

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON Monday, 9 July 2018 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

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

COUNCILLORS: Malpas, Ashraf, Aziz, Beardsworth, Birch, Choudary, Chunga, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Hadland, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, J Hill, Joyce, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, M Markham, Marriott, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Smith, Stone and Walker

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the Council meeting held on the 4th June 2018 were agreed.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors B Markham, McCutcheon, Parekh, Bottwood, Caswell, Kilby-Shaw, Graystone and Cali.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor announced that he attended the Samaritans Annual General Meeting celebrate 50 years of Samaritans and noted that there were now over 200 branches across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The Mayor announced that he and the Mayoress had attended the Speedy Cup event held on the Racecourse, Northampton and explained that it was the 16th annual Speedy Cup - a celebration of all things Irish and dedicated to the memory of Patrick Hanrahan, more affectionately known as Speedy to his friends and peers.

The Mayor announced that there had been a flag raising ceremony for the Armed Forces Day on the 25th June 2018 and he and the Mayoress had been joined Northamptonshire County Council and Chairman Cllr Osbourne to show their respects as the County also celebrated

The Mayor informed members that his Summer Ball would be held at the Guildhall on the 24th August 2018.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Ms Dagma King addressed Council and commented that she had spent some time observing the work carried out by the Wardens and explained that she considered those who were responsible for making some of the mess were not being fined; when she asked why some of the rough sleepers leaving rubbish were not being fined, she was informed that they were not always issued with a fine due to them not having the

funds available to pay. She therefore suggested that those who were unable to pay should be asked to contribute through community service such as street cleaning. She considered that this would be a more fair approach so that all people faced consequences for littering.

Mr James Kikta explained that he was the Director and Head Coach at Northampton Gymnastics Academy (NGA) and noted that the NGA was 100% self-funded and asked that the Council, as a whole or individually could make a donation to the club to provide funding towards new facilities. He noted that there were over 500 members of the Club and a considerable waiting list. He commented that the gymnasts came from all over the County and noted that they were committed to encouraging people from all backgrounds to join their club.

Ms Rebecca Walker commented that she was a parent of a child who attended NGA and explained that it was an extremely exciting time for club members who were being given the opportunity to receive new equipment. She explained that the club catered for both boys and girls and that she wanted the children in the club to have the best equipment. She reported that gymnastics provided children with discipline and structured exercise and noted that there was the opportunity to sponsor a child or a piece of equipment.

Mr Tony Mallard commented that at a recent Residents Association at Eastfields, residents had raised concerns about a number of garage sites. He noted that there was a proposal to remove garages and build flats on those sites, which he considered would go against the Radburn Principle, which had the potential to increase traffic, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour. He appreciated there was a housing shortage but noted that the removal of garage sites would result in the loss of privacy for some residents.

Mr Huffadine – Smith commented that the proposed Community Governance Review was a positive and refreshing approach and noted that it would involve more grass roots involvement in managing local amenities. He reported that Neighbourhood Councils would be a sound option as it would allow for further community involvement and urged the Council to consider further CGR for Neighbourhood Council, which would leave the Unitary Council free to focus on social services and other essential services.

6. MEMBER AND PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Mayor advised that 11 questions had been received from Councillor and members of the public and that the answers had been tabled in accordance with the Constitution.

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

In response to a supplementary question relating to question 2, Councillor Nunn commented that he was proud of the work that had been carried out in Bellinge and noted that he would visit the community building.

7. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATIONS

Councillor Nunn, as Leader of the Council, elaborated on his report and noted that in response to the public speaker, an ASBO Police Officer had been assigned to assist with issues relating to fly tipping and homelessness. In response to questions asked, Councillor Nunn commented that with regards to the proposed Unitary authority, a working party would share all views and noted the huge volume of work being carried out by the Chief Executive on the issue. He further noted that revisiting the 2 unitary structures with a borough Council was no longer feasible.

Councillor Larratt, submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon noting that he would be happy to meet with the Northampton Gymnastics Club to discuss if the Council could assist the club and urged anyone interested to use their Councillor Empowerment fund to support them. He further commented that there had been poor attendance at recent Councillor Training sessions and urged members to attend.

Councillor Hallam submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon. He noted that the environmental services re-provision was in its fourth week of the new contract and noted that the contract was going well. In response to questions asked, Councillor Hallam explained that there had been a number of instances of broken glass on the pavements and explained that this could be attributed to the increase in footfall of some pubs during the football but hoped that there would be a quick response in clearing up any broken glass. Responding to further questions, it was noted that there was a need for a combination of a better service and enforcement to successfully reduce littering and fly tipping.

Councillor Hallam further noted that the new contractors could face penalties should they default on the contract and noted that there had been 2,200 reports on fly-tipping which was a 20% increase on last year and fines issued to offenders had increased 60 % on 2017 figures. It was suggested to Councillor Hallam that some of the work carried out by the Council should include investigating the reasons for fly-tipping and engaging with student and HIMO landlords to ensure compliance with rubbish removal. Councillor Hallam noted that plans need to be put in place to ensure that end of year students were responsible for the disposal of their rubbish. In response to further questions, Councillor Hallam commented that he would give consideration to the reviewing the costs of collection of unwanted items. He noted that since the new contractors had been appointed, 165 fly-tipped mattresses had been collected.

Councillor Hibbert submitted his Cabinet Member report and elaborated thereon. In response to questions asked, Councillor Hibbert explained that he was aware of a number of tents that had been erected around the Town and noted that the outreach team had been working extremely hard to engage with them and explained that a lot of work had gone into engaging with new homeless people, specifically young people, at an early stage.

At this juncture of the meeting, the Mayor advised that the time limited for Cabinet Member reports had been reached and no further Cabinet Member would elaborate on their reports.

8. OPPOSITION GROUP BUSINESS

Councillor Birch stated that crime and the fear of crime was keeping some residents prisoners in their own homes as they were too afraid to venture out. She explained that there were some parents who were too afraid to let their children play out and avoided a number of parks through fear of becoming victims of crime. She stated that figures she had gained since May 2018 had shown an increase in the number of violent sexual offences, drug related offences and possession of weapons reported to the Police. She further commented that within recent months there had been 3 non-domestic murders in Northampton and questioned whether an increase in gangs could be attributed to higher levels of poverty and unemployment. She referred to increased numbers of people being exploited through cuckooing and noted the failings of the administration to deliver on Community Safety.

In response, Councillor King stated that cuckooing was on the increase but there had recently been a conviction for this and agencies were building in the work that had already been done. A number of actions were being put in place over the holiday period which would include a gun amnesty. She reported that she and Councillor Larratt had met with the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northampton and were liaising closely with him in working towards reducing crime.

Councillor Birch commented that she considered there to be a lack of solid outcomes and questioned where the measures of success would be and noted that the need to ensure that people were not becoming the victims of crime; reassurance was need to ensure everything within the Community Safety Plan was being delivered.

9. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT - 2017/2018

Councillor Lane, as the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report and thanked every member involved in the work of Scrutiny, specifically the Panel Chairs. He commented that as a Committee, they had continued to hold Cabinet to account and made some extremely good recommendations to Cabinet. He thanked the Scrutiny Officer for her continued hard work and noted his appreciation for her dedication to the role.

Councillor Walker seconded the report and echoed Councillor Lane in thanking the Overview and Scrutiny Officer.

Members discussed the various panel work that had been undertaken and thanked the officer and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their dedication and concurred that the topics that they had scrutinised had been extremely valuable and insightful.

RESOLVED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18 be noted.

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought Council acceptance the reviews and revised version of the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

Councillor Stone noted that the Labour Group were pleased to support the report and reported that it had been accepted by Trade Unions.

RESOLVED:

1. That Council accept the reviewed and revised version of the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy (“the policy”).
2. That Any further, or final amendments, be delegated to the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager in consultation with the leader of the Council, to action, prior to the Chief Executive signing and dating the policy statement of intent and going live to communicate out to all employees and being made publically available.

11. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE PLACES

Councillor Stone proposed a report that sought Council to ratify changes to the membership of Committees and Working parties.

Councillor Birch seconded the report.

Councillor Lane, as the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny thanked Councillor Culbard for the work that she had completed on Overview and Scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillor G Eales replaced Councillor Culbard on the Licensing Committee.
2. That Councillor Birch replaced Councillor Culbard on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
3. That Councillor Birch replaced Councillor Culbard on the Constitution Review Working Party

12. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Councillor Larratt proposed a report which sought Council’s acceptance of the recommendations made by the Constitution Working Party.

Councillor Patel seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That the recommendations of the Constitution Review Working Party be approved and the following proposed amendments to the Constitution:

- a) revised Financial Regulations (Appendix 1 of the report);
- b) new Planning Protocol (Appendix 2 of the report);
- c) revised delegated powers to the Head of Planning and the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer (Appendix 3 of the report);
- d) addition to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers regarding the delegation of powers to interim staff (Appendix 4 of the report); and
- e) revised Contract Procedure Rules (Appendix 5 of the report).

2.2 That authority be delegated to the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer to make any further minor consequential changes to the Constitution required to incorporate the proposed changes to the Constitution referred to in paragraph 2.1 above.

13. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Councillor Nunn proposed a report which sought Council's consideration of establishing a community governance review Cross Party Working Group to oversee a community governance review of the unparished areas of the Borough of Northampton.

Councillor Larratt seconded the report.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That a community governance review under Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 be undertaken in respect of the unparished areas of the Borough of Northampton (shown as the unshaded areas on the map at Appendix 1 of the report) be agreed.
- 2.2 That the establishment of a Cross Party Working Group (the 'Working Group') comprised of six Members of the Council be agreed to:
 - a) consider the requirements of the community governance review process under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and statutory guidance, and to make recommendations to Full Council regarding the Terms of Reference for the review and the process to be followed including the public consultation element;
 - b) as part of the community governance review process, produce proposals for Council's consideration at future meetings in relation to community governance arrangements in the unparished area of the Borough of Northampton; and
 - c) consider all further connected and ancillary matters arising from a community governance review of the unparished areas of the Borough of

Northampton.

- 2.3 That appointments be made to the Working Group proposed in paragraph 2.2 of the report, so that it is comprised of three Conservative Members, two Labour Members and one Liberal Democrat Member of the Council.
- 2.4 That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the proposed Working Group to enter into any necessary contracts or agreements connected with the work of the Working Group as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report.
- 2.5 That a budget of up to £30,000 be delegated to undertake any specialist activity associated with undertaking a community governance review.

14. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER FOR THE COUNCIL

The Mayor informed Council that the report had been withdrawn.

15. NOTICES OF MOTION

- i) Councillor Beardsworth accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Meredith.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“Whatever the boundaries of the new Unitary Councils, for Northamptonshire, those councils will take on responsibility for the care of older people in our community, from 2020.

A recent study estimated that 35% of inpatients in local hospitals were there simply waiting for suitable after care to be available (so called Bed Blocking).

This council asks scrutiny, working with NCC scrutiny and partners, particularly health service partners, to carry out investigation into Adult Social Care facilities in the area to identify future demand patterns, in order that the new Unitary Council is able to better plan for the needs of older people in the future”.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

- ii) Councillor G Eales accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Stone.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“Our town is famous for the boot and shoe industry and for leather works. The Central Museum hosts our famous shoe collection and the town has in trust the National

Leather Collection, currently located in the Grosvenor Centre.

We note recent announcements of retail and other High Street closures and the Northampton Chronicle's current Town Centre campaign. We know as a council that we need to support the regeneration of our town, increase footfall and to stimulate tourism. Leather goods manufacturers and our world renowned shoe makers can play a key role in this.

This council therefore resolves to:

Invite interest from shoe manufacturers and leather goods producers around the county and possibly beyond to be included in a retail shoe and leather goods outlet in Northampton Town Centre. This plan could see the development of one of the vacant sites in the middle of town become a show case for the sale of shoes and leather goods from our world class manufacturers. The vision being that the demand for our high quality shoes & leather goods, will contribute to making Northampton Town Centre an attraction for visitors into the town. This will aid regeneration and increase footfall.

To make this offer work and make it viable for the businesses concerned, this council will work with them and make whatever concessionary offers are within its gift for a defined period and play an active role in the delivery of what will be a mutual heritage and commercial concern.

This council will seek to include the BID and the University of Northampton in playing an active role in this initiative".

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

- iii) Councillor Joyce accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Ashraf.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

"There are four community libraries in the town that are under threat of closure.

This council recognises the value of libraries as community hubs. This council, therefore, resolves to work with the friends of the libraries to facilitate the libraries remain open for community use."

Council debated the motion.

Upon the requisition of a recorded vote:

There voted for the motion: Councillors Ashraf, Beardsworth, Birch, Choudary, Culbard, Davenport, Duffy, G Eales, T Eales, Eldred, Flavell, Golby, Hallam, Haque, Hibbert, Hill, Joyce, Kilbride, King, Lane, Larratt, M Markham, Marriott, Meredith, Nunn, Oldham, Parekh, Patel, Russell, Sargeant, Smith, Stone and Walker.

There voted against the motion: Councillor Aziz

There abstained the Mayor.

The motion was carried.

- iv) Councillor King accepted an alteration to the original motion as published on the agenda. The altered motion was seconded by Councillor Hibbert.

Council agreed to the altered motion debated below:

“This motion calls for the Council to continue to a commitment to support mental health awareness and support to the Government’s Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health.

The Concordat is intended to provide a focus for cross-sector action to deliver a tangible increase in the adoption of public mental health approaches across local authorities, the NHS, public, private and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations and others.

This Council is proud to actively support the campaign to make Northampton a ‘happy town’, including the launch of Northampton’s first ‘Happy Café’ in June. ‘Happy Cafés’ are being set up by supporters of the Action for Happiness movement in local communities, as a friendly and welcoming place to meet others with a shared interest in promoting happiness and well-being.

As well as the ‘Happy Café’ launch, there was also be a celebration of the publication of ‘50 Ways to Feel Happy’, a new illustrated children’s book which helps children build skills and develop healthy habits for their daily lives, promoting resilience, well-being, self-confidence and emotional stability.

This motion calls on the Council to further promote a prevention-focused approach to improving the public’s mental health , including supporting community based initiatives, for example, community choirs and health walks, which makes a valuable contribution to achieving a fairer and more equitable society”.

Council debated the motion.

Upon a vote, the motion was carried.

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

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 9.09pm