

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



COUNCIL

Monday, 15 September 2014

YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 6:30 PM WHEN THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS IS PROPOSED TO BE TRANSACTED

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES.

To approve the minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Council held on 14th July 2014.

3. APOLOGIES.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

(Copy herewith)

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Marriott to make a statement on 'Air Pollution'.

9. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE PLACES

(Copy herewith)

10. EXEMPTION FROM CALL-IN; URGENT KEY DECISION

(Copy herewith)

11. AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION - SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

(Copy herewith)

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

i) Councillor Hallam to propose and Councillor Hibbert to second that:
Seconded by Cllr Hibbert

‘Council welcomes the recent Green Flag Awards for Abington Park and Delapre Park after being judged to be among the best parks in the country.

‘Council notes that Delapre Park receives the award, from the charity Keep Britain Tidy, for the second year running and this is a first award for Abington Park which means they are among just 1,476 parks and green spaces across the country judged to be of a very high standard.

‘Council recognises these awards are a tribute to the commitment by all the volunteers who are part of the dedicated Friends groups and other organisations that work alongside the Council staff and our contractor to reach these high standards.

‘The Administration renews its commitment to maintaining our town's parks and green spaces and to seek Green Flag Awards across the town in the future.’

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

This Council recognises the incredible stress many visitors and patients are under when they find it necessary to park at Northampton General Hospital.

Problems with not only the expense, but more worryingly, the availability of parking at the Hospital must not be allowed to continue.

This Council therefore resolves to make representation to Northampton General Hospital regarding the concern of residents and to be proactive in encouraging a solution, and working with all partner organisations to overcome these difficulties.

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

There are many areas of the Eastern District where historic planting of the wrong kind of trees in the residential areas cause a number of problems for residents – from light being blocked from homes, to fallen debris, to damage to property from roots.

This Council resolves to develop a plan to remove trees that are identified as problematic and replace them with smaller trees more suited to residential areas.

iv) Councillor Mason to propose and Councillor Ashraf to second that:

This Council notes recent research based on Ministry of Justice statistics shows that nearly three homes are at risk of being repossessed in Northampton every day. In Northampton between July 2013 and June 2014 952 possession claims were issued to the county courts. This Council is concerned that any rise in interest rates in the near future will put more people at risk of repossession.

Therefore this Council resolves to explore all ways it can help local people with the threat of home repossession, such as supporting advice agencies to provide early help with those struggling financially.

One way Northampton Borough Council can help with the housing crisis is to increase the supply of affordable housing. We need more affordable housing for young families starting out and we need larger family homes for families that are expanding and growing up. We need housing that graduates from the university feel they can afford as a means of retaining some of our students post training.

This Council believes that building social housing can be funded by easing the restrictions on council borrowing for housing, a larger social housing grant programme, and a robust regime of private developer contributions.

Therefore this Council further resolves to lobby central government for such changes to happen so Northampton Borough Council can build more affordable homes.

v) Councillor Stone to propose and Councillor Gowen to second that:

Northampton Borough Council notes that large supermarkets, whilst bringing certain benefits to the local area, also have a detrimental impact on local communities, the local economy and the environment;

Therefore welcomes the fact that Brighton & Hove, Chorley, Cornwall, Coventry, Crawley, Derby, Islington, Lambeth, Lancaster, Lincoln, Oxford, Preston, Sefton, South Hams, Southend-on-Sea, Southwark, Thanet, Wakefield, Weymouth & Portland and Wyre Forest Councils have submitted a proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act for Local Authorities to be given the power to put a modest levy on very large retail outlets, or just supermarkets, in order to redress this detrimental impact, the specific wording of the proposal being:

"The government give local authorities the power to introduce a levy of up to 8.5% of the rateable value on supermarkets or large retail outlets in their area with a rateable annual value not less than £500,000 and for the revenue to be retained by local authorities in order to be used to help improve their local communities."

This Council also notes that the proposal also documents the detrimental impact, for example research has shown that for every pound spent in a large supermarket only 5p remains in the local economy while for independent retailers it is over 50p, that whilst in the last year large supermarket chains expanded their floor space by 2,750,000 square feet the number of people they employed fell by over 400 and that one of the largest supermarket chains has stated that it generated 28,500 tonnes of food waste at its stores and distribution centres and it threw out two-thirds of its bagged salad and 40% of its apples in the first six months of 2013;

Notes that the inspiration for the proposal has come from similar levies that have existed in Northern Ireland and Scotland for over two years and that the proposal notes the positive impact seen in those parts of the UK;

Notes that the VAT rise in 2011 was thirty five times higher as a cost to large retailers than this proposed levy would be and that following the VAT rise the major supermarket chains embarked on a price war where thousands of items were reduced in price;

This Council further notes that if this power was acquired it would present the opportunity to raise further revenue for the benefit of local businesses and local communities if the Council wished to use it;

This Council resolves to support the proposal and inform Derby City Council of this in writing.

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

The Guildhall
Northampton

D. Kennedy Chief Executive

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

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 14 July 2014 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

COUNCILLORS: Ansell, Ashraf Aziz, Beardsworth, Begum, Bottwood, Capstick, I. Choudary, N Choudary, Duncan, Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Ford, Glynane, Golby, Gowen, Hadland, Hallam, Hibbert, Hill, King, Lane, Larratt, Lynch, Mackintosh, Malpas, Markham, Mason, Mennell, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Palethorpe, Patel, Sargeant, Stone, Strachan, Subbarayan and Yates

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hibbert declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 – 'Northampton Partnership Homes- Delegation' as a Shadow Board Member.

Councillor Bottwood declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 – 'Northampton Partnership Homes- Delegation' as a Shadow Board Member

Councillor Hadland declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Motion i) as a Member of Northampton Town Centre BID.

Councillor Capstick declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 – Cabinet Member Reports, as a current Member of the WNDC Audit and Risk Committee.

Councillor Mason declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 – 'Northampton Partnership Homes- Delegation' as a Shadow Board Member.

Councillor Beardsworth declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 – 'Northampton Partnership Homes- Delegation' as a Shadow Board Member.

Councillor N Choudary declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 – 'Northampton Partnership Homes- Delegation' as a Shadow Board Member.

Councillor Hadland declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in Item 7 – Cabinet Member Reports, as a current Member of the WNDC Audit and Risk Committee.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meeting held on the 32nd June 2014 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Parekh, Davies and Conroy.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor announced that on Saturday 28 June the 9th/12th Royal Lancers paraded through the town centre as the regiment returned to the UK after months serving in Afghanistan. He thanked everyone who had attended and shown their support in welcoming back the soldiers.

The Mayor also welcomed Councillor Ashraf to the Council, having been elected to represent St James' Ward on the 3rd July 2014.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Mrs Susan Edwards addressed Council and commented that the recent sale of the Sekhemka statue had brought national shame on the Council. She commented that the Administration had stated that the statue was owned outright by the Council and questioned the validity of the statement. She further expressed her disappointment that members of the public were not listened to and not properly consulted about the sale of the statue, specifically in regards to the substantial petition that had been submitted to the Council.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor announced that no questions had been submitted by either members of Public or Councillors.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

At this point, each of the Cabinet Members made a presentation of their respective portfolios that had been circulated with the agenda.

Councillor Mackintosh submitted his Cabinet report and expressed his appreciation to the people who welcomed the return of the Lancers and noted that to mark Armed Forces Week, flags had been flown outside of the Guildhall. It was noted that it had been a busy month specifically in relation to regeneration projects and noted that there had been numerous successful events held, including the Delapre Beer Festival and the Grand Prix event.

In response to questions asked, the Leader confirmed that it had been agreed that a new heating and air conditioning unit would be installed in the Northgate Bus Station in mid-October 2014 and that he would not be attending a meeting with the Meridian Bus Service representative and suggested that issues relating to the bus Service be directed to County Council. It was further noted that Northampton had been nationally recognised in a report as one of the best places in the UK for new small and medium sized businesses. Responding to a statement that footfall in the town centre had fallen by 16% in 3 years, the Leader commented that since the Administration had introduced free parking, there had been a 37% increase in car park usage, and that Business Incentive Scheme had been introduced to assist in improving the business environment in the Town Centre. Responding further to concerns raised about the charging for toilet facilities in the Bus Station, Councillor Mackintosh explained that

there were numerous free toilet facilities in the town centre and that charging for such amenities was standard at most public transport centres.

Councillor Markham submitted her Cabinet Member report and noted that the designation for additional licensing of houses in multiple occupation (HMO) had been made on the 3rd July 2014 and that the public notice would run for a 6 week period. It was noted that a pre ALMO team had been established and as part of the Decent Homes contract, Savills had been bought in to pre-survey all properties that had yet to be started. Responding to a question, it was explained that the number of families using their living room as a bedroom was currently unknown but that those figures could be collated and sent to Councillor Stone as requested. It was confirmed that the Decent Homes helpline had been set up and there had been a dramatic decline in the number of calls being made to the number which was indicative of an improved situation. In response to further questions it was confirmed that the number of people in B & B's was 28, 3061 on the waiting list for Council housing and 161 in overcrowded accommodation and 96 voids. Councillor Markham stated that in order to implement the additional licensing, it was necessary to follow the correct legal process which would be lengthy and time consuming but essential. Responding to concerns expressed, it was confirmed that anyone claiming to be homeless would need to present themselves at the One Stop Shop and this advice should be given by all Councillors who deal with homelessness cases. Responding to a request made by Councillor Lane, it was noted that updated information with regards to homelessness issues, could be circulated to members in the future.

Councillor Hadland submitted his Cabinet Member report and noted that significant and dynamic changes had been made to allow for small and medium sized enterprises (SME) to flourish in the town centre which had been reflected in the local survey undertaken by a Think Tank that rated Northampton in the top ten. It was explained that Cosworth were expanding and was just one of a number of companies that were developing people through training and development.

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Beardsworth commented that with the recent announcement that the development of Rushden Lakes would be going ahead and the termination of the contract with Legal and General, the administration were taking Northampton backwards. She stated that the loss of the £300 million investment as a consequence of the termination of the Development Agreement could impact the future of the Town Centre and stated that the administration were doing a disservice to the residents and tax payers of Northampton and urged the administration to look at the long term effects that their decision making would have on the Town. She stated that the Town was going back in time and not being taken forward. She further suggested that the administration had rushed into building the North Gate bus station and that as a consequence, it had been ill thought out and problematic from the start.

Councillor Mackintosh responded by stating that it was unrealistic to consider that Legal and General were going to be forthcoming with their investment. With regards to taking the town forwards, Councillor Mackintosh suggested that this would not be a shared opinion especially in respect of a number of companies that had seen

progressive steps taken to develop, specifically the Saints, Cobblers, Carlsberg and Cosworth.

Councillor Beardsworth suggested that residents of Northampton were unhappy with numerous projects that had been undertaken and that there had been a distinct lack of communication and consultation with people.

9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2013/2014

Councillor Lane, as the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, submitted a report and thanked panel members, the Committee and the Scrutiny Officer for the work that they had completed and work currently being undertaken. It was noted that 3 new panels had been established and members of the public and councillors had inputted on the topics.

Councillor Sargeant seconded the report.

Councillor Glynane commented that he welcomed the report and stated that he was pleased with the result of the Call in that had been conducted with regards to the Disposal of Land – off Blackthorn Road.

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14 be noted.

10. UPDATE ON GREYFRIARS DEVELOPMENT

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report to update Council on the recent planning appeal decision regarding the Rushden Lakes development and the implications for the proposed development at Greyfriars. He explained that the decision to terminate the development agreement between the Council and Legal and General (L & G) was mutual and beneficial to all involved.

Councillor Hadland seconded the report.

Councillor Marriott commented that it had been disappointing that there had been such little progression with L & G in the past 14 years, and agreed with the termination of the agreement, which he noted should have been done sooner.

Councillor Palethorpe commented that he was pleased with that an alternative developer or partner be found and suggested that any future development and progression be discussed cross party.

Councillor Beardsworth stated that the promised investment that was proposed by L & G was as a result of continued work carried out by the Liberal Democrats and that the termination of the agreement was, in effect, undoing years of hard work.

Councillor Mennell stated that there was a need to move forwards with the matter and that any decision or agreement reached would need to be transparent. Councillor Capstick urged the administration to listen to the views and opinions of residents and

consult with them and Councillors on any future developments.

Councillor Meredith reiterated the support for cross party involvement and suggested that other areas that have been successfully developed be visited in order to gain knowledge and develop a positive way forward.

Councillor Glynane questioned how much it had cost the Council to terminate the contract and urged the administration to examine what went wrong in the agreement to ensure that it would not happen in future.

Councillor Subbarayan asked for figures relating to what further resources would be needed to ensure that the site be ready for future development and questioned what gains and losses were being made by terminating the agreement.

Councillor Mackintosh commented that there was a commitment to moving forward and would look at potential developments of the Grosvenor Centre and that with ownership of the Greyfriars site, expansion and development of the town centre would be possible to offer a positive and competitive retail experience.

RESOLVED:

1. That the current position regarding the termination of the Development Agreement with Legal and General (L&G) be noted.
2. That it be delegated to the Leader and Chief Executive to agree the final details of the termination of the Development Agreement.
3. That it be delegated to the Leader and Chief Executive any initial expenditure that is required to fund alternative plans in advance of a further report to Cabinet.

11. NORTHAMPTON PARTNERSHIP HOMES - DELEGATION - APPOINTMENT OF A MANAGING DIRECTOR

Councillor Markham submitted a report which sought the approval of the appointment of a Managing Director for the Housing ALMO at a salary level of £100,000 or more.

Councillor Mackintosh seconded adoption of the report.

Councillor Mason commented that the Labour Group welcomed the report.

Councillor Beardsworth commented that the Liberal Democrats supported the recommendations as it would enable the recruitment of someone with suitable expertise in the area.

RESOLVED:

1. That, in principle, the setting of the salary package for the ALMO Managing Director (or whatever Post description is finally agreed) in excess of £100,000.00 as required by the Council's pay policy be agreed.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Leader of the Council in his capacity as the chair of the Appointment and Appeals committee:
 - i) The power to appoint to the ALMO Managing Director post and all associated activities such as agreeing the Job Description, Person Specification and Interview Process and
 - ii) To determine the specific level of salary package for the ALMO Managing Director following the conclusion of an appropriate salary evaluation process.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

- i) Councillor Beardsworth proposed and Councillor Glynane seconded that:

"This Council welcomes the initiative by Northampton BID to clean up the Town Centre ("Clean up day" Wednesday, July 2nd) and proposes that this Council support their effort by looking at what other Councils around the Country are doing to tackle litter".

Councillor Hadland proposed and Councillor Hallam seconded an amendment:

The amended motion read:

"This Council welcomes the initiative by Northampton BID to clean up the town centre ("Clean up day" Wednesday, July 2nd) and recognises the work done by this Administration to improve the town centre, and therefore proposes that this Council support their effort by looking at what other Councils around the Country are doing to tackle littering as part of the work being carried out by the Keep Northampton Tidy Panel of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee".

Council debated the amended motion.

The amendment was debated.

The amendment was duly carried to become the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was debated, voted upon and carried.

Mr Jones addressed Council and commented that Victoria Street had inadequate facilities for the arrival and departure of National Express buses which operated on a 24 hour basis. He commented that it would be positive if passengers could be encouraged to visit the town centre.

Mr Bricher addressed Council and noted his support for the motion. He commented that long distance coaches, such as National Express, potentially faced delays and asked that service users be provided with information, seating and shelter.

ii) Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Marriott seconded that:

“This Council notes that Victoria Street has been designated the location for the arrival and departure for the National Express and other long distance buses.

This Council therefore resolves to utilise part of the car park in Victoria Street to develop amenities such as a transit area, information board, disabled friendly access and facilities and toilets for the bus users.

This Council further resolves to investigate the possibility to adapt an empty unit on the Drapery to provide a passenger centre and transit area.”

Councillor Hadland proposed and Councillor Mackintosh seconded an amendment:

The amended motion read:

“This Council notes that Victoria Street has been designated the location for the arrival and departure for the National Express and other long distance buses.

This Council recognises the Administration’s plans announced in May to utilise part of the car park in Victoria Street to develop amenities. The Administration will consider issues such as a transit area, information board, disabled friendly access and facilities and toilets for the bus users.

This Council is also already working with businesses on the Drapery to provide a passenger centre and transit area.”

The proposed amendments were accepted and became the substantive motion.

Council debated the substantive motion.

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

iii) Councillor N Choudary proposed and Councillor Stone seconded that:

“This Council notes Northampton Carnival Arts Consortium is a small group of dedicated and hard- working volunteers who spend hours of their own free time bringing to the town a great inclusive multicultural event.

This Council gives its support to the Northampton Carnival Arts Consortium and recognises their fantastic work.

This Council therefore asks the Cabinet to work with them from this September to ensure plans are put in place for 2015 in a timely and responsible manner, having

due regard to the venue, route and support for fundraising.”

Councillor Eldred proposed and Councillor Mackintosh seconded an amendment:

The amended motion read:

“This Council notes Northampton Carnival Arts Consortium is a small group of dedicated and hard-working volunteers who spend hours of their own free time bringing to the town a great inclusive multicultural event. This Council gives its continued support to the Northampton Carnival Arts Consortium and recognises their fantastic work. This Council therefore asks the Cabinet to work with them from this September to ensure plans are put in place for 2015 in a timely and responsible manner, having due regard to the venue, route and support for fundraising.

This Council calls on the Northampton Carnival Arts Consortium to finalise and submit their proposals including road closures to Northamptonshire County Council and agreements on venues with Northampton Borough Council by the end of December 2014 to allow for proper planning and to avoid last minute problems.”

The proposed amendments were accepted and became the substantive motion.

Council debated the substantive motion.

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

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

None.

The meeting concluded at 9.47pm

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 1

Question to Councillor Markham from Mr Norman Adams

Right to Buy receipts:

If a council were to fail to spend the receipts within three years, it would be required to return the unspent money to government with interest.

In the period April 2012 to June 2014 NBC have sold 155 properties with receipts of over £7 million

Question:

What amount of receipts have NBC spent?

Response

In 2012/13 and 2013/14 the total RTB receipts spent was £3.19m. The funding for capital programmes is not applied until financial year end therefore the 2014/15 spent figure is not available.

**Councillor Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 2

Question to Councillor Markham from Mr Norman Adams

The Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 inserted new sections into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to introduce a new application and appeal procedure, to review affordable housing obligations on the grounds of viability.

Question:

What effect to date has this made on numbers of deliverable affordable housing

Response

There have not been any formal applications received by the Council to review the amount of affordable housing provided in S.106 obligations through the mechanism introduced through the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013.

**Councillor Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 3

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Meredith

What is the total number of members of staff working within the planning department who have left the organisation within the past 3 months?

Response

Four members of staff have left the Planning Department in the last three months.

**Councillor Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 4

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Meredith

How many consultants are currently being used in the planning department?

Response

There are currently no consultants employed within the Planning Department.

**Councillor Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 5

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Meredith

Are there plans to use more?

Response

More what?

**Councillor Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 6

Question to Councillor Markham from Councillor Beardsworth

How many people have been paid compensation for wrongly removing property from vacated social housing?

Response

There have been 9 cases in the last 3 years, out of 2,962 properties that became empty and underwent repairs before being re-let.

**Councillor Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 7

Question to Councillor Markham from Councillor Beardsworth

How many of these were after the housing was vacated because of a death?

Response

Of the 9 cases in which compensation was paid, none of these was after the housing was vacated because of a death of the tenant.

**Councillor Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 8

Question to Councillor Markham from Councillor Beardsworth

How many interims and consultants are being employed by the Borough Council currently in the Housing department?

Response

The total number of Interims/Consultants in the Housing Department is 11 as of Friday 5th September.

**Councillor Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014
Question 9

Question to Councillor Eldred from Councillor Glynane

Whose decision was it to place the statue where it is?

Response

This question does not mean anything.

Councillor Eldred
Cabinet Member for Community Engagement

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 10

Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Glynane

How many members of staff have left the organisation in the past year?

Response

Since 2011 this administration has made significant reductions to the number of back office staff at the Borough Council, and senior management has been reduced from 21 to 10, saving local tax payers £850,000 which has been reinvested in front line services.

The number of employees that left NBC in 2013/2014 is as follows:

<i>TUPE</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>216</i>
<i>Non TUPE</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>140</i>

**Councillor Mackintosh
Leader of the Council**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 11

Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Glynane

How many members of staff left the organisation in 2010

Response

287 members of staff left in 2010 when the authority was under Lib Dem administration.

Since the Administration took control, we have reduced the number of senior managers, shared back office staff costs, significantly reduced bureaucracy and reinvested the savings in front line services - something the failed Lib Dem administration did not do.

**Councillor Mackintosh
Leader of the Council**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 12

Question to Councillor Markham from Mr Neil Clarke

NBC states housing developments of 15 dwellings or more are required to provide affordable housing at a minimum of 35%. BUT can be less if this makes a scheme unviable.

What percentage of developments in excess of 15 dwellings has USED the unviable line and been given planning consent with less than 35% of the dwellings affordable?

Response

Since the Affordable Housing Interim Statement was adopted in February 2013, there have been nine sites that meet the criteria of 15 or more dwellings which have been given planning permission up to 1st September 2014.

Two of these permissions have been approved with less than 35% affordable housing.

**Councillor Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 13

Question to Councillor Markham from Councillor Mason

There still appears to be some problems with the implementation of decent homes work in Northampton East, what is being done to remedy this situation?

Response

The Decent Homes Programme this year will bring 3,100 properties up to the Decent Homes Standard by way of significant improvements. In such a large programme there are bound to be some complaints and at present, there are 5 complaints at Stage One or Stage Two of our complaints procedure.

**Councillor Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 14

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Stone

When will plans for the St Edmunds Site be made public?

Response

The Council continues to work closely with the developers regarding the submission of a planning application and Listed Building Consent.

Clearly this is a complex application and it will be submitted shortly and be available on the planning website for public viewing thereafter.

**Councillor Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 15

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Stone

Are the small businesses negatively affected by the work to open up Abington Street and the work to improve the Victoria Promenade/Bedford road junction going to be compensated for their losses?

Response

Northampton Borough Council officers have been in direct discussions with the Independent Valuation Office. Officers have assisted in supplying information which has led the valuation office to offer a reduction in Business Rates for the duration of the works to Abington Street. The reduction is offered to businesses within a specific geographic area.

Borough Council officers are working with the County Council in terms of businesses located in the immediate vicinity of the Victoria Promenade works.

**Councillor Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 16

Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Marriott

We seem to be experiencing a lot of turbulence in the NBC workforce. If this is the case are we conducting exit interviews to find out why?

Response

Current turnover rates for the Council's workforce are below national averages, and are lower for the first six months of this year than for the last six months of 2013. All employees who leave are offered either to complete an exit interview form or to meet with an HR Advisor. This is detailed in the letter sent on receipt of a resignation. Whilst few employees take up this opportunity, the information provided is shared at the appropriate senior management level in the strictest confidence.

**Councillor Mackintosh
Leader of the Council**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 17

Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor N Choudary

When is the work on Victoria Street, putting in facilities for bus passengers, going to begin and end? What facilities are going to be provided for passengers in the Drapery?

Response

Works are to be completed by the end of October.

**Councillor Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

Question for Full Council Monday 15th September 2014

Question 18

Question to Councillor Hallam from Mr Fitzhugh

Far Cotton Recreational Ground was granted Town Green Status in 2010 and we would ask the Council why they have continually disregarded the laws and regulations concerning this awarded status, by allowing car parking and the setting up of 'Fun Fairs' to take place on Far Cotton Recreational Ground at the detriment of the worsening condition of Far Cotton recreational ground.

Response

The Council, as landowner, agreed to the registration of the Green. The essential characteristic of a Town Green is that it is there for the use and benefit of the locality for the purpose of recreation, amongst other things. Holding a Fun Fair on the Green for the benefit and recreation of residents in the locality complies with the law, but we are happy to discuss this further with local residents to seek their views.

**Councillor Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment**

Agenda Item 7



Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

15th September 2014

During the summer Northampton has been a vibrant and active place as people have enjoyed the varied programme of events put on by the Borough Council, relaxed in our wonderful parks and open spaces and shopped in our Town Centre.

In just three months this administration's free parking scheme has seen over 23,000 more cars park in the Borough Council's multi-storey car parks on Saturdays. This is a jump of almost 40% compared to the number of people parking this time last year. This Administration wants to improve Northampton and free parking is bringing people back into the Town Centre. Town Centre businesses and local residents told us they wanted more free parking, and we have delivered. The free parking offer is in addition to multi-million pound improvements to the town's public transport including the new North Gate Bus Station and a redeveloped Northampton Castle Railway Station.

In July, with Legal and General, the development agreement which was signed by the previous administration, was terminated. With Legal and General now removed from the redevelopment of the Greyfriars site we are now in a position to push ahead and create a retail and leisure area in the heart of our Town Centre. During August we have been consulting with residents to get their ideas for the future of the site, and demolition work to clear the old bus station is well underway.

I would like to send my congratulations to the community groups and staff who worked so hard to help Abington Park and Delapre Park win the prestigious Green Flag Award after being judged to be among the best parks in the country. Delapre Park received the award for the second year running, but this was the first time it has been awarded to Abington Park.

For the second year running, Alive at Delapre brought three fantastic nights of live music to Northampton. Delapre Park is an amazing location and our town was lucky once again to enjoy some world class entertainment with some big names in live music with a great mix for everyone. Events such as these help put Northampton on the map, and attract thousands of visitors to the town to the benefit of our local economy.

In April we launched the Business Incentive Scheme to make it easier for entrepreneurs and businesses to find new premises or expand. Not only are we seeing more jobs being created, but we are helping to encourage investment with more than £1.2m coming into Northampton as a result of the £200,000 awarded through the scheme. With so many positives coming from the scheme I would encourage any local business or entrepreneur with an idea to talk to us and see what the Borough Council can do to help. When people come to Northampton we want them to see a vibrant and attractive Town Centre that is busy with shoppers and alive with enterprise. Improving shopfronts

and helping to fill empty units is an important part of our work to support businesses, increase footfall and stimulate the local economy.

In August I had the honour of taking part in ceremonies in Northampton to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War. On 3rd August I attended a Service of Commemoration at All Saints' Church, and on 4th August I lit a solitary candle at The Guildhall as part of the Lights Out act of reflection and hope organised by The Royal British Legion. The ceremonies in Northampton were very moving and it was an honour to light a candle at The Guildhall to remember Northampton's fallen. These ceremonies help us to remember that we owe a huge debt to those who served in the First World War.

Community Safety

Domestic burglary has reduced by 11.5% and vehicle crime has reduced by 5.6%. Violent crime continues on an upward trend with a 17.1% increase from its baseline figure, which is mainly attributed to a change in national recording that came into place in April 2014. Anti-social behaviour has seen a slight increase of 1.1%, but the number of incidents has started to reduce compared to previous months.

Building on last year's success, the Community Safety Partnership Weeks of Action took place in Semilong in July and Blackthorn in August. Both weeks saw good engagement with local residents and businesses, Community Payback and Enterprise both undertook clean-up and grounds maintenance work, making a visible, positive differences in both areas. The Semilong week culminated with a 'Fun Day' at the community centre which was well attended and enjoyed by residents. The week of action on Blackthorn included a number of activities for young people in the area.

Councillor David Mackintosh
Leader of the Council



Cabinet Member Report for Housing

Northampton Borough Council

15th September 2014

Additional Licensing of Housing in Multiple Occupation

New licensing rules have been introduced by this Administration to make it easier for the authority to deal effectively with private landlords who neglect their responsibilities to their tenants and communities. The new rules, which come into force on 3rd November, will mean that existing licensing rules and standards will apply to two storey houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in a designated area.

Before granting a licence the Borough Council will check that certain standards are being met, and a licence can be suspended at any time if standards are not maintained.

HMO regulations give greater protection to tenants and make landlords manage their properties in a safe and appropriate way and are responsible for ensuring that their property and tenants do not have a negative impact on the local area. The appearance of properties, repairs and maintenance, overcrowding and anti-social behaviour by tenants, such as noise and making sure rubbish is put out on the right day, are all included in the standards.

Areas designated under the scheme include part of Abington, part of Castle, Kingsley, part of Delapre and Briar Hill, Kingsthorpe, part of Obelisk, part of Phippsville, Semilong, Spring Park, part of St James, St David's, Sunnyside and Trinity. In view of the university moving into town, a further consultation is planned over including Far Cotton under the designated area.

Prevention Bid

The Borough Council has submitted a bid to Northamptonshire County Council for the Community Wellbeing Service, with the support of over forty local partners, including housing providers, advice agencies, community organisations and health sector partners. The County Council are currently evaluating the bids.

Decent Homes

We are continuing to improve efficiency and work is progressing well. The Homes and Communities Agency visited in August and we were able to report that we are on course to achieve the decent homes targets and satisfy the requirements of the backlog funding grant. Customer satisfaction levels are very good and contractors are working with the council more effectively. Work is now being planned and issued to the contractors on the basis of the new Stock Condition Survey. Planning work is now underway for the delivery of the Northampton Standard when Northampton Partnership Homes is launched in January 2015.

ALMO

The ALMO implementation team are continuing to work on preparations for the new ALMO - Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH), and there has been a series of handovers. An Interim Chair has been appointed for Northampton Partnership Homes Shadow Board and the Finance Sub-Committee of the board has now been established.

Councillor Mary Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing



Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Northampton Borough Council

15th September 2014

Town Centre

More shoppers than ever are coming to Northampton every weekend as free parking continues to encourage people back into our Town Centre. By the end of June the Borough Council's free parking offer had seen over 23,000 more cars park in the our multi-storey car parks on Saturdays. This is a jump of almost 40% in just three months compared to the number of people parking at the same time last year.

Regeneration

On 14th July we announced that the development agreement between the Borough Council and Legal & General had been terminated. The development agreement, signed in 2009 by the previous administration, obliged Legal & General, subject to a series of preconditions including occupier commitment and financial viability, to attempt to extend the Grosvenor Centre back onto the site of the demolished Greyfriars bus station. Unfortunately, the Greyfriars development did not move ahead as required, and when permission for Rushden Lakes was granted in June, the Borough Council and Legal & General met and the agreement was terminated.

Legal & General are continuing with their multi million pound investment in the Grosvenor Centre, with Next and Primark opening major stores later this year, and the refurbishment of the malls and toilets, which are well underway and due for completion in early 2015.

Throughout August a public information event was held at The Guildhall for anyone to come forward with ideas for the future of the former Greyfriars site, and we will soon be putting together plans to transform the four-acre Town Centre site.

We will continue with the demolition of Greyfriars and are preparing the four-acre site for development, while seeking a developer to draw up plans for a major retail and leisure scheme. It is hoped that planning permission could be obtained and work ready to start on the site in autumn 2015.

We have appointed a contractor to take forward the next phase of the demolition of Greyfriars. DSM Ltd are reviewing and considering all demolition options for the building. The method of demolition will be chosen on the basis of safety and efficiency, and causing least disruption to nearby residents and businesses. The final decision will be made following discussion with the Health and Safety Executive and Northamptonshire Police, among others.

In July it was announced that Northampton is set to benefit from even more Government investment. The South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) has been awarded Local Growth Deal investment of £64.4 million. As part of the announcement the Government also provisionally earmarked £20.6 million for road infrastructure improvements, including the St James Mill Road link. This project would

provide the industrial area with a direct connection to Towcester Road, transforming it from a cul-de-sac into a through road, with improved access to the M1 and A45.

In August it was announced that the Dallington Grange development in Northampton, to help deliver 3,400 homes, was on a shortlist of 36 large-scale housing projects in line to receive a share of £850million of funding to get work going onsite and housebuilding started.

During July and August people in Northampton were asked to comment on plans to introduce charges for developers that would help to fund new community infrastructure. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge that can be placed on new development and collected by each local authority. Introduced by the Government in 2010, the CIL will set out the financial obligations developers may be expected to pay in order to contribute towards the cost of additional infrastructure necessary to support development. The CIL is intended to be used to help fund infrastructure that is needed to support new development, for example, roads, schools and community facilities. The Borough Council, in partnership with Daventry District and South Northamptonshire Council, is considering how the CIL could be adopted and used locally.

Enterprise

In April we launched a new Business Incentive Scheme to make it easier for entrepreneurs and businesses to find new premises or expand. Through the scheme, grants and incentives are available to help businesses take on empty or vacant units. So far the scheme has awarded almost £200,000 in grants, which has unlocked more than £1.2m in private investment and will have created nearly 100 new jobs by the end of the year.

During the month of August in the Town Centre, £9,000 in grant funding was awarded to improve the appearance and shopfront of Chanse Leather Goods in Abington Street and 44-46 Bridge Street. Three Town Centre grants worth more than £16,000 were awarded to Café Creperie, Action Support and The Courtyard Café to take on previously vacant units. The Business Improvement Scheme is also supporting the creation of a new boutique hotel in Guildhall Road and a grant has been awarded to refurbish 13 Guildhall Road into a new hotel, restaurant and café within the Cultural Quarter. £35,000 has also been awarded to three more growing businesses. Northampton Hope Centre, Uber Shop Ltd and MJB Accountants will all be expanding existing facilities or relocating to new bigger premises thanks to our grants.

The Waterside Enterprise Zone continues to attract interest from developers and potential occupiers. In particular the new production facility for Cosworth is nearing completion, with production starting in the next few months. This will provide high quality employment and apprentice opportunities.

The University Innovation Centre was topped out at the beginning of the month, and is already attracting a lot of interest from potential start-up businesses.

The new railway station will open to passengers in the next few weeks, and this will allow the next phases, the demolition of the old station, and the construction of a new multi-storey car park, to proceed.

Councillor Tim Hadland

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning



Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement

Northampton Borough Council

15th September 2014

Events

In July we hosted the Alive at Delapre concerts. The three day event attracted many thousands of visitors to the town, all of whom came to enjoy top entertainment in the beautiful setting of Delapre Park. The shows made a valuable contribution to our local economy, and helped spread Northampton's reputation as a venue for world class entertainment in the heart of the country.

On 3rd August a Service of Commemoration was held at All Saints' Church to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War. The Mayor of Northampton councillor John Caswell joined the service along with councillors, town dignitaries, members of The Royal British Legion and members of the public.

On 4th August the town took part in the national Lights Out moment of reflection at All Saints' Church portico. Across the country people turned off their lights between 10pm and 11pm, leaving only a single light or candle for a symbolic act of reflection and hope. In Northampton lights were turned out at the Guildhall, All Saints' Church and All Saints' memorial garden for one hour, when candles were lit and prayers said.

Local musicians, street entertainers and family friendly activities were held in the Town Centre during the Love Northampton Summer Events which ran from 26th July to 30th August. The free entertainment included quality local music and a variety of street acts, featuring acrobats and circus performers plus fairground rides and Northampton's very own beach on the Market Square. Love Northampton Summer Events was organised by the Borough Council in partnership with the Northampton Music 365 project, Most Marvellous, Northampton Leisure Trust and the Town Centre BID.

As part of the Love Parks Week, which ran from 25th July to 3rd August, theatre lovers were able to enjoy a fairy-tale performance of Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing performed by the Masque Theatre in the courtyard at Abington Park Museum.

Culture & Heritage

A major collection of artworks by celebrated artist Peter Newcombe has been donated to Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. The exquisite collection of twelve ink and wash drawings illustrate the poetry of Northamptonshire Peasant Poet John Clare. The drawings were first exhibited in Northampton Museum and Art Gallery in 1968 to great national acclaim and became Newcombe's first major success as an artist. Since then he has exhibited widely, including at the Royal Academy, Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour and Royal Society of British Artists. The gifted drawings represent a significant art donation to the museum.

August saw the opening of a major exhibition at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery. 'A Shoemaker goes to War' looked at the stories of some of the shoemakers who fought and how their absence affected those they left behind. The exhibition was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Northamptonshire Regimental Association and Northamptonshire Yeomanry Association. The exhibition forms part of an ongoing joint project with the Royal and Derngate Theatres entitled Conflict and Community. A number of associated workshops took place in August including Exploring Life in WW1, Poetry Writing and WW1 art workshops along with a 'What was it like in 1914' workshop run by the Royal and Derngate. Staff from the museum service and The Royal & Derngate theatres staged a 'WW1 Family Day' at the end of the month during which visitors could discover the history and heritage of Northampton Borough during WW1.

In July the Bassett Lowke Society staged a two day event 'Trains@NMAG' where a number of working model trains were on display at the museum.

July also saw the opening of the exhibition 'Norman Walsh – English Sports Footwear'. Walsh continues to be Britain's only, wholly owned company that designs and manufactures sports footwear. More than 4000 visitors viewed the exhibition during the three weeks that it was on display.

Northampton Leisure Trust

The summer has been extremely busy for the Trust with outdoor activities taking place across the Borough.

Children of all ages have been enjoying themselves taking part in the numerous activities in Funzone, the supervised holiday childcare scheme. Outside of Funzone there was a wealth of other activities on offer such as Street Dance, Cinema Gaming, Football, Badminton, Inflatables and Water Pistols, to name a few. All activities ran throughout the summer holiday period.

The Play Rangers have been out and about letting children's imaginations run wild hosting their popular and free, exciting outdoor activities in various parks and open spaces across the Borough. Play Streets sessions were also held in Spring Boroughs and Spencer.

Prior to the holiday period a Fun Day was held at Lings Forum. The event was a springboard for forthcoming school holiday activities. The event played host to over 240 children and their families and offered over 20 different activities. Local clubs continue to support the events including GKR Karate Club, Danes Camp Badminton Club, Lings Gym Mini's and Northampton Nets Basketball Club. All clubs have attracted new members because of the event.

National Play Day was held in Abington Park on 6th August with approximately 3,500 children, young people and their families attending. Building on the success of previous five annual National Play Day events, this year's event was the second to be funded by sponsors and contributions from local councillors.

Councillor Brandon Eldred

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement



Cabinet Member Report for the Environment

Northampton Borough Council

15th September 2014

Environmental Services

The Environment Services team are continuing to work with Housing and Enterprise to install containers for waste from flats. In the last year 1053 flats have been transferred over from waste sacks to containers. Where the transfer has taken place, there has been a marked improvement in the cleanliness of their area and a reduction in fly-tipping.

Environmental Health

The new full time Park Ranger and Neighbourhood Warden joined the team at the end of August. Following a period of training they will join their colleagues in carrying out patrols, carrying out enforcement and working closely with the communities in their areas. This brings the numbers to six Park Rangers and fifteen Neighbourhood Wardens.

The Environmental Crime team have been working with businesses in the Town Centre to ensure that waste is presented in the correct location at the right time for collection. Most businesses have responded positively to an informal approach, however it has been necessary to serve some Fixed Penalty Notices to deal with persistent problems.

Environmental Crime Officers have also been working with Neighbourhood Wardens to take further enforcement action in cases of fly tipping. Simple cautions have been served for two waste offences and three residents have been issued with invoices for clean-up charges. Between 1st April and 14th August a total of 81 Fixed Penalty Notices were served, 39 of these were for littering and 28 for waste offences.

Licensing

During July, three taxi and private hire checks were undertaken with Northamptonshire County Council at schools. Of the eighteen vehicles checked, twelve were fully compliant, with five having minor non-compliance issues.

Parks

On 28th July it was announced that Abington Park and Delapre Park and Abbey had won the prestigious Green Flag Award. The Green Flag Award is made by the charity Keep Britain Tidy, and Abington and Delapre are among just 1,476 parks across the country judged to be of a very high standard. A Green Flag flying overhead is a sign to visitors that the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities. This award is a tribute to the commitment by all the volunteers who are part of the dedicated friends groups that work alongside Borough

Council staff to reach these high standards. Our green spaces are very important as we grow and develop as a town and I am pleased that we managed to maintain the award at Delapre, while reflecting on the feedback from last year and meeting the judges' standards for Abington this year.

On 25th July the Borough Council, in partnership with Upton Parish Council, unveiled a brand new play area in St Crispin's Park. The £45,000 community play area has been funded through agreements made with the developers of the St Crispin's development.

From 25th July to 3rd August a series of events were held as part of Love Parks Week. The aim of Love Parks Week is to encourage people to visit, enjoy and take pride in their local parks and greens spaces, which are essential to healthy, happy and strong communities. Events organised for the week included a litter pick and general tidy up at Delapre Park, Abington Park and the Racecourse, the Bands in the Park concert at the Bandstand in Abington Park, free mini beast and craft activities at the Racecourse, and on 2nd August the dog café, run by our Park Rangers and Big Dog's Walking service, met at the Racecourse to offer dog walkers refreshments and advice.

Councillor Mike Hallam
Cabinet Member for the Environment



Cabinet Member Report for Finance

Northampton Borough Council

15th September 2014

Finance

The Council's Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 is due to be signed off by KPMG, the Council's external auditors, on 30th September. KPMG's annual report on the Accounts to Audit Committee on 9th September confirmed they "have identified no issues in the course of the audit that are considered to be material....and anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion". In addition KPMG are proposing to issue a positive opinion on the Council's value for money position.

The focus for the forthcoming six months will be the development of the Budget for 2015/16 and a refresh Medium Term Financial Plan. As previously reported the Council continues to face significant challenges on its finances as the planned reductions in Government funding are expected to continue until at least 2018. This will particularly affect the General Fund revenue budget and the Council must reduce its spending and increase its income to balance its budget. At the same time the Council will continue with its investment in the regeneration of the Borough, particularly around the Town Centre.

Revenue and Benefits

Pressure on the Benefits service is expected to increase during the second part of the year with the introduction of two reforms. One will see monthly data transfers of real – time earning information from HMRC. This will lead to a large number of cases requiring manual review and re – assessment. Funding is expected from the Department for Work and Pensions. A second change to the method of applying earnings to work cases is also expected. This could lead to a reduction in benefit against the old assessment method, leading to increased enquiries to the service. The position will be monitored carefully.

Councillor Alan Bottwood
Cabinet Member for Finance

Appendices:
0



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL
15th September 2014

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Borough Secretary

Report Title	Changes to Committee Places
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1. Purpose

1.1 Council is asked to ratify changes to the membership of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Councillor Ashraf replaces Councillor Mason on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

3.1 The Labour Group wish to makes changes to Committee members following the recent by-election held on the 3rd July 2014.

3.2 Appointments to all other Committees agreed by Council on the 15th May 2014 remain unchanged.

3.3 Because it is a like for like swap, proportionality will not be affected.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 N/A

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 N/A

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 There are no legal implications

4.4 Equality

None

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 N/A

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

**Emma Powley
Democratic Services
01604 837089**

Appendices: 0



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL
15th September 2014

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Borough Secretary

Report Title	Exemption from call-in and urgent executive decisions.
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To report to Council on the use of the power contained in the Constitution to exempt a decision from call-in where the decision being taken is urgent.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is recommended to note the content of this report.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1 When a decision is made by the Cabinet, or an individual Cabinet Member or a Key Decision is made by an Officer with delegated authority, that decision is subject to call-in for scrutiny. A decision may be implemented after the call-in period has expired, unless the Overview and Scrutiny Committee exercises the right to call-in within that period.
- 3.2 Paragraph 15.10 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution sets out that the call-in procedure shall **not** apply where the decision being taken is urgent. A decision is urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. It is necessary for the Mayor to agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency.
- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules require that decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council. This report complies with this requirement.

- 3.4 Council is therefore asked to note that the Chief Executive made a delegated Key Decision on [19th August 2014] that was treated as a matter of urgency and was not therefore subject to call-in. The Mayor agreed that the decision was reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. A summary of the decision is set out below:

The approval of:

- a) *an increase in the Capital Programme in relation to a key site within the Enterprise Zone to reflect the total project costs; and*
- b) *the Council granting, within a Lease, an option to purchase the Council's freehold reversion of a key site within the Enterprise Zone.*

- 3.5 The reason for the urgency was that if the Council was not able to enter into the necessary legal agreements at the time the decision was made, this could have endangered the Council's overall delivery of a key project which is an important part of the Council's Enterprise Zone programme.

- 3.6 The decision was exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 None.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 None.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 Contained within the body of the report.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

4.5 Other Implications

- 4.5.1 None.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 None

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer
0300 330 7000

<p>Appendices: 0</p>



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

15th September 2014

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Borough Secretary

Report Title	Amendment to Constitution – Scheme of Delegations
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Constitution is a living document and requires amendment and review on an ongoing basis. The purpose of this report is to recommend that Full Council agree an amendment to the Council's Constitution to amend the Scheme of Delegations to strengthen governance and streamline processes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Full Council approve the amendment to the Constitution detailed in paragraph 3.1.10.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The Constitution is a living document and needs to be reviewed from time to time to reflect best practice and to improve Governance and operational efficiency.
- 3.1.2 The Scheme of Delegations in Part 8 of the Constitution empowers officers to exercise powers on behalf of the Council.
- 3.1.3 The Chief Executive has specific delegated powers contained in the Constitution, Part 8, Part B, paragraph 1. (These are in addition to the general powers delegated to the Chief Executive, all Directors and the Borough Secretary in Part 8, Part A).
- 3.1.4 Paragraph 1.2.9 states that the Chief Executive shall exercise the following power:

“To act on behalf of the Council in respect of matters of urgency where the delay is likely to seriously prejudice the interests of the Council or the public after consultation with Group Leaders in relation to such proposed action”.

- 3.1.5 This delegated power enables the Chief Executive to respond quickly, by making decisions in situations where any delay would seriously prejudice the interests of the Council or the public.
- 3.1.6 While this power is properly only used in exceptional circumstances in situations of genuine urgency, it is a broad power that can be exercised by an officer in relation to both executive and non-executive functions. Therefore, it is important that there is an adequate check and balance on the exercise of this delegated decision making power.
- 3.1.7 Currently, this power as drafted may only be exercised by the Chief Executive after consultation with all Group Leaders in relation to the proposed action. It would strengthen Governance processes and be more efficient for the consultation to be with The Leader of the Council, the Leader of the main opposition and the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This is because the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny is almost always consulted on associated issues in relation to the use of the above powers.
- 3.1.8 Consultation by the Chief Executive with the Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Main Opposition Group and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will provide an adequate check and balance on the exercise of the officer delegated power.
- 3.1.9 It is therefore recommended that Full Council agree to amend the Constitution so that Part 8, Part B, Paragraph 1.2.9 is amended to state that the Chief Executive shall be able to exercise the following power:

“to act on behalf of the Council in respect of matters of urgency where the delay is likely to seriously prejudice the interests of the Council or the public after consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Main Opposition Group and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to such proposed action”

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 None.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 None.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 Contained within the body of the report

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 None.

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

Francis Fernandes
Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer
0300 330 7000