

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 19 January 2015 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

COUNCILLORS: Ansell, Aziz, Beardsworth, Begum, Bottwood, I. Choudary, N Choudary, Conroy, Davies, Eldred, Flavell, Ford, Glynane, Golby, Gowen, Hadland, Hallam, Hibbert, Hill, King, Larratt, Lynch, Mackintosh, Malpas, Markham, Mason, Mennell, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Sargeant, Stone, Strachan and Yates

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hadland declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 - Position Statement on the adoption of West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan, as a Member of the West Northants Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Councillor Hibbert declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 - Appointments to Outside Bodies - Northampton Partnership Homes, as a Board Member of Northampton Partnership Homes.

Councillor Oldham declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 - Position Statement on the adoption of West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan, as a substitute Member of the West Northants Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Councillor Nunn declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 - Position Statement on the adoption of West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan, as a Member of the West Northants Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Councillor Bottwood declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 - Position Statement on the adoption of West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan, as a substitute Member of the West Northants Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Councillor Mason declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 - Appointments to Outside Bodies - Northampton Partnership Homes, as a Board Member of Northampton Partnership Homes.

Councillor Golby declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 - Position Statement on the adoption of West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan, as a substitute Member of the West Northants Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Councillor Beardsworth declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 - Appointments to Outside Bodies - Northampton Partnership Homes, as a Board Member of Northampton Partnership Homes.

Councillor N Choudary declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 - Appointments to Outside Bodies - Northampton Partnership Homes, as a Board Member of Northampton Partnership Homes.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 8th December 2014 were agreed and signed by the Mayor.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors Eales, Lane, Duncan and Subbarayan.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor announced that since the last Council meeting both Honorary Freeman Geoff Howes and Honorary Alderman Stan James has sadly passed away. Members from all parties paid tribute to them, both whom had dedicated their lives to local politics and Northampton.

The Mayor noted that the French Consul had visited on the 13th January 2015 and awarded 3 medals to ex-servicemen for their services to the French during World War 2 – the highest award that can be given by the French.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Mr Boulter addressed Council and stated that he was in favour of the recommendations in the report - Position Statement on the adoption of West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan and commented that Northampton South was an unsuitable area for a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) and would exacerbate existing traffic problems and congestion around the East Hunsbury area.

Dr Leads addressed Council and questioned whether it was ethical to develop and sell houses in an area where there are existing problems and stated that Councillors had a duty of care and could not choose to ignore problems. He further stated that the Planning Inspectors report had air-brushed over a number of concerns that had been raised and asked that they consider redistributing the builds in other areas.

Mr Johnson addressed Council and, referring to Item 11 on the agenda, stated that the allocation of the site for 1000 dwellings in Northampton south SUE was inconceivable and would cause traffic chaos. He stated that there had been numerous problems with flooding in Collingtree Park and near-flooding in Hunsbury and the nature of the brook was unknown and therefore dangerous to develop on.

Mr Sellers addressed Council and noted that the Joint Core Strategy needed to be fit for purpose and expressed concern about the current pollution levels in the area and stated that he was unable to find any site more likely to encourage car use and

thus potentially increasing air pollution.

Mr Brice, as the Chair of Collingtree Parish Council, addressed Council and stated that the Parish Council had been assured that expert advice had been received but noted that the area had been subject to flooding 5 times in 16 years and many residents had been left with flood related issues and insurance concerns.

Mr Cross (Chairman of Whitehills and Spring Park Residents Association – WASPRA) stated that they were not opposed to development but that residents had ongoing problems with traffic and whilst a Relief Road would help alleviate problems in surrounding areas and villages, but have a major impact on Whitehills and Spring Park. He further expressed concern that there was little joined up thinking with regards to modal shifts.

Ms Kelk (Hardingstone Parish Councillor) thanked the Members of the Planning Committee for rejecting the Planning Application and commented that over 1500 letters of objection had been sent. She commented that those she spoke on behalf of were not against development of houses, but that the proposed location was not the correct one.

Mr Pease addressed Council and commented that there had been much involvement from Action Groups who supported the stance of the Council reports recommendations. He noted that there was a 1.3km stretch of road between the Queen Eleanor Roundabout and the Newport Pagnell Road that had not been analysed and further reported that the projected figure for that length of road would be an over capacity of 21% by 2026 and that further development would only make the situation worse.

Mr Bell addressed Council and explained that Hardingstone Action Group were please when the Planning Committee refused the Sustainable Urban Extension and noted that there was real concern from residents about the increased flood risks and traffic problems and that local people had put their trust in the Planning Committee and thus supported the report's recommendations.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that 2 questions had been received from Councillors and that the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions and answers had given were as tabled (included in an updated agenda on the website) unless where stated, supplementary questions were asked, detailed below:

In response to a supplementary question asked, Councillor Hallam confirmed that the grass cutting had been carried out quite late in the year due to the weather, but that the same team were also responsible for the leaf collection but urged Councillor Mason to let him know of any specific areas affected by fallen leaves.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

Councillor Mackintosh submitted his Cabinet Member report and explained that there had been an incident on Bridge Street and gave thanks to the Licensing Officers for their dedication and hard work. He noted that on the 12th January 2015 the new Railway Station had been opened and that it was a great facility for the Town Centre and had been completed and part of the Northampton Alive project. He further noted that the recent Cities Outlook report had rated Northampton as one of the best places for creating jobs and noted that 80% of homes and businesses in Northampton had access to superfast broadband. He explained that the French Consul had visited which had been successful and seen 3 people awarded medals, and the opportunity was given for condolences to be given with regards to the recent events in France. In response to questions asked Councillor Mackintosh confirmed that he had continued to have regular meetings with the Volunteers of Delapre Abbey (VODA). In response to question asked by Councillor Ashraf, it was explained that domestic violence rates had not been included in his report as they were released quarterly, but that any information that he had relating to the issue would be circulated to Members. In response to further questions, the Leader explained that marshals had been used when Abington Street was opened up to traffic as a precautionary measure and were afforded as the whole Abington Street project had come in under budget. Responding to a further question, he reported that he would look into the signage issues with regards to the free 2 hour parking on Abington Street and confirmed that it was always intended to have barriers. The Leader confirmed that bollards heading into shop frontages would be installed and expressed his appreciation of the work that had been carried out with the Northampton Association for the Blind.

Councillor Markham submitted her Cabinet Member report and explained that Northampton Partnership Homes had come into effect on the 5th January 2015 and would operate as an Arms Length Management Association; changes to Council housing belonging to the Council and tenants. In response to questions asked, Councillor Markham explained that the service would continue to function as it was and that she was not aware of any acute increases in private-rented sector evictions. She noted that there was continued work with the Fraud department as she had been made aware that some tenants had been requesting a 'Section 21' for eviction purposes as a means of getting on or prioritised on the Council House waiting list, and remarked that specific incidents should be shared with her in order to address the issue with expedience. In response to further questions, it was noted that the number of people living in Bed and Breakfast accommodation was 22, 3 of which had made themselves intentionally homeless.

Councillor Hallam submitted his Cabinet Member report and explained that The new service for clearing up fly-tipping from shared alleyways had been successful. He explained that Northampton in Bloom 2014 had been hugely successful and in 2014, Northampton had been placed in first position by East Midlands in Bloom and that plans for the next year were well underway. In response to questions asked, Councillor Hallam explained that the number of checks on taxi's had increased up to the run up for Christmas and commended the work of the Licensing Team for their work and that resources in that department were currently being looked at. He informed Councillor Meredith that he would look into the issues he had raised with regards to chickens on allotments and would meet with him to

discuss his concerns straight away. He further confirmed that the £25 bulk waste disposal charge could not be reduced due to a contract being signed 7 years ago under the previous administration.

Councillor Hadland submitted his Cabinet Member report and noted that the free parking over the Christmas period had been well received by visitors to the town centre and thanked all the members of staff who had worked hard to ensure that the car parking facilities were well run over the busy period. In response to questions raised, Councillor Hadland confirmed that there were no plans for development on Eagle Drive. He further confirmed that the parking on Abington Street was free, for 2 hours and that they were working with developers who were looking at submitting planning application in the future at the St Edmunds site. He further noted that whilst there was no formal agreement with Cosworth over the number of apprentices taken on, the company had a very good reputation in training and development and that provision of an expert to work with new businesses to assist them starting up was in its early stages but that every effort would be made to ensure adequate provision when the time came.

Councillor Eldred submitted his Cabinet Member report and commented that the pre-Christmas period had been hugely successful with the German Market and was pleased that Alfie Boe had agreed to attend Alive at Delapre in July 2015. He further noted that the work of the Forums was going well and reminded members that the grant process for 2015/16 was still open but the application process would end on the 30th January 2015. In response to questions asked, Councillor Eldred stated that there was a lot of work being carried out with the Friends of Northampton Castle in supporting the celebration of the Magna Carta and further information relating to it would be released in February 2015. He further commented that the administration would continue to support the Richard Butcher Memorial Trust.

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Beardsworth stated that in Northamptonshire there were 123 seats and that elections were held for 8 Councils and argued that the Liberal Democrats would like to see 3 unitary Councils. She explained that Oxfordshire were considering unitary status and noted that this could lead to less bureaucracy with services being better run and more joined up in its functions. She further stated that they would support a move back to the Committee System and that they would like to do so as a means of preserving front line services.

Councillor Mackintosh commented that he and his party were already delivering services and serving local residents and would continue to do so after the General Election.

Councillor Beardsworth commented that she and the Liberal Democrats would continue to work had within their communities and with residents regardless of the forthcoming election.

9. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES - NORTHAMPTON PARTNERSHIP HOMES

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report which sought the approval to facilitate the replacement of Councillor Beardsworth as a Council nominated Director of Northampton Partnership Homes, to be replaced by Councillor Lane and that Councillor Ford be replaced as a council nominated Member of Northampton Town Supporters Football Club by Councillor Eldred

Councillor Markham seconded the report.

Councillor Beardsworth commented that she had always put the needs of the tenants first and that she had contributed a lot as a member of Northampton Partnership Homes. Councillor Marriott suggested that an independent person sit on the Board to ensure its non-political status and it was further commented that failure to declare an interest had contravened the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillor Beardsworth be replaced as a Council-nominated Director of Northampton Partnership Homes by Councillor Lane
2. Councillor Ford be replaced as a Council nominated Member of Northampton Town Football Supporters Club by Councillor Eldred

10. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report that sought approval to make changes to the Constitution to enable the Council to implement various aspects of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Councillor Markham seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Borough Secretary be authorised, in consultation with the Constitutional Review Working Party to amend part 8 of the Constitutional Scheme of Delegations to include provisions contained within the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and any subsequent amendments or statutory implementation of the Act and to enable appropriate delegations to be exercised by Northampton Partnership Homes in consideration of its housing management function.
2. That power be delegated to the Chief Executive to designate an Officer of the Council to issue Community Protection Notices where appropriate
3. That the Borough Secretary be authorised, in consultation with the Constitutional review Working Party, to make any other changes to the constitution to enable the implementation of the new powers.

11. POSITION STATEMENT ON THE ADOPTION OF WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CORE STRATEGY PART 1 LOCAL PLAN'

Councillor Hadland submitted a report which sought to clarify Northampton Borough Council's position in relation to the adoption of the Joint Core Strategy Part 1 Local Plan, specifically in relation to Policies N5 and N6 and the strategic highways infrastructure which the council's Members on the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (WNJSPC) did not feel were adequately addressed in the Joint Core Strategy. He explained that the many people who had expressed their view were not NIMBY's and not fundamentally against development and the building of homes, but that they would like it to be sustainable. He further commented that Collingtree was not sustainable as an area for a SUE due to flooding, transport and infrastructure, which were the reasons for rejecting the Joint Core Strategy's recommendations. He further explained that the building of homes for both the Northampton South SUE and the Northampton South of Brackmills SUE may not happen for a number of years and this would not be funded or developed at the same time as infrastructure and questioned whether it was the right time for such developments. He stated that there was a commitment to improving the Town for its current residents and for future residents of Northampton and further questioned the validity of the democratic voting system of the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee.

Councillor Mackintosh seconded the report and explained that the WNJSPC was inherited and was conscious that people were not against development but that there was a need for the infrastructure to be in place as the same time as the home-building.

Councillor Beardsworth commented that she hoped that everyone supported the recommendations within the report and exclaimed her unhappiness that people had not felt listened to by the Joint Planning Unit. She further noted that the New Homes Bonus financially benefited the Council but suggested that there was a feeling that developments were being 'dumped' on certain areas, Northampton being one of them.

Councillor Larratt explained that the needs of Northampton had largely been ignored and that the A45 could not currently cope with the capacity and was heavily congested and that any potential developments on the site could have further ramifications on traffic on the roads, including the Newport Pagnell Road.

Councillor Marriott thanked all the members of their public for speaking and stated that there was a need for control over the development within the boundaries of Northampton.

Councillor Hill commented that he could not support an extra 1000 homes being built due to the traffic impact on the Rowtree Road and that any additional traffic would only make the situation worse.

Councillor Hadland thanked members and the public for their comments and noted they had produced a large amount of evidence which they had gathered, and expressed his appreciation at the work that they had done.

RESOLVED:

1. That Council confirms an objection to the allocation of the site for 1000 dwellings in Policy N5 'Northampton South SUE' and makes this known to the decision maker in the determination of the associated planning applications.
2. That Council confirms an objection to the allocation of the site for 1300 dwellings in Policy N6 'Northampton South of Brackmills SUE' and makes this known to the decision maker in the determination of the associated planning applications
3. That Council confirms an objection to the limited provision of the North-West bypass as set out in Policy T7 of the Joint Core Strategy and requests that Northamptonshire County Council invests in updating its strategic transportation modelling to better assess impacts of development on Northampton's highways and also plans and provides for a significant upgrade and as well as addressing the missing links of the North-West bypass, to be completed as soon as possible.
4. That Council, subject to confirmation of the recommendations above, notes and supports the adoption of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan Part 1 as part of the Development Plan for the purposes of determining planning applications.

12. COUNCIL TAX BASE

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report that sought Council's approval of the tax base for 2015/2016 and associated parish tax bases, included within the report.

RESOLVED:

That the tax base for 2015/16 at 61,926.81 Band D equivalent properties and associated parish tax bases within this report be approved.

	2015/16	2014/15
Billing	2,506.72	2,402.29
Collingtree	506.88	508.64
Duston	5,358.06	5260.40
Great Houghton	284.39	279.44
Hardingstone	761.18	757.93
Upton	2,181.34	2,006.64
Wootton & East Hunsbury	n/a	6,214.60
Wootton, Wootton Fields & Simpson Manor	2,889.67	n/a
East Hunsbury	3,368.24	n/a
West Hunsbury	1,602.17	1,585.70
Hunsbury Meadow	489.23	475.24
Northampton (Unparished)	41,978.93	41,160.27
Total tax base	61,926.81	60,651.14

13. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME - 2015/16

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report that sought Council's approval of the proposed amendment to the local Council tax Scheme.

Councillor Bottwood seconded the report.

Councillor Mason commented that she was opposed to the recommendations which she considered would affect the poorest people and would like it kept at 15%. Councillor Beardsworth echoed the concerns of Councillor Mason and said that the most vulnerable would be affected and urged the Conservative to reconsider.

RESOLVED:

That Council endorse the recommendation contained in the Cabinet report no later than the 31st January 2015.

14. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REPORT

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report which provided a mid-year update on the Treasury Management Strategy 2014-15, approved by Council in February 2014.

Councillor Bottwood seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

That Council note the treasury management activities and performance for the period 1 April to 30 November 2014.

15. COMMITTEE PROPORTIONALITY

Councillor Mackintosh submitted a report which sought approval for the changes of Committee places as required following changes to the composition of Political Groups.

Councillor Markham seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the number of Committee places on Planning be reduced by one, from 12 to 11, and that the Borough Secretary be authorised to amend the Constitution to reflect the change.
2. That the number of seats on each Committee as set out in the report be approved.
3. That the representation of the political groups be as set out in this report

4. That Groups notify this Meeting of Council as to the changes in their nominations to Committee as follows:

Labour –

Councillor Strachan is removed from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillors Marriott and Stone will sit on General Purposes Committee
Councillor Marriott is removed from the Standards Committee

Conservative –

Councillor Duncan is appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Aziz is appointed to the Planning Committee
Councillor Duncan is removed off the Licensing Committee and replaced by Councillors Ansell and King.
Councillor Patel is appointed Deputy Chair of the Standards Committee following the removal of Councillor Capstick
Councillor Oldham replaces Councillor Duncan on the General Purposes.

Liberal Democrats -

Councillor Meredith be removed from Planning Committee and appointed to the Standards Committee

5. That the allocation of political assistants to Groups remains the same.
6. That following the removal of Joy Capstick from the Labour Group that the Conservative Group gain an extra seat on Licensing Committee and Labour Group lose one in order to reflect changes to proportionality.

16. NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr Newbury addressed Motion i) and commented that there was a great need for a better road system and stated that he considered the completion of the ring road of utmost importance and noted that it needed to be extended further out past Bucton Fields.

Mr Croucher addressed Motion i) and commented that a North-West bypass would only be beneficial to the West and with an increase in traffic the roads were crumbling as a result. He stated that a bypass would be beneficial for future developments; specifically of a waste to energy plant was created in the St James' area.

- i) Councillor Larratt proposed and Councillor Hill seconded that:

This Council notes, welcomes and supports the position of Northamptonshire County Council with regard to a North West bypass for Northampton as expressed in a motion to that Council that was approved at a meeting held on 25th September 2014 calling for the building of a north west bypass to dual carriageway standard, thus completing the Northampton ring road.

'Furthermore this Council notes, welcomes and supports the strong desire of local residents in and to the north of Northampton for the construction of this road as expressed at a meeting of Northampton Residents Forum held on 4th November

2014.

This Council deeply regrets that the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy fails to support and provide for the development of this vital road infrastructure that will greatly assist in relieving the high level of traffic congestion and air pollution that exists in the north of the Borough and beyond.

'This Council therefore requires the provision of a North West bypass for Northampton to be a major feature of Planning Strategy and Policy for the area, and for it to be delivered to the standard expressed by the County Council within the time span of current development strategies and plans for the area'.

Council debated the motion

Upon a vote, the Motion was carried.

Mr Croucher addressed Motion ii) and commented that people needed an increase in wages in order to increase spending and therefore improving the economy and the Living Wage would be more fair and equal for those at the bottom of the economic ladder.

ii) Councillor Marriott to propose and Councillor Mason to second that:

This Council notes that the Conservative Administration opposed the Labour Group amendment to the "Council Wide General Fund Revenue Budget 2013-16" which would have implemented a living wage for council staff from April 2013. This Council welcomes the recent Conservative Administration 'U-turn' by now implementing the living wage for Northampton Borough Council staff.

The Living Wage Foundation says its *"good for business, good for the individual and good for society"*.

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, says *"paying the Living Wage is not only morally right, but makes good business sense too. There are now over 2,200 employees working for companies with contracts from the GLA who are benefitting from the London Living Wage."*

Local Authorities that have adopted the Living Wage include the Greater London Authority, Ashfield District Council, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Cherwell District Council, Gedling Borough Council, Oxford City Council, Thurrock Council and Winchester City Council.

This Council is also a major supplier/contractor of public services. Therefore it resolves for 1st April 2015 to:-

1. Supports the introduction of a Living Wage to all contracted and sub-contracted staff.
2. Adopt a policy of supporting the Living Wage in procurement on a case by

case basis.

3. Seek accreditation as a Living Wage employer through the Living Wage Foundation.
4. Use our influence as a major local employer and provider of services to urge other local employers to pay the Living Wage.

Councillor Mackintosh proposed and Councillor Bottwood seconded an amendment.

The amended motion read:

This Council notes that the Conservative Administration has brought forward plans to implement a living wage for council staff from April 2014 at a time when the financial position of the authority allows it.

The Living Wage Foundation says its *“good for business, good for the individual and good for society”*.

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, says *“paying the Living Wage is not only morally right, but makes good business sense too. There are now over 2,200 employees working for companies with contracts from the GLA who are benefitting from the London Living Wage.”*

Local Authorities that have adopted the Living Wage include the Greater London Authority, Ashfield District Council, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Cherwell District Council, Gedling Borough Council, Oxford City Council, Thurrock Council and Winchester City Council.

This Council is also a major supplier/contractor of public services. Therefore it resolves for

1st April 2015 to:-

1. Consider the introduction of a Living Wage for future contracts.
2. Consider a policy of supporting the Living Wage in procurement on a case by case basis.
3. Seek accreditation as a Living Wage employer through the Living Wage Foundation.
4. Use our influence as a major local employer and provider of services to urge other local employers to pay the Living Wage.”

The proposed amendments were accepted and became the substantive motion.

Council debated the substantive motion.

Upon a vote, the substantive motion was carried.

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

The Item was withdrawn.

The meeting concluded at 10.03pm