other and improving access to the lake for anglers and other park users. For the past seven years the Friends of Eastfield Park group has been asking for a wheelchair and pushchair friendly path through the park to improve accessibility so that the park can be enjoyed by local people all year round. Currently there is no pathway to the lake which means that it is underutilised as a recreational resource. The improvement scheme will cost around £30,000 and be paid for out of \$106 monies.

Work is underway to install a new children's playground at Briar Hill Park. The Borough Council has worked with The Children's Centre, PCSOs, Neighbourhood Wardens and parents of the school children at Briar Hill Primary to make sure the playground is appropriately designed with suitable facilities for local residents to use and enjoy. The new play equipment being installed includes; a wobble board, an adventure course with a rope bridge, a team swing, City Spinners, an Air Rider, toddler swings and a new bench. Work to install the new equipment is expected to be completed by the end of February.

Bloom

Community and voluntary groups, businesses, schools, churches, allotment holders and keen gardeners have been invited to take part in this year's Bloom competition. More groups than ever before took part in Bloom in 2013, but we would like even more people will take part this year. The theme for 2014 is remembrance and celebration, as this year marks the centenary of the outbreak of World War One and the 825th anniversary of our town charter.

Environmental Health

Our Environmental Crime Officers and Neighbourhood Wardens have worked together to pursue two successful prosecutions. One Town Centre resident was found guilty of fly tipping a sofa and fined a total of £620, and another resident was fined £585 for dumping bags of refuse.

Licensing

Eight taxis were taken off the road immediately or given a delayed prohibition in the latest round of spot safety checks in the town on 17th January. Officers from our Licensing Enforcement Team, the Police and Vehicle & Operators Services Agency carried out the safety checks as part of their on-going public safety campaign. During the six hour operation, 37 vehicles were stopped and inspected to check that they were roadworthy and met public safety standards. Six Private Hire Vehicles and two Hackney Carriages were taken off the road because they failed to meet safety standards. Offences included dangerous tyres, mechanical faults and lighting offences. Another 21 drivers were issued with advice or warnings about parts that were wearing to the point of failure.

Work has been undertaken to address illegal taxi ranking to ensure the smooth operation of the North Gate Bus Station, and two flagging operations have been undertaken for private hire vehicles which resulted in two drivers being caught illegally taking fares.

Carbon Management

We have received confirmation that the Borough Council is under our energy usage threshold for the second phase of the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Saving Scheme. This will result in a significant financial saving in future years.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for the Environment



Cabinet Member Report for Finance Northampton Borough Council 10th March 2014

On 24thFebruary the Budget was approved by Full Council, with the Council Tax report being adjourned until Full Council on 10thMarch due to an administrative error made by one of the parish councils.

The proposals balance the competing need to invest in our Town Centre, freeze Council Tax and improve our Council housing stock at a time when our funding from Government is reducing. We have also been able to increase investment that will support regeneration, local businesses and our local economy by making the Borough Council more efficient.

Whilst the Council has a balanced budget for 2014/15, we face further Government funding reductions over the medium term. This presents additional challenges and a widening funding gap which is forecast to last until at least 2018. We believe that the measures in this year's budget will help address this, and further work is underway to identify ways to increase our income and reduce our costs.

Work continues to monitor the transition to a separate LGSS Revenues and Benefits customer contact centre. This includes measuring the performance against prior years, where the net performance was across the generic centre. The Borough Council and LGSS are working closely, particularly as we enter the annual billing process, to ensure there is no disruption to customers during this busy period.

Wider plans for the new LGSS Revenues and Benefits service have been continuing in preparation for new partners joining the LGSS service. These plans will enable savings to be made whilst maintaining performance levels. Plans for the future wider shared service also aims to ensure that partners are well prepared for the welfare transitions underway. Performance across the service continues to be maintained despite increasing workloads and complexity. The work position is being monitored carefully.

Councillor Alan Bottwood
Cabinet Member for Finance

Appendices 1



COUNCIL 10 March 2014

Agenda Status: PUBLIC Directorate: Borough Secretary and

Monitoring Officer

Report	Northampton Borough Council's Pay Policy Statement 2014/15
Title	

1. Purpose

1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires every local authority to publish a Pay Policy Statement annually. This report includes details of the information, which must be included in the statement and provides a Pay Policy Statement for approval for the year 2014/15.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

2.1 approve the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2014/15 attached at Appendix 1.

3. Issues and Choices

Report Background

- 3.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a requirement for every local authority, to prepare and publish an annual Pay Policy Statement setting out the authority's policy for the financial year relating to the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the pay of Chief Officers and other employees.
- 3.2 This provision has been introduced in order to:
 - a) Increase the accountability, transparency and fairness of setting local pay.
 - b) To give local people access to information to allow them to determine whether pay is appropriate.
 - c) To ensure that the pay of senior staff is fair in the context of the pay of the rest of the workforce.

- 3.3 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Pay Policy Statement to include the Council's policies relating to:
 - a) The level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer, (including salary, bonuses and benefits in kind).
 - b) The remuneration of the Council's lowest-paid employees.
 - c) The relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and remuneration of employees who are not Chief Officers.
 - d) Remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment.
 - e) Increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer.
 - f) The use of performance related pay for Chief Officers.
 - g) The use of bonuses for Chief Officers.
 - h) The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to be employed by the authority.
 - i) The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers.
- 3.4 The Council is required to have regard to any guidance issued or approved by the Secretary of State when preparing its Pay Policy Statement. In this regard, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a guidance document under the Localism Act 2011 in February 2012 entitled, "Openness and accountability in local pay". DCLG also issued Supplementary Guidance in February 2013.
- 3.4 Elected Members are now required to take a greater role in determining pay, ensuring that these decisions are taken by those who are directly accountable to local people.
- 3.5 The Pay Policy Statement specifically requires Full Council approval of salary packages of £100,000 or more for new appointments. This reflects the recommendation made by DCLG in their February 2012 Guidance
- 3.6 Amongst other points, the DCLG Supplementary Guidance recommended that Full Council should have the opportunity to vote before large severance packages are approved for staff leaving the organisation. The Supplementary Guidance recommended that the threshold should be set at £100,000. This year, the Pay Policy Statement therefore now includes express reference to the requirement for Full Council to approve any severance packages of £100,000 or more. In this context, severance packages can include salary paid in lieu, redundancy compensation, pension entitlement, holiday pay and any bonuses, fees or allowances paid.
- 3.7 One of the aspects the Pay Policy Statement must cover is the relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and remuneration of employees who are not Chief Officers. The Pay Policy Statement therefore includes details of the ratio of the Chief Executive's remuneration when compared with the remuneration of the Council's median earner and the Council's mean earner. The Pay Policy Statement now sets out that while the Council does not have a policy of maintaining or reaching a specific pay multiple target, it will monitor the multipliers each year to monitor trends and ensure that the pay multiple does not widen.

- 3.8 Members are asked to note that the Pay Policy Statement has been updated to include further information about the Council's policies upon the termination of employment of any of its employees.
- 3.9 The Council must have the Pay Policy Statement for 2014 in place by 31 March 2014. It must be approved by full Council. The DCLG Guidance makes it clear that the Secretary of State does not consider that any of the grounds for exclusion of the public would be met when Members are considering the Pay Policy Statement.
- 3.10 Once approved, the Pay Policy Statement must be published in such a manner as the Council thinks fit, which must include publication on the Council's website. Each subsequent statement must be prepared and approved before 31 March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

The report continues existing policy.

4.2 Resources and Risk

The Pay Policy Statement must be prepared for the financial year 2014 – 2015 and each subsequent financial year. Once in place it will provide the public with a clear rationale to explain the Council's approach to pay.

4.2 Legal

The requirements under the Localism Act 2011 to produce and publish the Pay Policy statement supplement all the existing duties and responsibilities of the Council as an employer, particularly its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to avoid discrimination and provide equal pay. Since the Statement contains policies concerned with remuneration rather than information relating to individuals, the provisions of the Data Protection Act do not apply. Where the salary of senior post holders is published, outside the Pay Policy Statement, it is done so in order to comply with the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

4.3 Other Implications

The Pay Policy Statement will assist the Council to monitor remuneration across the service and provide a fair system of remuneration, which avoids discrimination.

4.4 Equality

No direct impact on equality context as this a statement of existing policy.

4.5 Policy

The report continues existing policy.

5. Background Papers

- Openness and accountability in local pay: Guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act 2011, Department for Communities and Local Government, February 2012
- Openness and accountability in local pay: Guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act 2011, Supplementary Guidance, Department for Communities and Local Government, February 2013

Francis Fernandes Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer

Pay Policy Statement 2014/2015

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Northampton Borough Council recognises that, in the context of managing scarce public resources, remuneration at all levels needs to be adequate to secure and retain high quality employees dedicated to the service of the public, but at the same time needs to avoid being unnecessarily generous or otherwise excessive.
- 1.2. It is important that local authorities are able to determine their own pay structures in order to address local priorities and to compete in the local labour market.
- 1.3. In particular, it is recognised that senior management roles in local government are complex and diverse functions in a highly politicised environment where often national and local pressures conflict. The Council's ability to continue to attract and retain high calibre managers capable of delivering this complex agenda, particularly during times of financial challenge, is crucial if the Council is to retain its current high performance levels.

2. Legislation

2.1. Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh local authorities to produce a pay policy statement for 2012/13 and for each financial year after that.

3. Scope

- 3.1. This Pay Policy Statement includes a policy on:-
 - (a) The level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer;
 - (b) The remuneration of the lowest paid employees;
 - (c) The relationship between remuneration of Chief Officers and other officers and
 - (d) Other specific aspects of Chief Officer remuneration, fees and charges and other discretionary payments.
- 3.2. Remuneration in this context is defined widely to include not just pay but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments.

4. Senior Pay

4.1. In this policy the senior pay group covers posts in the top three tiers of the organisation. These include the Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service.

Appendix 1

- 4.2. The Council has the following established number of posts at this level, 1 x Chief Executive, 2 Corporate Directors and 8 Heads of Service (including the Head of the JPU).
- 4.3. The management structure of the organisation can be found at the attached link on the Council's website.
- 4.4. The policy for each group is as follows:-

4.5. Chief Executive Officer

- (a) The salary for this post is £138,310. This is a local grade, following an analysis of the degree of responsibility of the role, the size of the Borough, market rates and benchmarking with other comparators.
- (b) This salary was approved by the authority's full Council on 6 August 2007. There are no additional bonus, honoraria or ex gratia payments.
- (c) There is a Chief Executive Performance Related Pay (PRP) scheme. The annual value of the PRP element is determined by the percentage cost of living award provided each year by the JNC for Chief Executives. As there has been no cost of living for the last 4 financial years, there has been no PRP payable to the Chief Executive. No cost of living or thereby PRP element is expected to be applied in 2014/15.
- (d) Other conditions of service are as prescribed by the Joint National Council (JNC) for Local Authority Chief Executives national conditions.

4.6. Corporate Directors and Heads of Service

(a) The salaries for these posts are based on a Senior Management grading structure comprising of 5 Grades. The breakdowns of these grades are 4 Senior Management grades (SMG1, SMG2, SMG3 and SMG4 for Heads of Service) and a Director grade. These posts are evaluated using the Hay job evaluation scheme and are currently within the following ranges:

Senior Management Pay Grades		
Grade	Salary Range (£)	
SMG1	44,505 – 51,593	
SMG2	53,141 – 61,605	
SMG3	63,453 – 73.570	
SMG4	75,768 – 87,832	

	Director Pay Grade
Grade	Salary Range (£)
Director	93,180 – 114,602

- (b) Use of the Hay scheme ensures that the relative "weight" of these roles can be objectively measured using consistent and robust criteria.
- (c) Progression through the relevant grade is linked to performance and is based on and related to improvements in service, corporate improvements and supporting the Team Northampton ethos. The senior management PRP procedure can be found at the attached link on the Council's website.
- (d) There are no other additional elements of remuneration in respect of overtime, flexi-time, bank holiday working, stand-by payments etc. paid to these senior staff as they are expected to undertake outside their contractual hours and working patterns without additional payment.
- (e) Other terms and conditions are as prescribed by Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities (as applied by Northampton Borough Council).

4.7 Additional Fees

Special fees are paid for Returning Officer duties, which are not part of the post holder's substantive role. These fees are payable as required and can be made to any senior officer appointed to fulfil the statutory duties of this role. The Returning Officer is an officer of the Borough Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Whilst appointed by the Borough Council, the role of Returning Officer is one, which involves and incurs personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from his/her duties as an employee of the Borough Council. As Returning Officer he/she is paid a separate allowance for each election for which he/she is responsible. A scale of election fees was agreed by the Council and increases in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

5. Pay Structure

5.1. The pay structure for all employees other than the Senior Management Team (Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service) falls under two national terms and conditions, either National Joint Committee (NJC) Local Authorities Services or Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees.

National Joint Committee (NJC) Local Authorities Services

- 5.2. The pay structure for the staff covered by the NJC was implemented on 1 January 2011. The spinal column points within the grading structure are based on the NJC Local Authorities Services National Pay Spine. The Council defines its lowest paid employee as employees paid at spinal column point 8, at a full time equivalent basic pay rate of £13,321 per annum. This is the lowest salary that Northampton Borough Council currently pays any employee. This is within the pay and grading pay structure, which ranges from grade 1 to 11.
- 5.3. All posts under the NJC are evaluated using the Local Government Single Status Job Evaluation Scheme, which is recognised by employers and trades

Appendix 1

- unions nationally. This scheme allows for robust measurement against set criteria resulting in fair and objective evaluations and satisfies equal pay requirements.
- 5.4. Performance within the grade for all staff is subject to satisfactory performance, which is assessed annually in accordance with the Council's agreed Performance Progression Policy

Allowances and benefits in kind

5.6 Allowances and benefits were renegotiated as part of the pay and grading review, which was implemented on 1 January 2011. The full terms and conditions document can be found in the "Terms and Conditions in full" document which can be found on the attached link on the Council's website.

Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees

5.7 The pay structure for the staff covered by the JNC was established on 1 May 2013. The lowest paid employee within the Council is currently paid at a full time equivalent basic pay rate of £22,725 per annum.

6 Payment/charges and contributions

6.1 All staff who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme make individual contributions to the scheme in accordance with the following table:

Band	Range	Contribution Rate %
1	£0 - £12,900	5.5
2	£12,900.01 - £15,100	5.8
3	£15,100.01 - £19,400	5.9
4	£19,400.01 - £32,400	6.5
5	£32,400.01 - £43,300	6.8
6	£43,300.01 - £81,100	7.2
7	£81,100 +	7.5

- 6.2 The Council makes employer's contributions into the scheme, which are reviewed every 3 years by the actuary. The current rate for the Council is 13.3%.
- 6.3 The LGPS is changing on 1 April 2014, the proposed employee contribution rates as of this date are:

Pay Bands	Contribution Rates
Up to £13,500	5.5%
£13,501 - £21,000	5.8%
£21,001 - £34,000	6.5%
£34,001 - £43,000	6.8%
£43,001 - £60,000	8.5%

£60,001 - £85,000	9.9%
£85,001 - £100,000	10.5%
£100,001 - £150,000	11.4%
Over £150,000	12.5%

Contribution rates are based on pensionable pay, employee contribution rates under the new scheme will be based on actual pay and not full time equivalent pay.

7 Multipliers

- 7.1 The idea of publishing the ratio of the pay of an organisation's top earner to that of its median earner has been recommended in order to support the principles of Fair Pay (Will Hutton 2011) and transparency.
- 7.2 The Council's current ratio in this respect is 5.4:1 i.e. the Chief Executive (top earner) earns 5 times more than the Council's median earner (£25,727). When measured against the mean earner (£26,914), the ratio is 5.1:1.
- 7.3 The Council does not currently have a policy of maintaining or reaching a specific pay multiple target. These multipliers will be monitored each year within the Pay Policy Statement to monitor trends and ensure that this pay multiple does not widen.

8 Discretionary Payments

The policy for the award of any discretionary payments is the same for all staff regardless of their pay level. The following arrangements apply:

- 8.1 Redundancy payments under regulation 5 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006. The Council has decided to use actual pay instead of the statutory maximum when calculating redundancy payments.
- 8.2 Additional membership for revision purposes under regulation 12 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Memberships & Contributions) Regulations 2007.

None awarded.

8.3 Additional Pension under regulation 13 of the same legislation.

None awarded.

- 8.4 Any discretionary payments arising through the termination of the employment contract will be made using delegated powers and will be based on a full written, legal risk assessment and written legal advice.
- 9 Use of consultants, contractors and temporary staff through personal service companies

Appendix 1

The Council is acutely aware of its obligation to secure value for money in the employment of its employees and those who carry our work on its behalf. Ordinarily employees will be employed directly by the Council but on an exceptional basis, where particular circumstances deem it necessary, people may be employed through personal service companies. In the first instance the Council will use a managed service provider (this contract is currently run by Carlisle Managed Solutions). When a personal service company is needed the Council will give detailed consideration to the benefit of using such a company and the need to ensure that value for money is achieved. Such arrangements will require prior approval by Chief Executive or Director (depending upon whether the post is part of the establishment).

10 Termination of Employment

10.1Severance Payments

Severance payments are made in accordance with the council's Redundancy Framework and are the same for all staff. Employees with more than two years' service will be entitled to redundancy pay in line with local government guidelines and statutory provisions. Redundant employees will receive two elements of their final pay:

□ Normal pay (including pay in lieu of any outstanding leave) up to the agreed
leaving date;
☐ A redundancy payment (where entitled) calculated in accordance with the
statutory provisions;

In exceptional circumstances, the Council reserves the right to make a payment in lieu of notice. This will only be considered if it is in the best interests of the Authority, or on compassionate grounds, and will require authorisation by relevant Senior Officers

Under the Council's redundancy scheme a week's pay will be calculated on the basis of actual contractual pay.

Employees in the pension scheme and who are over age 55 are entitled to immediate onset of pension benefits based on actual reckonable service if:

- They are over 55 at the termination date
- They have 3 or more months membership in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) or with transferred service.

An employee will lose their entitlement to redundancy pay if they take up a post with another body covered by the Redundancy Payments (Local Government) (Modification) (Amendment) Orders within 4 weeks of the date of the redundancy and the offer of the new job has been made before the end of the original contract.

11 Re-Engagement

Any former NBC Council employee who is in receipt of an early retirement pension on the grounds of efficiency, redundancy or at their own request, should not normally be immediately re-employed by the Council either on the basis of a contract of employment or a contract for service with the Council. If there is any doubt about the continuing need for an employee's services then early retirement should not be agreed.

However, it is recognised that there are some, very limited, circumstances when re-employment would be in the interests of the Council. In these cases a report should be submitted to the Corporate Director or his or her nominated senior management representative seeking approval to re-employ for a specified limited period.

Where an employee has been made redundant and receives a severance payment (and therefore without a pension) there should be no re-employment until the expiry of the period for which the number of weeks' severance payment has been given, e.g. if the employee has received a severance payment equal to 16 weeks pay, the earliest re-employment could be considered would be 16 weeks after the date of termination.

12 Decision on Remuneration on Appointment and Severance Packages

Decisions on remuneration are made as follows:

- (a) Chief Executive Officer local pay level approved by Full Council;
- (b) Director [and Head of Service] local pay level approved by Appointments and Appeals Committee;
- (c) Pay structure for all other posts approved by General Purposes Committee
- (d) Performance Progression Scheme in accordance with the locally agreed schemes and as approved by officers under existing delegated powers. The Performance Progression Scheme can be found at the attached link on the Council's website.
- (e) Not with standing "a" to "d" above any salary packages of £100,000 or more require Full Council approval. (A salary package includes salary, any bonuses, fees or allowances routinely payable to the appointee and any benefits in kind to which the officer would be entitled as a result of their employment).
- (f) Notwithstanding "a" to "d" above, any severance packages of £100,000 or more require Full Council approval. (A severance package may include salary paid in lieu, redundancy compensation, pension entitlements, holiday pay and any bonuses, fees or allowances paid).

13 Disclosure

This Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's website. In addition, details of staff paid above £50,000 are disclosed in accordance with the Government's Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency. This information can be viewed at the attached link on the Council's website.

For further information please contact:-Francis Fernandes, Borough Secretary, Telephone (01604) 837334 or by email ffernandes@northampton.gov.uk