

# NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



## COUNCIL

Monday, 2 March 2015

**YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL, WHICH WILL BE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL NORTHAMPTON ON MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2015 AT 6:30 PM WHEN THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS IS PROPOSED TO BE TRANSACTED**

- 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 2. APOLOGIES.**
- 3. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS**
- 5. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**  
(Copy herewith)
- 6. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS**  
(Copy herewith)
- 7. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS**  
Councillor Marriott to make a statement on "Improving the local environment".
- 8. COMMITTEE PROPORTIONALITY**  
(Copy to follow)
- 9. PAY POLICY STATEMENT**  
(Copy herewith)

## 10. NOTICES OF MOTION

- i) Councillor Markham to propose and Councillor Mackintosh to second

'Council notes the important changes in housing in Northampton in the last four years.

'The Council's housing stock transfer to Northampton Partnership Homes in January was a major step forward for Council tenants and the quality of services provided to the town's tenants.

'Council commends the Housing Stock Options Review process which started in April 2012 with a Tenants' Panel, an Employee Focus Group, and a Housing Options Panel to look at the potential options for the future ownership, funding and management of the Council's housing stock, to examine which option would best deliver long term improvements needed to both homes and estates.

'Council thanks the tenants, employees and councillors who took part in the Housing Stock Options Review and the officers involved in the process to create the Arms Length Management Organisation, Northampton Partnership Homes, and wishes the organisation best wishes for the future.

'Council also notes important changes in housing policy with changes in the Allocation Policy, structure of the Housing Revenue Account and work done with private sector housing, and Decent Homes and Empty Homes improvements.

'Council welcomes the work done to combat homelessness and the achievements of organisations working in Oasis House which opened in May 2012 as a partnership between the Council and Midland Heart consisting of 48 accommodation units including 39 self-contained apartments, nine emergency units and four have dog kennels attached. There is also accommodation at Acorn House and the day-time drop in facilities at the Hope Centre. The scheme also includes the base for Northampton Association for Accommodation for Single Homeless (NAASH), a day centre, IT suite, arts and crafts centre, housing advice service and training facilities.

'Council recognises the increase in the last decade of Houses of Multiple Occupation and the negative impacts and concerns around the conversion of family homes this can cause in residential areas. Council welcomes work done by the Administration to introduce an online register of HMOs, new rules on the conversion of properties and additional licensing to help protect tenants from unscrupulous landlords by bringing smaller properties into the licensing regime that were previously not included.

'Council notes that the Landlords Forum, established by this Administration, has improved relations between the Borough Council and local landlords, and has made it easier for this authority to help protect private tenants in the town, particularly those living in houses of multiple occupancy.

'Council welcomes the Administration's decision to build 100 new council homes at Dallington Grange as the largest social housing development in Northampton for more than 20 years. This major development will be built on land owned by the Council and will be financed by selling a parcel of land in the area or with money

received from ex-council houses sold under 'Right To Buy' legislation. Council is committed to increasing the number of council houses available for rent, and welcomes this scheme to provide 100 new homes for families in our town.'

'Council notes that in 2012 this authority was awarded £1.9 million government funding from the Empty Homes scheme to help meet the demand for affordable housing, enabling the Council to lease empty homes from their owners and help house those on the waiting list. Owners who take part in the scheme receive an interest free loan to help with the initial refurbishment costs and the continued maintenance of the property, both of which will be carried out by the Council. By bringing empty homes back into use, it contributes to the housing supply to meet local needs and help tackle homelessness.

'Council also notes that the Borough Council's Planning department has introduced incentives to encourage developers who have taken on commercial properties to create new one and two bedroom apartments.'

ii) Councillor Hadland to propose and Councillor Mackintosh to second:

'Council recognises the important steps forward for our town with the Northampton Alive regeneration programme which has delivered real change for Northampton.

'The many projects include:

- The new Northampton Castle Railway Station
- The North Gate Bus Station
- The Innovation Centre
- Opening up part of Abington Street to traffic
- The University relocation
- The St John's Halls of Residence
- The Skatepark
- Restoring Delapre Abbey
- The Ark restaurant
- Supporting The Saints, The Cobblers and The Cricket Club with development plans
- Helping major companies like Cosworth, Church's Shoes and Carlsberg
- Developing the Enterprise Zone to create 900 new jobs
- Supporting our Market Traders
- Demolishing Greyfriars
- Developing Abington Park Museum
- Supporting the restoration of St Edmund's
- The introduction of the Cycle CoNNect bike hire scheme
- Developing the Cultural Quarter by supporting The Royal and Dergate Theatres and The Errol Flynn Filmhouse, a new boutique hotel, expanding
- The Museum and Art Gallery, improving Guildhall Road, supporting the NN Arts Collective and bringing forward plans for the Vulcan Works creative industries hub with a new hotel on Albion Place

'Council also recognises the work done through the Business Incentive Scheme to support local businesses to help fill empty properties and support small businesses through a range of grants, helping to create hundreds of new jobs and unlocking over £1.6 million of private sector investment.

'Council welcomes the increase in visitors by 40% to the town's car parks following the introduction of the free car parking offer for the town's four multi-storey car parks which are free at weekends and for two hours on weekdays.

'Council notes the national recognition for Northampton. In March 2014, Experian called Northampton 'top for business' and The Centre for Cities in January 2015 called the town one of the best places in the country for new business start-ups. The Government also named Northamptonshire as the most enterprising place in Britain in 2012.

'Council recognises the support of Government, the local enterprise partnerships, Northamptonshire County Council, the town's Members of Parliament and other partners to achieve this regeneration to ensure Northampton has a bright future alive with ambition, enterprise and opportunity.'

iii) Councillor Bottwood to propose and Councillor Mackintosh to second:

'Council recognises the big challenges faced in local government finance in recent years but commends the Administration's budgets since 2011 which have balanced the need to invest in the future of Northampton with supporting the hardworking people of the town and protecting the Council's frontline services.

'This Council's share of Council Tax has been frozen since 2011 and savings have been made through back office savings and changes.

'Council's decision in May 2013 to share the back office through Local Government Shared Services with Northamptonshire County Council and other authorities will enable savings of over £9 million to the taxpayer and has allowed further investment to frontline services across the Council.

'The Administration has kept its manifesto commitment of reducing the number of senior managers and the costs has been reduced by 50% over the last four years. Since 2011, the number of senior managers has fallen from 21 to 10 and the Administration has cut the wage bill for senior management by over £800,000.

'Council notes that this Conservative Administration has not increased any councillor allowances unlike the previous Liberal Democrat Administration who increased councillor allowances by up to 63% whilst they were in power.'

iv) Councillor Eldred to propose and Councillor Mackintosh to second:

'Council notes the important contribution made to its work by the Forums for Disabled People, Diverse Communities, LGBTQ, Pensioners, Women and Youth and recognises the role played in key events in the Council's annual calendar including World AIDS Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, Chinese New Year, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, International Coming Out Day, International Women's Day and the introduction of the Inspirational Woman's Award. Council congratulates the Youth Forum for winning the National Diversity Award in 2012, and thanks the co-chairs of all the Forums for their hard work and support.

'Council notes the many events which have been staged in Northampton over the last four years including HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Olympic Torch

relay, Games Time at Delapre Park and Godiva Awakes in 2012, On The Waterfront in 2013, and the Women's Cycling Tour and Firework's Display in 2014 which have all attracted visitors to the town and increased footfall in Northampton.

'These are in addition to annual events such as the Christmas light switch-on and partner events like Carnival and Diwali which continue to be popular and this year Chinese New Year has been included.

'Council recognises that the Administration saved the Delapre Beer Festival in 2013 by stepping in to run the event for two years and looks forward to the event this year being run by CAMRA and Phipps Brewery.

'Council commends the Administration for reinstating the popular St Crispin's Fair in 2012 which has now become a regular annual event for the town.

'Council also notes this Administration introduced the Alive at Delapre music concerts in 2013 which bring world class music acts like Paul Weller, The Wanted, James Morrison, Simple Minds, the best of the 80s, Boyzone, Jessie J and Alfie Boe to Northampton.

'Council welcomes the introduction of the Love Northampton website, app and tourism brochure to promote events and businesses in Northampton which continue to attract people into the town.

'Council notes the important work done to recognise our commitment to an Armed Forces Community Covenant for Northampton and the many events that have been held for military anniversaries including Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday, the sixtieth anniversary of the armistice of the Korean War, the seventieth anniversary of D-Day, the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War and other events including the homecoming and Freedom of the Borough award for 9th/12th Royal Lancers. This Council remains committed to The Armed Forces Community Covenant for Northampton and continuing to recognise the dedication and service of the military, their families and veterans.

'Council notes that £2.2 million has been awarded in Partnership Grants to 96 organisations since 2011.

'Council recognises the introduction of the Councillor Community Fund where over £374,000 of funding has been allocated by councillors to more than 600 organisations to make a difference.

'Council welcomes the Administration's plans for expanding the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery and Abington Park Museum after the successful sale of the Sekhemka statue in July 2014 with the Borough Council's share of around £8million which was ring-fenced for the Museum Service.

'Council also recognises the Administration increased opening hours for the museums despite the challenging financial situation.'

v) Councillor Hallam to propose and Councillor Mackintosh to second:

'Council notes that this Administration re-introduced Neighbourhood Wardens from 2011 when there were 9 wardens. There are now 15 wardens.

'Council also notes that three Park Rangers were introduced in September 2011 and the number was increased to 4 Park Rangers in 2012. The number was further increased in 2013 and there are now 6 Park Rangers.

'The Administration has invested over £250,000 additionally to the Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Ranger schemes since 2011 with a further investment planned in the next financial year.

'Council has continued to invest in Northampton in Bloom each year and was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> out of 62 towns, cities and villages for most improved area in 2014, and has extended this now through winter, spring and summer.

'Council recognises Northampton is blessed with beautiful parks and green spaces, and welcomes the Green Flag status awarded to Abington Park and Delapre Park.

'The Administration has maintained a zero tolerance approach to littering and fly-tipping. During the last four years, a total of 79 fixed penalty notices were served and 30 people were prosecuted.

'The Administration has taken environmental health matters seriously and 96 Noise Abatement Notices have been issued since 2011.

'The Licensing team has undertaken enforcement work with 229 vehicles receiving cautions, 371 vehicles were suspended until defects were rectified including 262 that were prohibited by VOSA since 2011.

'In keeping with a manifesto commitment, the Administration introduced Park Management Committees for Delapre Park, Abington Park, The Racecourse and Eastfield Park to allow park users and local groups to have a say in the management and future plans for the town's parks and green spaces.

'The Council has also taken the commitment to reducing Carbon emissions and the Carbon footprint has been reduced by 2,650 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> since May 2011. Under this Administration, 118,713 tonnes of waste has also been recycled plus 8,306 tonnes of food waste.'

vi) Councillor Beardsworth to propose and Councillor Glynane to second:

This Council agrees that over the past four years the Conservative administration has failed to live up to all of the "5 pledges" in their 2011 manifesto.

1. Put Northampton Back on Track.
2. Reduce waste to protect public services
3. Invest in safer, cleaner neighbourhoods.
4. Demand better homes for the future
5. Empower communities with pride in Northampton

vii) Councillor Glynane to propose and Councillor Ford to second:

This Council notes the failure of both the Borough and County Council administrations to properly engage and integrate Northampton into this year's Magna Carta celebrations.

viii) Councillor Glynane to propose and Councillor Ford to second

This Council notes the national and international interest in the War of the Roses, and the benefits to the town and the County to a proper understanding and celebration of our history.

Council further notes Northampton's pivotal role in this war, including the battle of Northampton fought at Delapre Abbey.

Recent discoveries, such as a cannon shot that may be the oldest found in England, highlight the potential for developing the historical and cultural offer of our town.

Council resolves to develop a 'National Centre' for the war of the Roses at Delapre Abbey.

ix) Councillor Mason to propose and Councillor Stone to second:

This Council notes that a recent study showed that nearly 1 in 4 children in Northampton are living in poverty. Based on the old Borough Council Wards (pre May 2011) both Lumbertubs and Castle have child poverty rates of around 37 per cent.

This Council further notes the Discretionary Housing Payment will not meet demand and many people are being harmed by the 'bedroom tax'.

This Council believes the high child poverty rates are the result of welfare reform changes such as the benefit cap, the austerity agenda and stagnant wages.

This Council asks the Cabinet, as a matter of urgency, to increase financial help to food banks and to local voluntary sector organisations that work with the most vulnerable people in poverty.

**11. 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](http://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](mailto:democraticservices@northampton.gov.uk)

Tel 01604 837722

Mail Democratic Services



Northampton Borough Council  
The Guildhall  
St Giles Square  
Northampton NN1 1DE

**Question for Full Council Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015**

**Question 1**

**Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Mason**

Did Northampton Borough Council join the Credit Union SORTED programme and if not why not?

***Response***

After careful consideration, it was decided that the Credit Union's proposal to NBC in respect of its SORTED programme was not the best way forward for our tenants (as they were at the time) . It was clear to us that although some tenants would benefit from NBC entering the programme on a corporate basis, many did not require the support offered by the SORTED programme. As those who did require the services of the programme were able to enter it individually, we decided that we could best support our tenants by raising awareness of the Credit Union and by directing customers to their services when appropriate to do so. We did this by providing free space in our One Stop Shop and a sign posting service through our contact centre and web site.

**Councillor David Mackintosh  
Leader of the Council**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015**

### **Question 2**

#### **Question to Councillor Hallam from Councillor Stone**

Full Council requested on 10th March 2014 requested that the air pollution in Abington Street be monitored before the work was done to open it up and afterwards.

Please can we have the results of that?

#### ***Response***

The national guidance for air quality sets out conditions where a more detailed consideration of air quality is needed beyond that of basic screening. This would include busy roads or junction networks where the annual average daily flow is in excess of 10,000 vehicles, and that there is also exposure in the area. Exposure will normally be regarded over the average for a year at the facades of housing, schools or hospitals, although it can include areas where members of the public could be exposed for more than 1 hour (which has to happen more than 18 times per year) such as outdoor dining areas, e.g. cafes/bars/restaurants). Exposure normally needs to occur within 5 – 10 metres of the edge of the road.

At this time we do not have any concerns about air quality levels along the recently de-pedestrianise Abington Street.

Since its re-opening I believe the flow of vehicles along Abington Street has been quite conservative that it would fall outside of the screening criteria and monitoring would not be justified. With regard to the objective that exists for pollutants linked to road transport, where we have identified high levels these have been roads such as Harborough Road, Victoria Promenade and St James. By comparison these are significantly busier roads than Abington Street, and so this gives a flavour of the sorts of locations where the potential harm from poor air quality needs to be considered.

The objective for exposure over 1 hour would also be disregarded. There is a rule of thumb which can be used to highlight potential concerns. Where the average for a year is high (in excess of 60 micrograms), this could indicate problems with the hourly limit. In the areas I have mentioned above I cannot recall a single measurement above 60 for the year that we have needed to investigate further. Again, this suggests the sort of circumstances where the objective might need to be taken into account, and why it is very unlikely to need to apply to Abington Street.

**Councillor Mike Hallam**  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015**

### **Question 3**

#### **Question to Councillor Hadland from Councillor Stone**

St Edmunds hospital site is privately owned. Why has the borough put Northampton Live design posters up on the site and how much did it cost?

#### ***Response***

Northampton Borough Council is working with both public and private partners to regenerate Northampton. The Northampton Alive banner is one that brings these projects together and helps to promote the town, increasing visitors and encouraging investment.

St Edmunds is one of the Northampton Alive projects and we are working with the owner of the building to bring this project forward, helping to regenerate what has been a derelict and run down building in Northampton for some time.

NBC want to ensure that the public are aware of all of the work that is being done and the projects that are being delivered to improve our town. Alongside the website, an important part of this is to use signage to create a visual reminder of these projects that are being undertaken around the town.

The St Edmunds signage cost a total of £2,444 for design, manufacture and installation.

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

## **Question for Full Council Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015**

### **Question 4**

#### **Question to Councillor Markham from Councillor Stone**

36% of families in Spring Boroughs are socially overcrowded. This means they are using the living room as a bedroom and children are sharing a room with parents.

When are we going to monitor this situation in terms of the damage it is having on the physical, emotional and mental health of the parents and the children and the impact it is having on the achievement of children in schools?

#### ***Response***

Socially overcrowded families who are not otherwise eligible for the housing register can apply to the Council to be in the low demand scheme. This scheme allows for them to be offered the hard to let properties that cannot be let through choice-based lettings. There are 9 families in Spring Boroughs currently on the low demand scheme. There are 23 families on the housing register from Spring Boroughs.

Staff attended a forum in Spring Boroughs in December to explain what these affected families could do to address their housing need and we will continue to work with these and similar families.

The development of new family housing is an option for the Little Cross Street site, currently under consideration.

**Councillor Mary Markham  
Cabinet Member for Housing**

## Question for Full Council Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

### Question 5

#### Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Marriott

At the Cabinet meeting on 18th February 2015, the Leader claimed town centre footfall was increasing. Would therefore explain why the recent figures show a trended decline over the past 3 quarters?

#### Town Centre Footfall 2014/2015

Quarter 1: 3,895,189

Quarter 2: 4,176,018

Quarter 3: 3,666,041

#### Abington Street Footfall 2014/2015

Quarter 1: 2,550,771

Quarter 2: 2,726,476

Quarter 3: 2,055,213

### **Response**

Town centre footfall is indeed increasing. In 2013 the recorded footfall figure was 14,125,324. In 2014 the recorded footfall figure was 14,476,969. There was therefore an increase of 351,645 between the two years.

An in-year comparison between quarters does not give an indication of whether footfall figures are increasing or decreasing. Some times of year are always busy, other times are less so. The more sensible comparison, if one wishes to look at quarters, would be to make a year on year quarterly comparison, as provided below:

	2013	2014
Jan – Mar	2,845,239	2,739,721
Apr – Jun	3,912,997	3,895,189
Jul – Sep	4,002,676	4,176,018
Oct – Dec	3,364,412	3,666,041
Total	14,125,324	14,476,969

**Councillor David Mackintosh**  
**Leader of the Council**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015**

### **Question 6**

#### **Question to Councillor Mackintosh from Councillor Marriott**

Would the Leader explain what the Borough Council is doing to assist the police in tackling the local increase in violent crime?

#### ***Response***

NBC continues to enjoy a close working relationship with the Police on all matter relating to Community Safety. In order to address issues of violent crime a number of pieces of work are being undertaken in partnership with a range of agencies:

- Multi-Agency Town Centre Task group that looks at, and provides a joint response to issues such as Street Drinkers and Legal Highs
- Joint agency visits to licensed premises
- Taking swift action against those licenced premises that are connected to violent incidents
- Establishment of School Pastors at The Academy, rolling out to other schools over the next 12 months
- Funding of specific domestic abuse projects ranging from support and counselling for victims, to counselling and engagement with perpetrators to address their behaviour.
- Target Hardening of properties for victims of domestic abuse
- Currently reviewing new ASB legislation in order to address ASB that can lead to violent crime
- Partnership Strategic Assessment for 2014/15 is focussing on Violent Crime and specifically perpetrators. This will inform the activities and service delivery of the Community Safety Partnership for 2015/16
- NBC Overview & Scrutiny are also undertaking a of domestic abuse in order to review and inform its future responses

**Councillor David Mackintosh**  
**Leader of the Council**



## Report of the Leader of the Council

### Northampton Borough Council

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

#### **Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

Since taking control of the Borough Council in 2011, one of this Administration's main priorities has been the economic regeneration of Northampton. Working with a number of partner organisations, this Administration has attracted many millions of pounds of inward investment, supported hundreds of businesses and created over a thousand jobs for local people.

In 2012 we set up the Northampton Alive programme to guide the regeneration of our town working with our partners. To date the project has delivered a new railway station, new bus station, the St Johns student accommodation, the new innovation centre, the reopening of Abington Street to traffic, the heritage gateway, cultural quarter and the boot and shoe quarter and the expansion of facilities at our towns three major sports clubs.

The Government awarded Northampton an Enterprise Zone in 2011, which has been an important tool for attracting inward investment and creating new jobs.

This Administration has given support to local businesses through our Business Incentive Scheme, by lowering market rents by 25% and introducing free parking in the town centre, which has increased the number of visitors by 40%.

We have also helped major employers such as Carlsberg, Cosworth and Churches Shoes to expand and create more jobs in our town and cement their relationship with Northampton, and Cllr Tim Hadland and I were pleased to welcome the Prime Minister, David Cameron, and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, to the Enterprise Zone on 18th February, where we visited Cosworth to show how the Council has helped attract extra investment and create new jobs.

#### **Finance**

In 2011 we pledged to cut waste at the Borough Council, to reduce senior management, invest more in front line services and to freeze Council Tax. This Administration believes that public money is precious, and that a well-run and efficient council benefits all residents.

In June 2013 the Borough Council entered into an agreement with Local Government Shared Services to combine back office functions with other authorities and save Northampton's tax payers £9.5 million over five years.

Under the previous administration this authority became overloaded with expensive senior management, diverting money away from front line services. Over the last four years this Administration has reduced the number of senior managers from 21 to 10, in the process freeing up around £850,000 to be reinvested in front line services.



These savings have meant that for the last four years this Administration has not increased its share of Council Tax, relieving the burden on local tax payers and making more money for front line services.

I am grateful to Cllr Alan Bottwood for presenting four budgets to Council which have prioritised frontline services, protected services and have not increased Council Tax to help hardworking people.

### **Community Engagement**

The Administration has worked hard to empower communities and make Northampton a great place to live, play and do business. Through the diverse community events we have celebrated Northampton's history and talent and also created some new set-piece events including the Alive at Delapre concerts. Cllr Brandon Eldred has played an active role in ensuring the Council has engaged with the communities and we have a proud record over the last four years of events which have brought tens of thousands of people into the town and enjoyment to many.

The Administration also helped the town to celebrate the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games with the Olympic Torch passing through the town - a truly historic day. The Council has also empowered our communities with new parish councils and transferred the management of our Community Centres to a range of community organisations.

The Councillor Community Fund has also been an effective tool to help councillors engage with communities and support community events and the Administration is proud to have introduced this and to have helped hundreds of organisations in the town.

The Administration also introduced the Armed Forces Community Covenant for Northampton in March 2013 and I was proud to sign this historic document to recognise the important role played by our Armed Forces and to make a formal commitment to mark annual events like the annual Armed Forces Day in June and Remembrance Sunday in November and to support serving members, veterans and their families through services provided by the Council and partners.

### **Housing**

The Administration undertook the largest consultation exercise with tenants during the Housing Stock Options review in recent history which resulted in the creation of the Arms Length Management Organisation, Northampton Partnership Homes. I was very proud, alongside Cllr Mary Markham, to officially hand over the keys to the Council's housing stock in January and we will both watch with pride as the organisation grows and develops in future years.

The last four years have also seen major changes in Housing with new policies and ways of working plus a new partnership approach with the opening of Oasis House. I am proud to have become a Patron of The Hope Centre and have seen first-hand the important work undertaken by all of the partnership agencies and, although only for one night each year, Cllr Mary Markham and I have slept rough to raise money and awareness of homelessness and we are both proud of the work done at Oasis House.

The Administration has worked hard to address the negative impacts and concerns with the introduction of Houses of Multiple Occupation in residential areas, which was a key priority for the election. Since May 2011, the Administration has introduced an online register of HMOs, new rules on the conversion of properties, additional licensing and a Landlords Forum to work with landlords who understand and follow the rules.

### **Environment**

This Administration was elected with a pledge to bring back Neighbourhood Wardens and to introduce Park Rangers. The Administration has invested over £250,000 additionally to the Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Ranger schemes and there are now 15 Neighbourhood Wardens and 6 Park Rangers.

Over £14 million has also been invested in our parks and green spaces since the Administration took control in 2011.

The Administration has also needed to address a number of challenges within the Enterprise contract during the last four years which was inherited by the Liberal Democrat administration. They signed the contract on 20th April 2011 and it began in June 2011.

Cllr Mike Hallam has ably chaired the Northampton in Bloom committee which has enhanced the town with the floral displays and brought partnerships together to improve the town. The Administration has remained committed to the Bloom programme and has sought to involve more schools, businesses, community organisations and neighbourhoods in the annual competition. The Administration has also extended the flower displays to Winter in Bloom and Spring into Bloom, as well as the traditional summer flowers.

### **Community Safety**

The Community Safety Partnership continues to be the best forum for partnership working between the authorities and the Police, and has helped to deliver many schemes that have enhanced community wellbeing across Northampton.

The Administration has also worked proactively with Community Payback to promote schemes through the Probation Service, and to publicise the work to show restorative justice being done in our town.

It was an unexpected honour to suddenly find myself elected as Leader of the Council in 2011 but it is a job I have enjoyed to take forward the town where I was born, grew up and which I love. The last four years have been both challenging and rewarding and I believe we have left the town and this Council better than we inherited.

I would like to put on record my thanks and appreciation to my Cabinet and to Cllr John Caswell and Cllr Mary Markham who both served as my Deputy Leader. The Cabinet have all played important roles in supporting the work of the Administration and taking forward our policies and so much has been achieved due to their hard work, commitment and ability to get things done. The Assistant Cabinet members have been an important support too in helping with the large workload which comes with an Administration seeking to effect big changes and make a difference.

I would also like to thank all members of the Conservative Group for their support and steadfast approach to improving the town and in taking some of the difficult decisions required when in administration.

The officers and directors across the Council have all coped with massive change and transformation over the last four years and have ably supported the work of the Administration with all the challenges we have faced which have included restructuring the Council to share the back office with LGSS, create the Northampton Partnership Homes Arms Length Management Organisation and reduce the number of senior managers whilst maintaining frontline services and delivering the largest regeneration programme in a generation.

I have been constantly impressed by the level of public service and commitment I have seen from the officers at the Council and, where that commitment was lacking, they left. The team at Northampton Borough Council now, I believe, is best equipped to support councillors in taking forward the authority and to cope with the challenges and opportunities which I am sure lie ahead for Northampton.

The Council plays a massive role in the town alongside a large number of partner organisations, businesses and voluntary sector groups. I have met many people over the last four years and seen how many great things happening across the town. Sometimes there have been challenges and sometimes it has been difficult, but it has been a pleasure to work alongside so many great people who have constantly reminded me why I love Northampton.

None of us know what the future will bring and there are elections ahead where I hope to take up new responsibilities but I remain committed to serve the people of Northampton and the town I love, and I know that the town's best days are still yet to come.

**Councillor David Mackintosh**  
Leader of the Council



## Cabinet Member Report for Housing

### Northampton Borough Council

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

#### **Housing Stock Options Review**

The Administration was elected with a manifesto commitment to explore the options for the future of the town's Council housing. The Housing Stock Options Review process was started in April 2012 to look at the potential options for the future ownership, funding and management of its Housing Stock, to examine which option would best deliver long term improvements needed to both homes and estates as well as improve the quality of services provided to its tenants.

Following the introduction of self-financing, in line with best practice, the Council produced a 30 year business plan which was approved by Cabinet on 24th January 2012. This first business plan, developed under the new self-financing rules, was used as the starting point for the financial analysis undertaken during the Housing Stock Options Review.

The engagement structure in the Review consisted of a Tenants' Panel, an Employee Focus Group, and a Housing Options Panel. The Tenants' Panel was also supported by its own Independent Tenants' Adviser.

The Housing Options Panel was made up of 5 tenants who were on the Tenants' Panel, 5 employees from the Employee Focus Group and 5 Councillors with representation from the three main political parties. The tenants and employees who sat on the Housing Options Panel were elected by members of their respective groups. The Housing Options Panel examined the key issues in the Review and functioned in a decision making capacity.

All tenants were kept informed of the process and were able to attend a number of events held throughout the process. Tenants were actively encouraged to participate by joining the Tenants' Panel, attend Area meetings, a tenant open day in July 2012 and Tenant Conferences held in December 2012, May 2013 and November 2013. Newsletters published by the Council and the Independent Tenants' Adviser were also sent to all tenants periodically throughout the Review.

Following the gathering of key evidence, the Employee Focus Group, the Tenants' Panel and the Housing Options Panel members were supported to assess five options to see which ones could best meet the Mission Statement goals for the Review. The result of this was that both the Employee Focus Group and the Tenants' Panel selected the establishment of an Arms Length Management Organisation to manage the Council's housing stock as being the option that most closely met the desired outcomes of the review. This was endorsed by Full Council on 9th December 2013 with cross party support.

I would like to thank all tenants, employees and councillors who took part in the Housing Stock Options Review and the officers involved in this process. It was a long but necessary process that required significant commitment from everyone involved which I am sure is what helped us to achieve the positive outcome in setting up the Arms

Length Management Organisation, known as Northampton Partnership Homes, which started work in January,

### **Northampton Partnership Homes**

Since its launch earlier this year, the Administration has worked closely with Northampton Partnership Homes as the ALMO has started to take shape. The Leader and I were very pleased to officially hand over the keys to the Council's housing stock in January and we will both watch with pride as the organisation grows and develops in future years.

### **Decent Homes**

The Decent Homes programme has carried out improvements to 5,392 homes with an investment of £49.6 million that has helped improve the lives of thousands of tenants and their quality of life across Northampton and the programme will be complete later this month.

### **Allocations Policy**

The Administration reviewed the Council's Allocations Policy in January 2013 to take into account changes in national legislation but also to incorporate other Council policies like the Administration's commitment to the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

The Armed Forces Covenant for Northampton was agreed in October 2012 and, under the Allocations Policy, service personnel, veterans and their families now have the following benefits:

- Members of the Armed Forces are placed at the top of the priority list for Government-funded home ownership schemes
- Former personnel with urgent housing needs are always given high priority for social housing, and personnel who move from base-to-base will not lose their housing qualification rights
- The Council will work with specialist agencies to prevent homelessness amongst ex-service personnel
- The Council will provide Disabled Facilities Grant funding for home adaptations to help disabled service personnel to live independently

A revised version of the Allocations Policy came into effect on 1st December 2013.

### **Housing Revenue Account**

Changes to the national financing for Council housing were complete in April 2012 which resulted in a Council buy-out of the Housing Revenue Account. As a result the Council now self-finances its stock of social housing and retains the rental income collected each year. Since January 2015, the housing stock is now managed by Northampton Partnership Homes, the Arms Length Management Organisation.

### **Homelessness**

Oasis House opened in May 2012 and was officially opened by HRH The Duke of Gloucester on 3rd October 2013. The facility is a partnership between the Council and Midland Heart and consists of 48 accommodation units including 39 self-contained apartments, nine emergency units and four have dog kennels attached. There is also accommodation at Acorn House and the day-time drop in facilities at the Hope Centre.

The scheme also includes the base for Northampton Association for Accommodation for Single Homeless (NAASH), a day centre, IT suite, arts and crafts centre, housing advice service and training facilities.

Since it opened, the Gateway Service has been providing help and assistance to single homeless people at Oasis House and assesses all prospective tenants at Oasis House.

The Council and NAASH were awarded £226,000 in January 2012 for three years for the No Second Night Out project to reduce rough sleeping in Northampton through partnership and personalised engagement.

### **Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

The Administration was elected with a mandate to address the negative impacts and concerns around the conversion of family homes in residential areas to Houses of Multiple Occupation. Since May 2011, the Administration has introduced an online register of HMOs and introduced new rules on the conversion of properties,

On 9th April 2014, Cabinet agreed to introduce additional licensing for Houses of Multiple Occupation in Abington, Castle, Kingsley, Delapre & Briar Hill Kingsthorpe, Obelisk, part of Phippsville, Semilong, Spring Park, part of St James, St David's, Sunnyside and Trinity. The additional licensing has been introduced to help protect tenants from unscrupulous landlords by bringing smaller properties into the licensing regime that are currently not included.

The changes give greater protection to tenants, as well as making landlords accountable for the effect their property and tenants have on the local area. This covers anti-social behaviour such as noise, putting too many refuse bags out or blocking up parking spaces in the street. It is an opportunity to set standards that protect tenants and neighbours by making more landlords responsible for the appearance of their property, stopping overcrowding of properties and making sure repairs work is completed.

The Administration has also pledged to consult on the possibility of extending the scheme to other parts of the town in the future. This Administration supports and welcomes responsible landlords in our town, and is committed to protecting tenants from landlords who fall below the standards expected.

### **Disabled Facilities Grants**

The provision of Disabled Facilities Grant has remained a commitment for the Administration. £9.8 million has been invested since May 2011 to help in over 1,300 properties to support people to remain in their homes despite their disability.

### **Sheltered Housing**

This Administration recognises the importance of sheltered housing and the role it plays in protecting some of our most vulnerable residents. A Sheltered Housing Services and Operational Review is currently underway which is consulting with tenants and partners and surveying housing stock to make sure we can provide high quality service and accommodation for sheltered housing residents for years to come.

### **Call Care**

The Call Care service celebrated its 25th anniversary in May 2012 which continues to give 7,500 elderly and vulnerable residents support, peace of mind and continued independence. The Call Care service is operated by the Council 365 days a year, 24 hours a day and, in October 2013, the service was relocated from Exeter Place to the

third floor of The Guildhall. As well as substantially reducing the accommodation costs of the team, this also released four flats to be reinstated to the housing stock for much needed tenancies. The Administration remains committed to the Call Care service provision across Northampton.

### **New Council Homes**

On 12th March 2014, Cabinet agreed the decision to build 100 new council homes at Dallington Grange. The development will be the largest social housing development in Northampton for more than 20 years. This major development will be built on land owned by the Council and will be financed by selling a parcel of land in the area or with money received from ex-council houses sold under 'Right To Buy' legislation. This Administration is committed to increasing the number of council houses available for rent, and I am pleased that we are able to provide 100 new homes for families in our town.

### **Community Energy Savings Programme**

The Council joined forces with energy company EON in March 2012 to improve the energy efficiency of over 2,500 Council properties and help private householders save energy and money. Householders qualifying for the scheme could save up to £300 a year on their fuel bills through a series of energy saving measures that included external wall insulation, loft insulation, new boilers and solar panels.

### **Northampton Energy Saving Service**

Northamptonshire Energy Saving Service (NESS) was one of the winners in the 2013 Green Apple Awards competition. This is in recognition of companies, councils and communities carrying out projects that enhance the environment. The housing service played a huge part in this process by initiating the idea and successfully securing funding to develop the service. The Council developed partnerships with the Community Law Service, Care & Repair, the Citizens Advice Bureau, Workbridge - St Andrews Healthcare, the Flourish Partnership and the County Council. The partnership delivers frontline energy efficiency and benefit update advice across the borough and to date have helped over 6,000 residents keep warm and out of fuel poverty.

### **Right To Buy**

The Administration has supported the Right To Buy options for tenants and, since May 2011, 174 houses and 62 flats have been bought by tenants. The Right To Buy option remains available to eligible tenants that have transferred to the management of Northampton Partnership Homes and the Council will continue to promote the scheme.

### **Fraud Initiative**

The Administration has taken a hard line on fraud issues that have been uncovered and the Housing Services, in partnership with the Fraud Team, launched a new safeguarding process for tenancy allocations in July 2013, following a successful pilot exercise. The pilot found that one in seven cases investigated were not eligible for social housing and others had adjustments to benefits and single person discounts removed from Council Tax liabilities. The new safeguarding process will allow cases of high risk to be referred for verification checking, including credit search and home visits to ensure that we prioritise for those people in real need of our help, and not those seeking to play the system.

### **Empty Homes Programme**

In 2012 the Council was awarded £1.9 million government funding from the Empty Homes scheme, which aims to put more homes that have been empty for six months or longer, back onto the property market. The programme aims to help meet the demand

for affordable housing, enabling the Council to lease empty homes from their owners and help house those on the waiting list. Owners who take part in the scheme receive an interest free loan to help with the initial refurbishment costs and the continued maintenance of the property, both of which will be carried out by the Council. By bringing empty homes back into use, it contributes to the housing supply to meet local needs and help tackle homelessness. This scheme also prevents neighbourhood decline and regenerates areas, helping to improve the environment that people live in.

I am incredibly proud to have worked with a fantastic team in the Housing Department and to have worked alongside the tenants we serve. I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to work as the Cabinet member for Housing and as Deputy Leader of the Council. I would like to thank Cllr Stephen Hibbert and Cllr Matt Lynch who have both served as my Assistant Cabinet member during this time.

**Councillor Mary Markham**  
**Cabinet Member for Housing**





## Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning

Northampton Borough Council

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

### **Regeneration**

The economic and physical regeneration of Northampton was one of this Administration's key priorities on taking control of the Borough Council in 2011. All of the projects below have benefitted the residents of Northampton by generating inward investment, improving skills, modernising transportation links, creating more incentives for people to visit and generally supporting business in our town to create jobs and a thriving local economy.

### **Project Angel**

Plans were approved in May 2014 to transform derelict land in the heart of Northampton into a new iconic headquarters and office building for Northamptonshire County Council, saving tax payers millions of pounds and generating a massive cash injection to the town centre economy. The building is due to open in autumn 2016 and bring 2,000 workers back into the town centre and the sod cutting ceremony took place on 10th February.

### **University of Northampton**

In 2012, the University of Northampton announced plans to build a new single-site campus in the Enterprise Zone to capitalise on the links with research and innovation in technology. Plans were approved in July 2014 and the new campus is due to open in 2018.

Work commenced in December 2013 on a new Innovation Centre opposite the Railway Station which will provide premises for up to 60 small and start-up businesses and enhance the Enterprise Zone offer for the town. The Innovation Centre will open this spring.

In March 2014 the new Halls of Residence opened at St John's bringing 464 students to live in the town centre and making Northampton a true University town

### **Sixfields**

The Administration worked with Northampton Town Football Club to facilitate the redevelopment of Sixfields Stadium and the surrounding area with a £12 million loan deal which was announced in July 2013. The planning application was agreed in October 2013 and work on the new Stadium started in June 2014. A further planning application for 255 new homes, a 100 bed hotel and retail units was agreed in December 2014 and the development work will be underway soon.

In September 2013, a new deal was announced by the Council working with Moulton College and the Rugby and Northampton Athletics Club to secure a new home for the town's athletics club due to the redevelopment at Sixfields. The deal sees the club move to Moulton College's campus to enjoy all the benefits of state of the art facilities to support the athletes train and compete. The new athletics track planning application was agreed in October 2014 by Daventry District Council and the sod cutting ceremony took place on 21st January.

### **Franklin's Gardens**

A £5 million loan to the Rugby Club was agreed in July 2013 and plans for the extension of Franklin's Gardens were approved in January 2014. Work to expand the North Stand, to be known as the Barwell Stand, will take place later this year during the summer and will expand capacity to 15,500.

### **Church's Shoes**

The Council supported Church's Shoes to enable the expansion of their factory in St James. The Council worked closely with the Homes & Communities Agency and private landowners to assemble a 4.5-acre site adjacent to the company's headquarters and allow Church's Shoes to move forward with the new facility which will create 140 new skilled jobs at the heart of the Enterprise Zone.

### **Carlsberg**

In January 2012, Carlsberg announced the £20 million extension of its bottling plant, which was officially opened in March 2013 and created 30 new jobs.

### **Grosvenor Centre**

It was disappointing that Legal & General did not take forward plans to expand the Grosvenor Centre so this Administration terminated the Council's agreement with them in July 2014 to allow new proposals for the Greyfriars site to proceed. The closure of House of Fraser was a big loss to the Centre, but the Administration welcomed the investment by Legal & General in refurbishing the current centre with new toilets, the refurbishment of Boots plus the opening of the new Next and Primark stores.

### **Greyfriars Demolition**

Work to demolish Greyfriars bus station began in March 2014 after the opening of the new North Gate Bus Station. The site was secured and fenced while a detailed demolition and site clearance programme took place. The physical demolition of the building will take place on 15th March.

### **North Gate Bus Station**

The new North Gate Bus Station opened in March 2014. The project was completed on time and on budget, and provides a facility to give visitors arriving by bus a suitable welcome to our town.

### **Castle Railway Station**

The new Northampton Castle Railway Station began operation on 12th January 2014 with a visit by the Transport Secretary. Through effective lobbying by the Leader and Brian Binley MP, £10 million of Government funding was secured towards the £20 million redevelopment of Northampton Castle Railway Station to create an impressive new gateway to the town and the Enterprise Zone. Other partners, including Network Rail and Northamptonshire County Council, funded the remainder of the development costs.

Phase two of the new facility is currently underway and will see the demolition of the old station buildings and construction of a new multi-storey car park, making way for development of the rest of the station site. The new car park will have at least 1,300 spaces, around 350 more than are currently available, and there will also be a lift and bridge, offering passengers direct access to the ticket floor of the station. Once this is complete, the old car park will be removed ready for start on phase three, which will see construction of commercial and light industrial properties.

### **Heritage Gateway**

The Administration is working with Northamptonshire County Council on long-term proposals to develop Marefair as an historic gateway to the town centre. The improvements would celebrate Northampton's medieval heritage, including its former castle and tell the story of Northampton's historic past.

### **Cosworth**

The Council helped world famous high performance technology specialists Cosworth to expand their existing operations to increase their engine assembly and manufacturing capacity. The new £12 million Advanced Manufacturing Centre is the first of its kind in the UK and will manufacture components and assemble some of the world's most advanced engines to global automotive manufacturers. The new state-of-the-art 38,000ft<sup>2</sup> facility represents the next phase in a period of growth and development for Cosworth with support and backing from the Borough Council, South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership and the Department for Communities and Local Government. The project has created 70 new jobs and apprenticeships in the Enterprise Zone.

### **Abington Street Open to Traffic**

In December 2014, work completed to open up the middle section of Abington Street to allow one way traffic from St Giles Terrace along Abington Street to Wellington Street, providing parking and dropping off points for businesses and shoppers, and increase footfall to help local traders.

### **Skatepark**

Northampton Radlands Plaza skatepark opened in July 2012 and soon became one of the town's most popular attractions over the summer. Radlands Plaza quickly became recognised as one of the best skateparks in the UK, with hundreds of people of all ages visiting every week. The Outpost Café was opened there in August 2013.

### **Cycle CoNNeCT**

Northampton's bicycle hire scheme was launched in July 2014 to create a low cost, convenient and sustainable way to travel about the town. The scheme was set up by the Council in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council and highways service provider MGWSP, the Brackmills Business Improvement District and the University of Northampton. The £150,000 initiative initially provided 50 bikes for public hire from 10 docking sites around the borough with the first 30 minutes of cycling are free, with every additional hour of use costing £1 up to a maximum of £5 per day.

### **Albion Place Hotel**

Whitbread, Premier Inn's parent company, announced plans in January 2013 for a new 104-bedroom Premier Inn hotel and restaurant at Albion Place, which sits within the Enterprise Zone and the town's Cultural Quarter. The new hotel and restaurant will be developed on Council owned land and will create 50 new jobs on opening. Given its proximity to nearby theatres, cinema and shops, this will contribute to the regeneration of the area.

### **The Ark Restaurant**

In September 2014, The Ark restaurant opened to provide a unique new addition to the range of food offers in the town. The floating restaurant was launched on the River Nene at Midsummer Meadow under a deal agreed with the Council.

## **Delapre Abbey**

Restoration of this 900 year old historical site has been made possible by funding from the Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage and it was designated as the Council's top heritage priority by the Administration. It will provide a Visitor Centre, tours and exhibitions, plus space for functions such as conferences and weddings. A new Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust has been established and regular meetings are held with the Heritage Lottery Fund working closely with the Friends of Delapre Abbey.

The historic bell tower and clock at Delapre Abbey were lifted back into place on the roof of the stable block in March 2012 following a full restoration programme to put the clock back into working order for the first time in 20 years. The roofing work was carried out by local company Moulton Roofing, while the restoration of the clock and wind vane has been undertaken by specialist company.

Work was carried out on a £400,000 project in April 2014 to urgently repairs to the roof of Delapre Abbey. The project was jointly funded by the Borough Council and English Heritage, and was essential to prevent leaks into the building that has caused damage to the interior of the abbey. At the same time structural repairs were also carried out to the north wing of the building. A £200,000 grant was awarded from English Heritage's Historic Buildings, Monuments and Designed Landscapes Scheme. English Heritage makes this funding available for conserving and restoring the country's most significant historic assets. This Administration also committed £200,000 to the project to preserve this much loved treasure.

The Contractor, Robert Woodhead was appointed in December 2014 with construction set to start on site shortly. The future provision of a refreshment facility has been secured after agreement in September 2014 between Northampton Borough Council and the Friends of Delapre Abbey. The new permanent location will be within the 19th century stable block and this received planning permission in December 2014.

## **St Edmund's**

The Council continues to work closely with the developers of the St Edmund's hospital and the proposals they are currently putting together to redevelop the site for specialised care use represent the best opportunity of bringing this key site back into use, which is something we are all want to see.

## **Cultural Quarter**

The Errol Flynn Filmhouse art house cinema opened in June 2013. The 90-seat venue hosts the very best in world, independent, British and mainstream film, broadening the range of films available to view in the town and is a valuable part of the Cultural Quarter.

In June 2014, Cabinet approved plans for a new £6.5 million creative hub in the Vulcan Works building on Guildhall Road with the creation of 240 jobs and bring an old building back into use. The grade-II listed building was commissioned in the late nineteenth century by Henry Mobbs & Co to manufacture boot and shoe-making machinery. The plans will transform the site into an incubator for creative firms and offer space for 70 businesses. Planning permission was approved in January 2015 and funding was announced through the SEMLEP Local Growth Deal from Government the next day.

In December 2014, work was completed to improve Guildhall Road to widen the pavements, allowing space for outdoor café tables and street entertainment. There are now parking spaces on both sides of the road and more spaces will be created in the lower part of Guildhall Road with trees and other planting will enhance the area at the heart of the Cultural Quarter.

In June 2014 the Administration first announced plans for the Boot and Shoe Quarter. The 'historic core' of Northampton's boot and shoe industry in the Mounts area has been recognised by designated signs to mark its boundary, and work has been done to encourage the development of independent businesses, arts and activities in the area.

### **Boutique Hotel**

On 17th February the Borough Council's Planning Committee approved plans for a new boutique hotel at 13 Guildhall Road. The hotel is expected to incorporate 13 luxurious double rooms, a café, serving hotel guests and other visitors, and an Indian restaurant. Northampton has needed a facility like this for some time, and it will be a wonderful addition to our Cultural Quarter.

### **Enterprise Zone**

In August 2011 Northampton was awarded an Enterprise Zone by the Government. Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone is a major asset that has allowed us to attract millions of pounds of inward investment and create hundreds of new jobs in our town.

### **Free Car Parking**

The Administration was elected with a manifesto commitment to provide free parking as an incentive to bring people back into the town centre and support local businesses. The Administration introduced an hour of free parking in October 2011 and, in April 2014, the four multi-storey car parks at St John's, St Michael's, Mayorhold and the Grosvenor Centre were designated as free on Saturdays and Sundays and for two hours on week days. Since then April 2014, the number of cars has increased by 40% with footfall increasing by 400,000. Parking remains free on Sundays and bank holidays in all Borough Council car parks.

Six state-of-the-art electronic traffic information signs were also installed around the town centre during December 2013 to provide parking details for drivers coming into the town centre and make it easier for shoppers to find their way to our premier car parks and take advantage of our free parking offers.

### **Business Improvement Districts**

The Administration has worked closely with the Town Centre Business Improvement District and the Brackmills Business Improvement District which have helped with investment and events in the town centre and to improve the Brackmills Industrial Estate. Following the renewal by businesses in March 2014, the Council will continue to work constructively with the Brackmills BID and will work with the Town Centre BID on their renewal plans for the ballot later this year.

### **Market Advisory Group**

The Administration set up the independent Market Advisory Group to look at ways to improve the vitality of the Town's historic market.

In October 2013, the Administration reduced rents for Market Square traders by 25 per cent. This move was in response to a call for more support for traders which came from the independent Market Advisory Group.

I would like to put on record my thanks to Raymond Everall, Dick Roberts and David Rudd who served as independent Chairs of the Market Advisory Group, and their work to help support the traders.

### **Business Incentive Scheme**

In April 2014, the Council launched a Business Incentive Scheme to support local businesses to help fill empty properties and support small businesses through a range of grants. The scheme has awarded over £380,000 in grants, which has unlocked more than £1.7 million in private investment and helped to create 168 new jobs and brought business units and empty shops in the town back into use. In addition, the new Business Rate Rebate scheme gave qualifying retail businesses up to £1,000 in Business Rate Relief.

### **National Recognition**

In March 2014, Northampton was named top for business according to the finance data specialist Experian. The key criteria measured were number of start-ups, rate of insolvencies, level of financial health and business turnover. Northampton was the only place in the country to achieve a score as high as 19 and the town achieved top marks for turnover, start-up and insolvency rates and dropped just one point for financial strength.

In June 2014 Northampton was recognised as being among the best places for supporting entrepreneurs and innovators with more small and medium sized businesses being set up here than almost anywhere else in the country. A government think-tank has placed Northampton as being one of the top ten places in the UK for new small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and also one of the top ten places where SMEs are successfully adopting high-growth strategies.

The Centre for Cities published its 'Small Business Outlook 2014' looking at the strength and performance of SMEs, which are a vital part of the national economic recovery. Northampton has one of the highest levels of new SMEs as more and more entrepreneurs take advantage of the benefits of beginning their new business in Northampton. The report also shows how more of our town's SMEs are also using high-growth strategies compared to other areas. This describes businesses that aim for quality rather than price, or deliver highly customised or bespoke products and services.

The latest Cities Outlook report from Centre for Cities ranks Northampton as one of the best places in the country for new business start-ups. It identifies that there were around 1,440 new businesses launched in the borough during 2013, placing it at number three in the UK.

The last four years has seen huge change throughout the town and massive regeneration programmes and it has been a delight to serve as the Cabinet member at the heart of it all. I would like to thank my Assistant Cabinet member, Jonathan Nunn, for his work throughout the last four years and especially his commitment to the Market Advisory Group.

### **Councillor Tim Hadland**

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning



## Cabinet Member Report for Community Engagement

Northampton Borough Council

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

### **Councillor Community Fund**

The Councillor Community Fund was introduced by the Administration in April 2012 to provide £3,000 per year to each councillor to allocate to community organisations or projects. Over 600 applications were received and over £374,000 of funding was allocated by councillors.

The Councillor Community Fund has been a popular scheme and has enabled individual councillors to direct thousands of pounds of funding where it will do the most good in their communities or to support community events.

### **Partnership Grants**

During the last four years, the Administration has allocated a total budget of £2.2 million has been awarded in Partnership Grants to 96 community and voluntary groups. The small grants process is administered by the Northamptonshire Community Foundation on behalf of the Borough Council and 58 projects have benefited from the scheme with £100,000 a year in small grants.

### **Forums**

The Administration has strongly supported the Forums to allow for public engagement and involvement with the work of the Borough Council.

I am grateful for the work undertaken by the Disabled People's Forum; the Diverse Communities Forum; the LGBTQ Forum which has continued to mark the annual International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia and, since 2013, has also marked International Coming Out Day; the Pensioners' Forum; and the Women's Forum which was introduced by the Administration in 2012 and has marked International Women's Day since 2013 and also introduced the annual Inspirational Woman of the Year Award; and the Youth Forum which won the National Diversity Award in 2012.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the co-chairs of the Forums – Cllr Phil Larratt and Mr Martin De Rosario (Disabled People's Forum), Cllr Christopher Malpas and Mr John Rawlings (Diverse Communities Forum), Cllr Anna King and Mr Matthew Toresen (LGBTQ Forum), Cllr Brian Oldham and Mr Roger Rumsey (Pensioners' Forum), Cllr Anna King and Ms Jane Carr (Women's Forum), and Cllr Anna King and the young people who have helped to lead the Youth Forum. Through their hard work we have seen the Forums play an active role in community life and support the work of the Council.

### **Museum Service**

Refurbishment work was carried out the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery during 2012 and to Abington Park Museum in 2014.

In April 2014, the Administration announced plans for a major expansion of the Museum building into the Old Gaol block when Northamptonshire County Council relocate staff as part of the Project Angel regeneration project. Plans were also announced for Abington Park Museum, which will focus on the building's connection with William Shakespeare and on the history of the Northamptonshire Regiments. The Council will also explore how some parts of the building, known as Abington Manor, can be used for other purposes such as conferences or weddings.

In July 2014, the Sekhemka statue sold for a record-breaking £15.7million with the Borough Council receiving around £8million which was allocated to the Museum Service for the expansion plans.

Despite the challenging financial situation, the Administration also increased the opening hours for the museums in April 2014.

### **Northampton Leisure Trust**

The Northampton Leisure Trust was set up in 2011 and remains a key partner. It received charitable status from the Charities Commission in February 2012. Under this Administration, the Borough Council has worked in partnership with the Northampton Leisure Trust to host the Northampton Sports Awards at The Guildhall, with the winners of the awards going onto the Northamptonshire County Sports Awards.

In October 2012, the Northampton Leisure Trust also took over the management of Duston Sports Centre on behalf of Duston Parish Council and supported by the Borough Council.

### **Events**

Bringing events to Northampton has helped to attract visitors to the town and support local businesses and has been a key objective for the Administration.

June 2012 marked HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and The Big Jubilee Picnic was held in Delapre Park as part of the celebrations with Union Jack bunting around the town and street parties held by local people.

In July 2012, the Olympic Torch came to Northampton ahead of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Over 45,000 people lined the streets of Northampton to watch the Torch pass through the town. Other events were held in the town as part of the Cultural Olympiad including Games Time at Delapre Park with music, video and fireworks; Godiva Awakes with a 33ft high puppet powered by 100 cyclists passed through Northampton en route to London wearing bespoke riding boots designed by Northamptonshire boot maker, Horace Batten and which are now on display in the Museum; and The Lionheart Project saw three giant hand crocheted lions displayed on the Market Square.

Christmas remains an important town for visitors to the town and businesses and the Administration has worked with businesses and partner organisations to provide a positive experience with high profile ceremonies to switch on the Christmas lights, an ice rink on the Market Square in 2012 and a German Christmas Market in 2014.

The Administration introduced the Alive at Delapre music festival in 2013 which has attracted thousands of visitors to listen to Paul Weller, The Wanted, James Morrison,



Simple Minds, a host of 80s stars and Boyzone. The event will continue in July with performances from Jessie J and Alfie Boe.

In 2013, the Borough Council saved the popular Delapre Beer Festival from cancellation by taking over the event after CAMRA announced it would be stepping down. The Borough Council ran the event for a second year last year with over 6,000 visitors and it will return again in May to be managed by Phipps Brewery and CAMRA.

In November 2014, the Administration brought back the popular Fireworks Display to the town with a fantastic display on Midsummer Meadow attended by 18,000 people.

The Administration also brought back the popular St Crispin's Fair in October 2012 which is now an annual fixture on the town's events calendar and increased to four days in 2014. The fair attracts thousands of families into the town centre and Market Square and received positive feedback from the public and businesses.

In May 2014, Northampton hosted the first ever Women's Cycling Tour in the town centre which attracted thousands of visitors.

The Administration introduced the On The Waterfront festival in Becket's Park in 2013 which included a big screen showing of Andy Murray's win at Wimbledon and, in 2014, included the town's first outdoor film festival allowing families to watch a free line-up of films including Disney's "Frozen", "Mamma Mia", "Despicable Me 2" and "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs".

To mark fifty years of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, the Administration introduced the Grand Prix Experience in 2014 including pit stop challenges, race driving simulators and stands from the Mercedes Formula 1 team, Silverstone Race Track and the Richard Sanders Group.

Other annual events remain important parts of the town's calendar including Remembrance Sunday, the Diwali lights procession with the Indian Hindu Welfare Organisation, Holocaust Memorial Day, events to mark World AIDS Day and the Heritage Open Weekend. Earlier this month we also introduced events to mark Chinese New Year.

The Bands in the Park season in Abington Park remains an important focus for the Administration and the season now runs from April until September with a vast range of popular bands which help to attract people to the park, and the Administration remains committed to continuing this programme.

### **Tourism**

The Administration introduced the Love Northampton website in February 2012 with a website dedicated to promoting events and venues across the town. Since its launch, the Love Northampton website has helped to promote over 2,000 events at around 100 venues and has also supported over 450 shops, businesses and restaurants across the town.

In February 2013, the Love Northampton tourist guide was published supported by sponsorship from local businesses. It proved popular and was republished in 2014 and 2015. In January we also launched the Love Northampton smart phone app and last

month we hosted a Love Northampton event on Valentine's Day at The Guildhall to showcase local businesses in Northampton.

### **Armed Forces Community Covenant**

The Armed Forces Community Covenant for Northampton was introduced by the Administration in March 2013 and was signed by a number of partner organisations to recognise the important role played by our Armed Forces. The Community Covenant includes a commitment to mark important events like the annual Armed Forces Day in June and Remembrance Sunday in November but also to support serving members, veterans and their families through services provided by the Council and partners.

On 23rd June 2013, the Borough Council joined with The Royal British Legion and the Korean Veteran's Association to hold a drumhead service of commemoration and dedication at the Abington Square War Memorial to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the armistice of the Korean War. The ceremony also included the unveiling of a new memorial to all those who have died on active service and through terrorism from Northampton since 1945.

The seventieth anniversary of the D-Day landings in June 2014 was marked with a drumhead service at the Abington Square War Memorial, followed by a parade back to The Guildhall.

In August 2014, the centenary of the start of the First World War was marked with a series of events. The opening of a major exhibition at the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, "A Shoemaker Goes to War" started a weekend of commemorations including a Service of Commemoration at All Saints' Church and a candlelit vigil at 10pm on 4th August 2014 to mark the moment that lights went out across Europe.

### **One Stop Shop**

The One Stop Shop remains an important focus of providing front line support and advice to people and the Administration has continued to enhance and improve the services and support available by working with partners and by making space available.

An enquiry desk for Northamptonshire Police was introduced to the One Stop Shop in February 2014 as an opportunity to bring together services offered by the Police and the Borough Council.

In April 2014, the Borough Council joined with the not-for-profit financial co-operative, the Northamptonshire Credit Union, to open a new access and information point at the One Stop Shop. The new access point has allowed the Credit Union's advisors to be more accessible and to be open to the general public for longer opening hours.

### **Community Centres**

The Administration carried out a process of detailed public consultation to transfer control of the town's community centres to local voluntary and community organisations.

The following transfers took place:

- Duston Community Centre to Duston Parish Council in January 2012
- Abington Community Centre to its existing management committee in March 2012

- Alliston Gardens Community Centre to Alliston Gardens Youth and Community Centre in March 2012
- Bellinge Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in March 2012
- Briar Hill Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in March 2012
- Camp Hill Community Centre to its existing management committee in March 2012
- Kings Heath Community Centre to the Need to Know Centre Northampton in March 2012
- Kingsthorpe Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in March 2012
- Rectory Farm Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in March 2012
- Semilong Community Centre to Alliston Gardens Youth and Community Centre in March 2012
- Southfields Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in March 2012
- Spencer Dallington Community Centre to Deafconnect in March 2012
- Standens Barn Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in March 2012
- St James Community Centre to The Doddridge Centre in March 2012
- The Pastures Community Centre to its existing management committee in March 2012
- Vernon Terrace Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in March 2012
- Lodge Farm Community Centre to Community Spaces Northampton in January 2013
- Far Cotton Community Centre to its existing management committee in November 2012
- Parklands Community Centre to its existing management committee in April 2014
- Blackthorn Community Centre to Blackthorn Good Neighbours in June 2013
- Weston Favell Parish Hall to the Indian Hindu Welfare Organisation in April 2014

The Community Centres are now effective facilities for local people across the town's communities and the Borough Council has effective partnerships with all of the voluntary and community organisations running them. The transfer process has been praised nationally and the Administration worked hard to improve the situation inherited from the previous administration.

### **New Parish Councils**

A Community Governance Review was carried out throughout 2012 with local referendums being held in six communities across the Borough. People in West Hunsbury and Hunsbury Meadows voted to establish new parish councils to better represent their areas and help to decide on local services and the first elections were held in May 2013.

### **Sports Clubs**

The Administration has worked hard to build bridges with the sports clubs following the problems during the Liberal Democrat control of the Council.

The Administration now has positive relations with Northamptonshire County Cricket Club, Northampton Saints Rugby Club and Northampton Town Football Club, and all of these clubs have been able to proceed with development plans in the last four years by working constructively with the Council.

In April 2012, the three sports clubs started selling tickets from the One Stop Shop to help make it easier for people to buy tickets in the town centre.

In September 2013, the Cricket Club celebrated promotion to Division 1 and winning the Friends Life t20 Trophy with an open top bus parade through Northampton and a Civic Reception at The Guildhall.

Over 30,000 people crowded the streets of Northampton in June 2014 to celebrate The Saints' wins of the Aviva Premiership and the Amlin Challenge Cup with an open top bus parade through the town. Later this month we will also be staging a Festival of Rugby with The Saints to mark the LV= Cup final being staged at Franklin's Gardens with a wide range of activities to celebrate the game of rugby.

As part of the Administration's plans to develop Sixfields Stadium, the Council has supported the Rugby and Northampton Athletics Club to become part of the multi-million pound sports complex at Moulton College and the sod cutting ceremony took place in January.

It has been a privilege to serve as the Cabinet member for Community Engagement since 2011 and I am proud of all that has been achieved in my Department. I would also like to thank Cllr Anna King who has served as my Assistant Cabinet member since 2011 who has been a fantastic help to me.

**Councillor Brandon Eldred**  
**Cabinet member for Community Engagement**



## Cabinet Member Report for Finance

### Northampton Borough Council

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

#### **Budgets**

The Administration has worked hard during a challenging period for local authorities and the country with reductions over the last four years in central funding. Despite these challenges, the Borough Council has maintained a balanced budget and made huge investments in the town's future.

Throughout the last four years, the Administration has invested in the town's regeneration, increased the number of Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers, provided free car parking in the town centre, delivered massive regeneration projects for the town and increased the footfall and number of visitors to the town centre.

The Administration's four budgets have balanced the need to invest in the future of Northampton, to freeze Council Tax to help hardworking families and improve our Council housing stock with a need to reduce spending, reduced the number of senior managers and reduced back office costs.

#### **Shared Services**

In March 2012, the Administration announced that it had started discussions with Local Government Shared Services - the shared services partnership established by Northamptonshire County Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. An historic deal was announced on 17th October 2012 to share the back office and save £9.5m of taxpayers' money over five years.

The new partnership was approved by Full Council in May 2013 and began on 1st June 2013 with a smooth transition and 220 employees completed the TUPE transfer. The agreement sees LGSS provide back office services to the Borough Council including IT, HR, Finance, Procurement, Legal services, and Revenues and Benefits.

#### **Revenue and Benefits**

Welfare reforms over the last four years have included the benefit cap, the spare room subsidy, discretionary housing payments and the implementation of the new local Council Tax Support Scheme have been successfully managed by the Revenue and Benefits Team.

The Revenue and Benefits service won a Gold medal for the Revenues Team of the Year Award in 2013 and the Silver medal for the Excellence in Staff Development Award in 2013 in the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation. These awards reflect the service achievements to meet the ongoing demands with the collection of income and debt alongside supporting staff development.

#### **Senior Management reductions**

The Administration has kept its manifesto commitment of reducing the number of senior managers to ensure funding is prioritised to frontline services. The cost of senior management has been reduced by 50% over the last four years. Since 2011, the number of senior managers has been cut by the Administration from 21 to 10 and total pay and remuneration for senior managers has fallen from £1.68 million to around £850,000.

## **Council Tax Freeze**

The Administration has not increased the Borough Council's share of Council Tax throughout the four year term to help hardworking families in Northampton. The reductions in senior management costs and other efficiencies through shared services has meant there have been no reductions in frontline services.

## **Housing Revenue Account**

Changes to the national financing for Council housing were complete in April 2012 which resulted in a Council buy-out of the Housing Revenue Account. As a result the Council now self-finances its stock of social housing and retains the rental income collected each year. Since January 2015, the housing stock is now managed by Northampton Partnership Homes, the Arms Length Management Organisation.

## **Successorize**

The Successorize event started in 2013 and has now become an annual event to support young people to develop their skills and confidence in finding employment across Northamptonshire. Local businesses volunteer their time to support the young people with everything from interview techniques, new hairstyles and apprenticeship offers. The next Successorize event will take place on 19th and 20th March.

## **Living Wage**

In December 2014, the Administration announced that the Council will become a Living Wage Employer from April, ensuring that all directly employed staff are paid the nationally-set living wage, which is calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK and designed to provide sufficient income for a person to have a minimum acceptable standard of living.

## **Staff Terms and Conditions**

The Administration has introduced a number of changes to staff terms and conditions to achieve budget savings. Human Resources have negotiated with trade unions to successfully conclude changes including new working hours. Without making these changes, the Council would have needed to consider redundancies and 98% of staff accepted these changes.

## **Working with Local Business**

The Administration is committed to working with local Northampton businesses wherever possible. To help businesses understand how they can do business with the Borough Council directly as a main contractor or indirectly, the Borough Council has run sessions on 'How to do Business with the Council' and outlined rules around procurement to help local businesses to compete for business. This has been delivered jointly with Northampton Partnership Homes and LGSS most recently to best help businesses get involved with all aspects of the Council. The last workshop was in January and over 100 businesses attended.

The Administration also introduced a Business Incentive Scheme in April 2014 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.

The scheme has awarded over £380,000 in grants, which has unlocked more than £1.7 million in private investment and helped to create 168 new jobs and brought business units and empty shops in the town back into use.

It has been a pleasure to serve as the Cabinet member for Finance and, despite a very challenging period for local authorities, I am proud to have led a Department which has managed to maintain control of the Council's finances whilst also investing in the town's future and making strategic changes to the authority to prepare us for the future.



## Cabinet Member Report for the Environment

Northampton Borough Council

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015

### **Environmental Services**

The Administration is committed to a clean and safe Northampton and has worked hard over the last four years to address concerns raised by the public to provide an important service to local people.

The Enterprise contract was signed by the Liberal Democrat administration on 20th April 2011 and began in June 2011. The Administration has addressed a number of challenges within the Enterprise contract during the last four years. The weekly collection of recyclable material has resulted in 118,713 tonnes being collected for recycling since 2011. Food waste was introduced in January 2012 and since then 8,306 tonnes of food waste has been collected which has been diverted away from landfill.

### **Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers**

The Administration re-introduced Neighbourhood Wardens from 2011 when there were 9 wardens. There are now 15 wardens. The Administration remains committed to providing Neighbourhood Wardens across the Borough as an important frontline support to communities, and local parish councils and residents associations.

The Administration introduced Park Rangers to the town's parks and green spaces. Three Park Rangers were introduced in September 2011 and the number was increased to 4 Park Rangers in 2012. The number was further increased in 2013 and there are now 6 Park Rangers.

The Administration has invested over £250,000 additionally to the Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Ranger schemes since 2011 with a further investment planned in the next financial year.

Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Rangers have worked together with local communities to assist with clean-ups and planting days. They also have access to four wheel drive vehicles to help carry out patrols and to make them more visible.

### **Allotments**

The Administration has worked with the Northampton Allotment Association to ensure allotments are provided across the town and to address concerns that have been raised. Over the last four years this Administration has undertaken a number of works including new water tanks, repairs to internal roads, and safety and access improvements.

### **Northampton in Bloom**

The Northampton in Bloom season is always an important part of the town's calendar with flowers bringing the town to life. The Administration has remained committed to the Bloom programme and has sought to involve more schools, businesses, community organisations and neighbourhoods in the annual competition. The Administration has also extended the flower displays to Winter in Bloom and Spring into Bloom, as well as the traditional summer flowers.

The Bloom programme has always sought to reflect other events. In 2013, the programme and in 2014 the theme was “Remembrance and Celebration” to reflect the events taking place in the town including the 825th anniversary of the town’s charter and the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War. This included a floral display on St Peter’s Way supported by The Royal British Legion.

The Administration has continued to invest in Northampton in Bloom each year and was awarded first out of 62 towns, cities and villages for most improved area in 2014, and has extended the programme now through winter, spring and summer.

### **Parks and Open Spaces**

The Administration has committed massive investment in our parks and open spaces since 2011 totalling over £14million.

The improvements included refurbished aviaries in Abington Park opened in May 2012 with new bird sheds, feeding stations, breeding boxes and perches, refurbished toilets in Abington Park opened in 2012 and work was also carried out to the Bandstand in July 2011. The work was recognised with the Park winning its first prestigious Green Flag award in 2014. Delapre Park enjoyed success winning the prestigious Green Flag Award in 2013 and retaining it in 2014.

At the Racecourse the Umbrella Fair Organisation was granted a lease to take control and refurbish the Ground Floor of the Pavilion - refurbishment plans are coming along well and toilets in the Ground Floor are now open to the General Public. The tennis courts at The Racecourse, Abington Park and Becketts Park were all resurfaced in 2014.

Major improvements were also made along the riverside at Midsummer Meadow with new lighting installed in January 2015 connecting the Skatepark, The Ark restaurant and café with Becket’s Park.

In Eastfield Park, work was carried out in February 2014 to install a new pathway from Skiddaw Walk to the lake area and connect to the existing pathway to the rear of Newby Court and Lodore Gardens. As well as the new path, the plans included the addition of a new bench and litterbin at the lakeside and other general environmental improvements around the lake.

The overall investment in the town’s parks and open spaces has meant improvements to Abington Park, Becketts Park, Bradlaugh Fields, Dallington Park, Delapre Park, Errington Park, Far Cotton Recreation Ground, Kingsthorpe Recreation Ground, Lings Park, Midsummer Meadow, Thornton Park, The Racecourse, Upton Park, Victoria Park, West Hunsbury Park, Penvale Park and other green spaces across the town including new play equipment.

### **Green Flag Awards**

The Administration was committed to recognising the fantastic parks and green spaces within Northampton and is pleased that Delapre Park has retained Green Flag status and Abington Park was awarded Green Flag status for the first time in 2014.

### **Fly-tipping**

Administration has maintained a zero tolerance approach to littering and fly-tipping. During the last four years, a total of 79 fixed penalty notices were served and 30 people were prosecuted.



### **Junior Wardens**

The Junior Wardens scheme has continued to expand and has now worked across Northampton in 17 primary schools. The course, run jointly with Northamptonshire Police, allows children to get involved in activities to start them thinking about anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping and litter, health and well-being and personal safety.

### **Park Management Committees**

In keeping with a manifesto commitment, the Administration introduced Park Management Committees for Delapre Park, Abington Park, The Racecourse and Eastfield Park to allow park users and local groups to have a say in the management and future plans for the town's parks and green spaces.

### **Environmental Health**

The Administration has taken environmental health matters seriously and 96 Noise Abatement Notices have been issued since 2011..

### **Licensing**

The Licensing team has undertaken enforcement work with 229 vehicles receiving cautions, 371 vehicles were suspended until defects were rectified including 262 that were prohibited by VOSA since 2011.

The Licensing team have worked in challenging circumstances to ensure that Northampton is safe and taken prompt action, when required, to ensure the licences are properly enforced. In October 2011 we were all shocked and saddened by the tragic incident at Lava and Ignite which sadly led to the deaths of two young women. The Administration pledged that we need to learn lessons from this tragic incident and the Council will continue to work to ensure this case is properly concluded.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Christopher Malpas and members of the Licensing Committee for their help and support during my time as the Cabinet member.

### **Carbon Management**

The Council has also made significant energy savings since 2011 and the Carbon footprint has been reduced by 2,650 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> since May 2011. The savings made are as a result of energy efficiency measures that have included rationalising office space, insulating building, new LED lighting in car park, upgrading lighting in offices, installing high efficiency water boilers and upgrading computer facilities.

I have been very honoured to serve as the Cabinet member for the Environment since 2013. It has been a busy time and I am very proud of everything we have achieved and I would like to thank Cllr Stephen Hibbert and Cllr Brian Oldham who both served as my Assistant Cabinet member during my time in office and who were a great help to me.

**Councillor Mike Hallam**  
**Cabinet Member for the Environment**

Appendices  
1



**COUNCIL**  
**3 March 2015**

**Agenda Status: PUBLIC**

**Directorate: Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Northampton Borough Council's Pay Policy Statement 2015/16</b>
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**1. Purpose**

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1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires every local authority to publish a Pay Policy Statement annually. This report includes details of the information, which must be included in the statement and provides a Pay Policy Statement for approval for the year 2015/16.

**2. Recommendations**

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Council is recommended to:

2.1 approve the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2015/16 attached at Appendix 1.

**3. Issues and Choices**

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**Report Background**

3.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a requirement for every local authority, to prepare and publish an annual Pay Policy Statement explaining the authority's own policies for the financial year towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff and its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the pay of Chief Officers and other employees.

3.2 This requirement was introduced to:

- a) increase the accountability, transparency and fairness of setting local pay;
- b) give local people access to information to allow them to determine whether pay is appropriate; and
- c) ensure that the pay of senior staff is fair in the context of the pay of the rest of the workforce.

- 3.3 In summary, the Localism Act 2011 requires the Pay Policy Statement to include the Council's policies relating to:
- a) The remuneration of Chief Officers, (including salary, bonuses, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind).
  - b) The remuneration of the Council's lowest-paid employees.
  - c) The relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and remuneration of employees who are not Chief Officers.
  - d) Remuneration of Chief Officers on recruitment.
  - e) Increases and additions to remuneration for each Chief Officer.
  - f) The use of performance related pay for Chief Officers.
  - g) The use of bonuses for Chief Officers.
  - h) The approach to the payment of Chief Officers on their ceasing to be employed by the Council.
  - i) The publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of Chief Officers.
- 3.4 The Council is required to have regard to any guidance issued or approved by the Secretary of State when preparing and approving its Pay Policy Statement. In this regard, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a guidance document under the Localism Act 2011 in February 2012 entitled, "*Openness and accountability in local pay*". DCLG also issued Supplementary Guidance in February 2013.
- 3.4 The Council must have the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 in place by 31 March 2015. It must be approved by full Council. The DCLG Guidance makes it clear that the Secretary of State does not consider that any of the grounds for exclusion of the public would be met when Members are considering the Pay Policy Statement.
- 3.5 Members are asked to note in particular that the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 makes reference to the Council's pay structures being locally agreed from 1<sup>st</sup> April. This is following the authority's decision to withdraw from national pay bargaining.
- 3.6 Once approved, the Pay Policy Statement must be published in such a manner as the Council thinks fit, which must include publication on the Council's website. Each subsequent statement must be prepared and approved before 31 March immediately preceding the financial year to which it relates.

#### **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

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##### **4.1 Policy**

The report continues existing policy.

##### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

The Pay Policy Statement must be prepared for the financial year 2015 – 2016 and each subsequent financial year. Once in place it will provide the public with a clear rationale to explain the Council’s approach to pay.

#### **4.2 Legal**

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

#### **4.3 Other Implications**

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

#### **4.4 Equality**

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

#### **4.5 Policy**

The report continues existing policy.

### **5. Background Papers**

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

**Francis Fernandes**  
**Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer**

**Northampton Borough Council**  
**Pay Policy Statement 2015/16**

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1. Northampton Borough Council recognises that, in the context of managing scarce public resources, remuneration at all levels needs to be adequate to secure and retain high quality employees dedicated to the service of the public, but at the same time needs to avoid being unnecessarily generous or otherwise excessive.
- 1.2. It is important that local authorities are able to determine their own pay structures in order to address local priorities and to compete in the local labour market.
- 1.3. In particular, it is recognised that senior management roles in local government are complex and diverse functions in a highly politicised environment where often national and local pressures conflict. The Council's ability to continue to attract and retain high calibre managers capable of delivering this complex agenda, particularly during times of financial challenge, is crucial if the Council is to retain its current high performance levels.
- 1.4 The Council is committed to ensuring that it is open and transparent about its pay policies and how pay decisions are made. This Pay Policy Statement fulfils the Council's statutory requirements under Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011 and was agreed by full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015.
- 1.5 In accordance with the Government's Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency, the Council publishes information on all employees earning £50,000 or above. This information can be viewed here ([link to transparency info](#))

**2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 This Pay Policy Statement sets out the Council's policies on:-  
(a) the remuneration of its Chief Officers;  
(b) the remuneration of the lowest paid employees;  
(c) the relationship between remuneration of Chief Officers and other officers;  
and  
(d) other specific aspects of Chief Officer remuneration
- 2.2 Remuneration in this context is defined widely to include not just pay but also charges, bonuses, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in or enhancements of pension entitlements, and non-statutory termination payments.
- 2.3 Chief Officers in this context means the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Monitoring Officer, Directors and Heads of Service.

### **3.0 Basic Pay Determination**

3.1 The pay grade and the terms and conditions that are applied to each post are determined through the process of job evaluation. Both Hay and National Joint Council (NJC) schemes are in operation in the Council. The key principles underlying the application of job evaluation in the Borough Council are:

- Consistently application to ensure fairness;
- Application by appropriately trained and experienced employees;
- Openness and transparency to ensure accessibility for employees and their representatives;
- Incorporation of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

3.2 The pay grade of posts on Hay terms and conditions (ie. Director and Head of Service posts) will be in accordance with Senior Manager/Corporate Director pay grades on the locally agreed pay structures as at 1 April 2015.

3.3 The pay grade of the rest of the workforce (all staff other than Chief Officers) will be in accordance with pay grades 1-11 on locally agreed pay structures as at 1 April 2015.

3.4 Starting salary for all appointments (new recruits, employees who transfer within the organisation and employees promoted) is the first point of the new grade. In exceptional circumstances (which must be demonstrated by business case), starting salary above the minimum will be approved. This occurs in cases where it is necessary to meet an existing salary and the candidate can demonstrate a level of skills and experience that is comparable to existing employees who have progressed through the grade.

### **4.0 Chief Officer Pay (Senior Management Team)**

#### **4.1 Pay Scale**

The current pay rates for new appointees to these Chief Officer pay ranges, can be viewed here. The senior pay group covers posts in the top three tiers of the Council; that is, the Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service.

#### **4.2 Additional elements of remuneration**

There are no other additional elements of remuneration in respect of overtime, flexi-leave, bank holiday working, standby payments etc. Any duties undertaken by Chief Officers outside of their contractual hours are without additional payment paid to these senior staff as they are expected to undertake duties outside of their contractual hours without additional payment.

Bonuses/benefits in kind are not paid to Chief Officers.

### **5.0 Decisions on Remuneration**

#### **5.1 Appointments and Appeals Committee**

The Appointments and Appeals Committee comprises 6 members of the Council (of whom at least two are Cabinet members). In relation to appointments, the Appointment and Appeals Committee has the delegated authority to:

- (i) Recommend to the Council the appointment of the Chief Executive.
- (ii) To make appointments of other Chief Officers
- (iii) To undertake all associated activities including agreeing job descriptions, person specifications, the interview process generally.

5.2 Decisions on remuneration are made as follows:

- (a) Chief Executive Officer local pay level approved by Full Council;
- (b) Director and Head of Service local pay level approved by Appointments and Appeals Committee;
- (c) Pay structure for all other posts approved by General Purposes Committee;
- (d) Performance Progression Scheme in accordance with the locally agreed schemes and as approved by officers under existing delegated powers;
- (e) Notwithstanding “a” to “d” above, any salary packages of £100,000 or more require Full Council approval. (A salary package includes salary, any bonuses, fees or allowances routinely payable to the appointee and any benefits in kind to which the officer would be entitled as a result of their employment);
- (f) Notwithstanding “a” to “d” above or any other aspect of this Statement, any severance packages of £100,000 or more require Full Council approval. (A severance package may include salary paid in lieu, redundancy compensation, pension entitlements, holiday pay and any bonuses, fees or allowances paid).

5.3 Pay Award

From 1 April 2015, cost of living increases in relation to all staff will be determined locally as the Council has withdrawn from national pay negotiation arrangements. The General Purposes Committee ratifies the level of increase, if any, to be applied to the published pay rates, by reference to the Council’s performance against measurable targets and overall affordability given the Council’s prevailing budget decision.

5.4 Individual Salary Level – Progression through the Development Points – (Directors, Heads of Service and all other staff below Head of Service level).

There is no automatic progression through the development points. Personal development in role may be recognised by the award of discretionary consolidated/non-consolidated pay movements each year, in accordance with the locally agreed step values, through the grades. Awards may be considered only on completion of Personal Development Plan milestones and where contribution and competence have been suitably evidenced and assessed via the performance management scheme (appraisal).

5.5 Additional Fees

Returning Officer duties – The role of Returning Officer is a statutory role which incurs personal responsibility and accountability which is separate from the Returning Officer’s normal employment contract. The Returning Officer is paid a separate allowance for each election for which he/she is responsible. A scale of fees was agreed by the Council’s Resources Committee for Borough and Parish Council elections in 1997, which increases in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Separate Payments are made for Parliamentary, European, Police and Crime Commissioners Elections and national referenda are funded by central Government.

## 5.6 Market Premium Payments

It is not the Council's normal policy to pay market supplements to Chief Officers.

The process for approving market supplements for the rest of the workforce can be viewed here.

## 6.0 Pay Equity and the Pay Multiple

6.1 The idea of publishing the ratio of the pay of an organisation's top earner to that of its median earner has been recommended in order to support the principles of fair pay and transparency (*the Hutton review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector - 2011*).

6.2 The Council's current ratio in this respect is 1:5.5 i.e. the Chief Executive (top earner) earns 5 times more than the Council's **median** earner (£25,141). When measured against the **mean** salary (£26,954), the ratio is 1:5.13.

6.3 The Council does not currently have a policy of maintaining or reaching a specific pay multiple target. The Council commits to calculating the pay ratio on an annual basis to monitor trends and to ensure that this pay multiple does not widen.

6.4 The Council monitors the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and the remuneration of its lowest paid employees. The Council defines its 'lowest paid employees' as employees paid on the first spinal column point (scp 8) of the National Joint Council (NJC) pay spine for Local Government Services employees. This is the lowest rate of pay applied to Council employees, currently £13,596 per annum.

## 7.0 **Termination of Employment and Severance Packages**

7.1 On ceasing to be employed by the Council, employees will be paid contractual payments due under their contract of employment.

7.2 The Council's Redundancy Framework details the conditions under which redundancy payments can be made. The Council calculates redundancy payments based on an individual's actual pay, length of continuous service and age.

7.3 Severance payments are made in accordance with the Council's Redundancy Framework.

7.4 Employees with more than two years' service will be entitled to redundancy pay in line with local government guidelines and statutory provisions. Redundant employees will receive two elements of their final pay:

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

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

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



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

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

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

#### 7.7 Re-Engagement of former employees

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

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

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

### 8.0 **Discretionary Payments**

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

Redundancy payments under regulation 5 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006; the Council has decided to use actual pay instead of the statutory maximum when calculating redundancy payments.

Additional membership for revision purposes under regulation 12 and regulation 13 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Memberships & Contributions) Regulations 2007 are not awarded.

Any discretionary payments arising through the termination of the employment contract will be made using delegated powers and will be based on a full written, legal risk assessment and written legal advice.

## 9 **Review**

This Pay Policy Statement will be reviewed annually and recommended to Full Council for approval. The statement for 2016/17 will be submitted to Full Council for approval by 31 March 2016.

The Council may by resolution of the Full Council, amend this Pay Policy Statement during the course of the year to which it relates.