

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held at remotely via  
Zoom: <https://www.youtube.com/northamptonbctv> at 6:00pm on 7  
September 2020

**George Candler**  
**Chief Executive**

If you need any advice or information regarding this agenda please phone Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, telephone 01604 837408 (direct dial), email [ttiff@northampton.gov.uk](mailto:ttiff@northampton.gov.uk) who will be able to assist with your enquiry. For further information regarding **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** please visit the website [www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny)

**Members of the Committee**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Chair             | Councillor Jamie Lane  |
| Deputy-Chair      | Councillor Graham Walker   |
| Committee Members | Councillor Tony Ansell<br>Councillor Rufia Ashraf<br>Councillor Mohammed Azizur Rahman ( Aziz)<br>Councillor Janice Duffy<br>Councillor Gareth Eales<br>Councillor Penelope Flavell<br>Councillor Andrew Kilbride<br>Councillor Samuel Kilby-Shaw<br>Councillor Dennis Meredith<br>Councillor Nilesh Ramesh Parekh<br>Councillor Emma Roberts<br>Councillor Cathrine Russell<br>Councillor Zoe Smith |

**Calendar of meetings**

| <b>Date</b>             | <b>Room</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 9 November 2020 6:00 pm | All meetings to be held in the Jeffery Room at the Guildhall unless otherwise stated |

# Northampton Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee

## Agenda

| Item No and Time | Title  | Pages          | Action required  |
|------------------|--|----------------|--|
| 1                | <b>Apologies</b>                                     |                | Members to note any apologies and substitution   |
| 2                | <b>Minutes</b>                                       | <b>1 - 4</b>   | Members to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2020   |
| 3                | <b>Deputations/Public Addresses</b>                  |                | <p>The Chair to note public address requests.</p> <p>The public can speak on any agenda item for a maximum of three minutes per speaker per item. You are not required to register your intention to speak in advance but should arrive at the meeting a few minutes early, complete a <a href="#">Public Address Protocol</a> and notify the Scrutiny Officer of your intention to speak.</p> |
| 4                | <b>Declarations of Interest (Including Whipping)</b> |                | Members to state any interests.  |
| 5                | <b>Monitoring of accepted recommendations</b>        |                | <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake monitoring of the accepted recommendations contained within the O&amp;S Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementia Friendly Town</li> <li>• Culture and Tourism</li> </ul>   |
| 5 (a)            | <b>Dementia Friendly Town</b>                        | <b>5 - 16</b>  |  |
| 5 (b)            | <b>Culture and Tourism</b>                           | <b>17 - 41</b> |  |
| 6                | <b>Performance Management Scrutiny</b>               | <b>43 - 44</b> | <p>The Committee to undertake performance management Scrutiny on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks or agreed extension</li> <li>• % of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed extension</li> </ul>  |

## Northampton Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee

|              |  |                |  |
|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| <b>7</b>     | <b>Scrutiny Panels</b>   |                | The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive an update from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Panel and Working Groups.   |
| <b>7 (a)</b> | <b>Scrutiny Panel 1</b>  | <b>45</b>      | The Committee to receive a progress report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Food Poverty.   |
| <b>7 (b)</b> | <b>Overview and Scrutiny Gangs and Knife Crime Working Group</b>             | <b>47</b>      | The Committee to receive a progress report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Gangs and Knife Crime Working Group.  |
| <b>7 (c)</b> | <b>Pre Decision Scrutiny Working Group - Trial of Buy Back of Properties</b> | <b>49 - 50</b> | The Committee to receive a progress report from the Chair of the Pre Decision Scrutiny Working Group - Trial of Buy Back of Properties Working Group   |
| <b>8</b>     | <b>Potential future pre decision scrutiny.</b>                               |                | The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider any potential issues for future pre decision scrutiny.   |
| <b>9</b>     | <b>Urgent Items</b>  |                | This issue is for business that by reasons of the special circumstances to be specified, the Chair is of the opinion is of sufficient urgency to consider. Members or Officers that wish to raise urgent items are to inform the Chair in advance. |

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## NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 13 July 2020

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair), Councillor Graham Walker (Deputy Chair) Councillors Tony Ansell, Rufia Ashraf, Janice Duffy, G Eales, Penny Flavell, Andrew Kilbride, Samuel Kilby-Shaw, Dennis Meredith, Cathrine Russell and Zoe Smith

Councillor Mike Hallam, Cabinet Member for Environment  
Councillor Stephen Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing  
Councillor Brandon Eldred, Cabinet Member for Finance  
Councillor Anna King, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety  
Phil Harris, Director of Housing and Wellbeing  
Stuart McGregor, Chief Finance Officer  
Chris Carvell, Environmental Services Manager  
Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager

#### 1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Emma Roberts.

#### 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2020 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

#### 3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

#### 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

There were none.

#### 5. BUDGET SCRUTINY

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, highlighting the salient points regarding both the West Northants Shadow Authority budget and financial implications of Covid19 on the Council. It was highlighted that a finance monitoring report would be presented to Cabinet at its meeting in August 2020.

Mr McGregor was thanked for the informative updated.

AGREED: That the report is noted.

#### 6. MONITORING OF ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS

## **(A) CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

Phil Harris, Director, Housing and Wellbeing, presented the action plan detailing progress on the accepted recommendations, he highlighted the key points and provided explanations of what has taken place and what work is currently being undertaken and other work planned.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- In response to a query regarding feedback from schools on the training provided, the Committee heard that it had been incredibly successful and had been delivered by various experts.
- A joint approach was being enacted with Daventry District Council regarding enforcement – “international lighthouse”. Sharing of best practice is also being undertaken amongst Local Authorities
- The Committee was very pleased to note that a number of the recommendations had been dealt with.

**AGREED:** That further monitoring of the accepted recommendations of this action plan takes place at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 November 2020.

## **7. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook performance management scrutiny on:

- HML01 total number of households living in temporary accommodation
- HML07 total number of households that are prevented from becoming homeless

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- It was commented that less social housing is becoming available; for example there are 100 less homes than was expected despite Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) building 100 homes in the year.  
Housing Services has been successful in preventing the loss of the breakdown in some shorter term tenancies and have had dialogue with tenants and the landlords
- A report will be considered by Cabinet at its August 2020 meeting regarding a second phase of the pilot scheme involving the purchase of 24 former council homes to reduce the Council’s use of temporary accommodation.
- It was confirmed that bed and breakfast accommodation is rarely used now as temporary accommodation.
- In answer to a query whether reasons for homelessness has changed, it was confirmed that the reasons are similar over the past couple of years such as family and relationship breakdown.
- The Committee commented that loss of employment due to Covid19 could lead to people losing their homes

- In response to a query regarding the landlord's forum, it was confirmed that a change of emphasis was being looked at for letting to people that are in receipt of housing benefit and looking to prevent evictions

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook performance management scrutiny on:

- ESC06% of land and highways assessed falling below acceptable levels – detritus (NI195b) (4M)

The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

Regarding detritus on the roadside the Committee heard that this had fallen behind due to Covid19 but was on track.

AGREED: That performance management scrutiny of the above was now complete.

## **8. CSP PERFORMANCE**

Councillor King, Chair, CSP, presented the report to the Committee and highlighted the salient points.

The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

- It was commented that work regarding training with schools had been phenomenal and fabulous feedback received. In addition, virtual events had taken place
- It was noted that there were some challenges around violent crime.
- The Taxi Marshal Scheme commenced on 4 July 2020 and was working slightly early over the first three weekends, from 7pm to 1am – the Scheme would then revert to “pay day” weekend.
- Purple Flag has been extended and assessors would visit the town.
- The plan to gate Jeyes Jetty has been approved and is near completion.
- It was confirmed that taxi drivers are expected to wear masks.
- The statistics contained within the report are in line with national figures

AGREED: That the update on CSP performance is noted and a further update is presented to the Committee at its meeting on 11 January 2021.

## **9. SCRUTINY PANELS**

### **10. SCRUTINY PANEL 1**

The Chair advised that evidence gathering had halted due to Covid19 but would be re-starting next week.

### **(A) OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME WORKING GROUP**

The Chair advised that evidence gathering had halted due to Covid19 but would be re-starting later this week.

**(B) PRE DECISION SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - TRIAL OF BUY BACK OF PROPERTIES**

The Chair advised that the Working Group had met earlier today and received a good brief. It would meet one more time in August 2020.

**11. DRAFT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020**

The Chair presented the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/2020 for the Committee's approval. The report highlighted the good work of Overview and Scrutiny over the past year. The report would be presented to full Council at its meeting in September 2020.

The Chair put on record his thanks to the Democratic and Member Services Manager for her work and dedication to Overview and Scrutiny over the past 14 plus years. He added that the centre for public scrutiny had, on many occasions, noted Overview and Scrutiny at Northampton as examples of best practice. He went on to thank Members for their enthusiasm, hard work and input into Overview and Scrutiny. The Committee thanked the Chair for his dedication, hard work and support to Overview and Scrutiny and the way that he had diligently led the Committee.

AGREED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/2020 is approved and presented to full Council at its meeting on 14 September 2020.

**12. POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE DECISION SCRUTINY.**

There were none.

**13. URGENT ITEMS**

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 7:06 pm



**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

**ACTION PLAN: SCRUTINY PANEL - Dementia Friendly Town**

Response and Action Plan in response to the Recommendations from Scrutiny Panel

5 **Proposed dates for monitoring implementation of accepted recommendations**

| Report received by Cabinet   | Monitoring activity               | Monitoring complete   |             |  |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|-------------|--|
| March 2018   | February 2019                     | Date to be added by O&S Committee when agreed monitoring is completed |             |  |
| <b>Recommendation 1:</b> Northampton Borough Council works towards “Dementia Friendly Status for Northampton” being achieved. A Dementia Friends Champion is nominated to lead on this work. |                                   |   |             |  |
| Action   | Implementation/responsibility by: | Resources required/available  | Target date | Achievement/Completed  |
| A Dementia Friends Champion (DFC) to be nominated to lead on   | Marion Goodman                    | Officers Time   | April 2018  | Louise Musson – Call Care Manager appointed to lead on the work for Dementia |

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| <p>the work required.</p> <p>Work towards Northampton being a Dementia Friendly Town (DFT) in liaison with the Northampton DAA, Northamptonshire DAA and University of Northampton.</p> |  |  |  | <p>Friendly Town</p> <p>NBC have become a member of the Northampton and Northamptonshire Dementia Action Alliance (DAA).</p> <p>Louise Musson (NBC) is Chair of the Northampton DAA and Deputy Chair for the Northamptonshire DAA.</p> <p>The Northampton DAA has now applied for 'working towards Dementia Friendly Community' Status. This will be confirmed in January 2019. At which point they will be able to start evidencing the work being carried out throughout Northampton to support the town gaining Dementia</p> |
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|  |  |  | <p>Friendly Community status.</p> <p>Northampton Dementia Action Alliance has now been given 'working towards Dementia Friendly'. This allows NBC to use the logo which demonstrates our commitment to people living with dementia.</p> <p>Work has been suspended on this until after lockdown. Organisations working with People living with Dementia continue to support their clients during Covid-19 but other work to raise awareness has been put on hold until after lockdown.</p> <p>The University of Northampton and its partner Urban Splash are developing a business case, as part of funding from Innovate UK, to establish a community that is designed to enable active</p> |
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|   |                                  |                              |             | aging. This will be on the University of Northampton's Waterside campus, called Unity House. As part of their business case, a consultation is being carried out with representatives from a range of health, social care and housing organisations, as well as speaking with people with dementia and their families. (UON) Consultation docs. Enclosed. |
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| <b>Recommendation 2:</b> A Dementia Forum is established. Northampton Interfaith Forum (NIFF) is invited to join the Forum. |                                  |                              |             |   |
| Action  | Implementation/responsibility by | Resources required/available | Target date | Achievement/Completed   |
| Northampton Forum (Dementia Action Alliance) to be established.   | Louise Musson                    | Officers Time                | April 2018  | Completed – Northampton has a DAA which is currently chaired by Louise Musson (NBC).  |

| Interfaith Forum to be invited to join.  |  |                                     |                    | <p>NIFF has been invited to form part of the Northampton DAA and have since joined.</p> <p>One of the local churches has held a Dementia Friendly Service and are looking to make this a regular event and open it out to other churches.</p>                           |
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| <b>Recommendation 3:</b> Northampton Borough Council registers with the Alzheimer's Society as part of the Dementia Friendly Recognition Scheme.   |  |                                     |                    |   |
| <b>Action</b>  | <b>Implementation/responsibility by</b>          | <b>Resources required/available</b> | <b>Target date</b> | <b>Achievement/Completed</b>  |
| Internal Dementia Strategic Working Group to be formed from all the key areas of NBC. This will enable a review of best practice in the organisation for people living with dementia and their carers and work towards fulfilling the Alzheimer's criteria for becoming a DF | Louise Musson and<br>Lead Officers for each area | Officers Time                       | April 2019         | <p>This group has started working in the individual service areas including museum services and community safety and partnership. Further regular meetings of the whole working group have been diarised commencing in February 2019</p> <p>Group met in April, the</p> |

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| <p>organisation.</p> <p>Northampton Borough Council will register as an organisation 'working towards DF community/organisation.</p> |  |  | <p>January 2019</p> | <p>following proposals were discussed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NBC to have DF champions in key areas i.e. OSS.</li> <li>• DF information sessions should be added to the staff induction.</li> <li>• All existing public facing staff to have DF information session, this could be added as an objective in this year's appraisal.</li> <li>• LM to look at on line DF information sessions.</li> <li>• HR to review carers policy which will include Carers of people living with Dementia.</li> </ul> |
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|  |  |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planning will consider people with Dementia when sending out their public engagement letters.</li><li>• Museums are considering people with dementia during the design of the new museum.</li><li>• Museums will continue running their DF café.</li><li>• OSS will consider the environment for people living with dementia and ensure all front facing staff have DF information sessions. They will look at some of their team attending champion training to support this.</li></ul> |
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|  |  |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call Care will have an information table in the OSS during Dementia Awareness Week WB 20<sup>th</sup> May.</li> </ul> <p><b>Still awaiting Dementia Champion training for staff. Alzheimer's society have suspended inductions during covid-19</b></p> <p><b>We are looking forward to working with the museum to look at activities for people living with dementia.</b></p> <p>As part of the DAA, Northampton Borough Council will be recognised as one of the leads for working towards Dementia Friendly Northampton. This will be confirmed January</p> |
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|   |  |   |             | 2019.   |
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| <b>Recommendation 4:</b> Dementia Friends information and training is included in both Councillor and staff inductions.   |  |   |             |   |
| Action  | Implementation/responsibility by                 | Resources required/available  | Target date | Achievement/Completed   |
| DF Champions training needed for a number of staff, to ensure DF information sessions are provided.<br><br>DF information sessions to be provided to all new staff and Councillors. | HR, Training & Development, Health and Wellbeing | Officers Time<br><br>Champion Training for Officers which is Free from the Alzheimers organisation. | April 2019  | This will form part of the work of the NBC strategy<br><b>Still awaiting Dementia Champion training for staff. Alzheimer's society have suspended inductions during covid-19</b><br><br>23 <sup>rd</sup> June, Dementia information sessions information posted for all front-line staff to complete. |
| <b>Recommendation 5:</b> A Councillor Champion for older people, focussing on dementia is appointed.  |  |   |             |   |
| Action  | Implementation/responsibility by                 | Resources required/available  | Target date | Achievement/Completed   |
| Appoint Councillor for  |  | None  | April 2018  | Cllr Anna King, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and safety is   |

| Older People  | Marion Goodman                   |                              |             | the Councillor Champion for Older People   |
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| <b>Recommendation 6:</b> The Dementia Friends Champion liaises with the local churches in Northampton to ascertain what Groups are currently available and whether further Groups such as Care and Share could be introduced. |                                  |                              |             |  |
| Action  | Implementation/responsibility by | Resources required/available | Target date | Achievement/Completed  |
| DFC to liaise with NIFF and other church groups to establish a database of Dementia Support Groups within Northampton.  | Louise Musson                    | Officers Time                | April 2019  | Stephanie De Vally from Northamptonshire Police is progressing this action as part of her contribution to the Northampton DAA.<br><br>LM liaising with St Peters Church who are running a DF café and offering DF church services. |
| <b>Recommendation 7:</b> The Dementia Friends Champion has dialogue with the Transport Manager of   |                                  |                              |             |  |

| UNO and the Head of Vulnerable Persons, Northants Police, regarding training for drivers of UNO around raising awareness of those living with dementia.  |                                  |                              |                |  |
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| Action   | Implementation/responsibility by | Resources required/available | Target date    | Achievement/Completed  |
| The NBC Strategic Working Group will liaise with UNO and other transport providers via the Bus Station User Group to support them with raising awareness of Dementia and their carers.   | NBC Strategic Group              | Officers Time                | September 2019 | This will form part of the work of the NBC strategy group.<br><br>Both UNO and Northamptonshire Carers are members of the DAA. |
| <b>Recommendation 8:</b> The Dementia Friends Champion works with the Assistant Chief Executive, Northamptonshire Carers, regarding the introduction of ID cards for carers when travelling with someone living with dementia. |                                  |                              |                |  |
| Action   | Implementation/responsibility by | Resources required/available | Target date    | Achievement/Completed  |
| The NBC Strategic Working Group will liaise with UNO, other transport providers and Northamptonshire   | NBC Strategic Group              | Officers Time                | September 2019 | This will form part of the work of the NBC strategy group.   |

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| Carers via the Bus Station User Group to discuss the introduction of carer ID cards. |  |  |  |  |
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**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

**ACTION PLAN: SCRUTINY PANEL – Culture and Tourism – Recommendations in Progress**

Response and Action Plan in response to the Recommendations from Scrutiny Panel

**Proposed dates for monitoring implementation of accepted recommendations**

| Report received by Cabinet   | Monitoring activity | Monitoring complete |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| 13 June 2018   | 11 November 2019    |                     |
| <p><b>Recommendation 1: An action plan is devised and ensures the marketing and the promotion of Northampton’s culture, heritage and tourism is effective and includes:</b></p> <p>The action plan includes a vision for the promotion of the town which includes the following definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Culture</b> - “the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively”.</li> <li>• <b>Tourism</b> – “The commercial organisation and operation of holidays and visits to places of interest”.</li> <li>• <b>Heritage</b> – “Valued objects and qualities such as historic buildings and cultural traditions that have been passed down from</li> </ul> |                     |                     |

previous generations”.  
and  
Aspires to be a city of culture in 2025

**Update : 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Following research by Officers, Members and Partners regarding submitting a bid to be a city of culture it was proposed that a long term strategic vision and aim for Northampton to be a city of culture for 2029 would be launched. It was realised that 2025 was too soon. The Arts Council was supportive. It was commented that by this time projects such as the Vulcan works would be completed. Work will continue and funding would be identified

18

| Action  | Lead Cabinet Member & lead responsible Officer                                   | Resources required / available                  | Target date | Achievement/Completed  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A review is undertaken of the success of the Britain’s Best Surprise and funding is sought to support Northampton’s contribution to it.</li> </ul> | Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety<br><br>Communications Manager | Communications Manager.<br><br>Funding required | Spring 2019 | The Communications Manager has joined the Britain’s Best Surprise board and is working to ensure Northampton’s offer is clearly highlighted as part of its work. The board has now produced a Destination Management Plan and has been asked to propose delivery against elements of that to attract funding from Northampton Borough Council, which can be achieved through the cultural and heritage budget established in 2018/19.<br><br><b>Update October 2019</b><br>The current theme of activity is the Year of Food and Drink, next year (2019/20) it will be the Year of Arts and Culture (launch event on 24 October at the |

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|  |  |   |             | <p>Royal &amp; Derngate) and discussions have begun about the following year's theme</p> <p><b>Update March 2020</b><br/>The Year of Arts and Culture official launch took place at the Core at Corby Cube in February and was very successful, attracting national media attention.</p> <p>Coronavirus has curtailed this activity to a great degree, though there are plans for the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery to feature heavily in the programme once public activity becomes commonplace again</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/>Funding of £5,000 has been identified to support the activity of Northamptonshire: Britain's Best Surprise</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An app. that gives details of what to do and where to visit in Northampton is developed similar to that produced by Hull – <u>Curious Collector App</u>.</li> </ul> | <p>Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety</p> <p>Communications Manager and Digital Services Manager</p> | <p>Digital Services Team</p> <p>Communications Manager</p> <p>Northampton Town Centre BID</p> | Autumn 2019 | <p>Initial discussions have taken place with the Digital Team about the possibility of revamping the Love Northampton website and App. As Northampton Town Centre BID are looking to be involved in the project, they were approached and asked whether they might be able to identify any resource to support this work. No response has been received to date. This will continue to be followed up as an option.</p>   |

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|  |  | Summer<br>2019 | We are also engaging with the producers of Trail Tale, an app which offers guided walks around British Towns. They are keen to create a package for Northampton at no cost to the Council. This is |
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|  |  |  | <p>likely to be the preferred option</p> <p><b>Update August 2019</b><br/>We have now engaged with the producers of Trail Tale and are pulling together a package of material for them to use. Northampton is featured on the app now, albeit in a limited form</p> <p><b>Update October 2019</b><br/>We are pulling together content for the new Love Northampton website and will provide this as additional content for the Trail Tale app. This will be complete by Christmas</p> <p><b>Update December 2019</b><br/>Content has largely been decided and a further member of the Digital Services team has been recruited to help optimise it for web use. This work is set to begin in the new year.</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/>The new Love Northampton website has been populated and is currently being user-tested</p> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shoes, leather and lace manufacturing are promoted on the website "Britain's Best Surprise."</li> </ul> | <p>Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety</p> <p>Marketing and Communications Manager</p> |  | <p>Aim to have this in place by unitary.</p> | <p>We have asked for this to be added to the Britain's Best Surprise forward plan for 2019 for discussion in the spring.</p> <p><b>Update October 2019</b><br/>This has been discussed and is a contender for the 2020/21 theme year.</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/>Northamptonshire's footwear offer has its own section on the Northamptonshire: Britain's Best Surprise website<br/><a href="https://www.northamptonshiresurprise.com/crm-categories/things-to-do/shoes/">https://www.northamptonshiresurprise.com/crm-categories/things-to-do/shoes/</a></p> |
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|   |  |  |  | This still forms part of the Britain's Best Surprise considerations for next year's primary activity  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Green Badge qualification, offered by the Institute of Tourist Guiding (ITG) is investigated for Northampton in conjunction with Northampton BID. This qualification is opened to ward Councillors and Honorary Aldermen.</li> </ul> | <p>Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety</p>                      | <p>Town Centre BID representatives</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>Facilities Team re: Guildhall Tours</p> | To be considered by Northampton Town Council                                     | <p>In partnership with Northampton Town Centre BID, Ward Councillors and Honorary Aldermen to be consulted in relation to their interest in the qualification.</p> <p>If positive, then training to be arranged as appropriate. This work will start in April 2019</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/>With the emerging changes relating to Unitary and Northampton Town Council, little progress has been made against this action. Now, with the coronavirus pandemic, it is proposed that this action is transferred to actions to be considered by Northampton Town Council at the appropriate time</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northampton Borough Council (NBC) works with its global brands to collectively promote the Northampton offer to a wider audience.</li> </ul>   | <p>Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise</p> <p>Economic Development Consultant</p> <p>Economic Growth and Regeneration</p> | <p>Economic Development Consultant</p> <p>Economic Growth and Regeneration Manager</p>                               | Part complete – but more work to do. Aim to have this in place ahead of unitary. | Engagement with a number of those firms has started with regard to signage around the Enterprise Zone. A number of Northampton's high-profile firms have agreed to be featured on newly revamped signage and designs are now in place for many of those new signs. Following the completion of this work, the intention is to extend the conversation to include how those firms might use their considerable influence to support and promote brand Northampton.   |

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|   | Manager   |  |   | <p>We have also asked for this issue to be added to the Britain's Best Surprise forward plan of work for 2019 as it is as much a countywide opportunity as it is one for the borough.</p> <p><b>August 2020</b><br/> The first stage of the place marketing work is underway which involves stakeholder engagement with Northampton's major brands to develop a place narrative. This place narrative will be used to create marketing materials which will be used by the council and its partners through Northampton Forward to promote Northampton as a place to Live, Work and Visit.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs on the entrance to Northampton are erected that says what the town has to offer. "Don't drive through, stop and visit ...."</li> </ul> | Leader of the Council<br>Marketing and Communications Manager |  | To be considered by Northampton Forward | <p>With the ongoing work in relation to promoting Northampton, signage will be included as part of this work. It is proposed that this action is not progressed until the name and branding has been formally agreed. The Communications Manager is liaising with NCC who are responsible for the current signs to understand the process required. Highways England would also need to be involved as they have a signage strategy</p> <p><b>Update October 2019</b><br/> In the meantime, gateway signage has been</p>   |

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|  |  |  |  | <p>introduced to the Enterprise Zone featuring some of the fantastic companies that call Northampton home, and part of the hoarding at Four Waterside – opposite the train station – has been similarly branded.</p> <p><b>Update March 2020</b><br/>It is proposed that this action is now transferred to be considered as part of the Northampton Forward</p> |
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|  |   |  |         | <p>place marketing plans</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/>This has been included as part of the Northampton Forward plans</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brand Northampton as an exciting place to visit.</li> </ul> | <p>Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety</p> <p>Cabinet member for Regeneration and Enterprise</p> |  | Ongoing | <p>This work is ongoing through all other strands outlined in this document.</p> <p>Funding has been contributed from NBC and from the Lord Lieutenant to promote Northampton as a film industry location. Alan Moore recently filmed here at the Guildhall and Vulcan Works.</p> <p>A film location database has been established for Northampton.</p> <p>The Emporium way art project has seen funding contributed to street and art and the start of pop up covent garden style events, the first of which was held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019.</p> <p><b>Update August 2019</b><br/>In addition, we are working with the Digital Services Team to overhaul the Love Northampton website to make it fit for purpose.</p> <p>Also, we are in the early stages of a piece of place marketing work which will consider how best to</p> |

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|  |  |  |  | attract a visitor audience as well as better engage local residents. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blue plaques are introduced around the town.</li> </ul> | <p>Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise</p> <p>Marketing and Communications Manager in liaison with the Planning and Regeneration Teams.</p> |  | <p>In progress</p> | <p>The English Heritage publication <i>Celebrating People &amp; Place Guidance On Commemorative Plaques &amp; Plaque Schemes</i> provides detailed guidance on developing blue plaque schemes. This includes aims, selection process, criteria, costs, funding and project management recommendations.</p> <p>This should be used to help develop a strategic approach to establishing and implementing a blue plaque scheme for Northampton.</p> <p>A proposal is being developed in relation to reviving the practise of updating panels in the Mayors' Names Gallery in the Guildhall which commemorates local benefactors and philanthropists, setting out their works. There would be suggested criteria and consideration of the selection procedure would be required. A panel would be established to oversee the selection. In addition, this will provide an opportunity to consider a more permanent location for the new Boards</p> <p><b>Update October 2019</b><br/> Planning Policy have produced a paper on the process surrounding Local Blue Plaque Schemes.</p> <p>A proposal to install new boards in the Great Hall Corridor dedicated to more recent benefactors and</p> |
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|  |  |  | <p>philanthropists who are now deceased was considered by the Executive Programme Board. Eight names were suggested for the new boards, i.e. George Thomas Hawkins, Joan Wake, Joseph Bassett-Lowke, Joanne Campbell, Frank Dickens, Joan Tice, James Manfield and Lynn Wilson. The Executive Programme Board accepted the proposal and consideration will also be given how to highlight high profile living individuals' connections to Northampton.</p> <p><b>Update December 2019</b><br/>A project team has been set up to work on the Philanthropists and Benefactors Names Boards and Blue Plaques Scheme. This comprises officers from Facilities, Planning, Communications, Democratic Services and Museums Services. The team is working on a number of matters including the financing of the scheme, town and country planning considerations, how public consultation might take place, the possibility of a selection panel, selection criteria and how to research the background of people nominated for blue plaques</p> <p><b>Update March 2020</b><br/>The Project Team defined selection criteria for</p> |
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|  |  |  | <p>nominations and processes for the Names Boards and Blue Plaques. A selection Panel was recruited to ensure impartiality, test subjects selected for the Names Boards and Museum Volunteers researched them to see if they met the criteria (James Manfield, Joanne Campbell, Joseph Grose, Marie Bouverie, Alfred Cockerill). The Panel met on 4<sup>th</sup> March and, after much deliberation, James Manfield and Marie Bouverie were selected to be honoured on the Names Boards. Funding and Listed Building Consent to put new boards in the Great Hall corridor are being sought.</p> <p>The subjects for the Blue Plaques will be nominated via public consultation, which will be published on various NBC media platforms and will be launched on 16<sup>th</sup> March for 6 weeks. The Panel will be asked to shortlist 8 subjects from the nominations to be researched to ensure compliance with the criteria. The Panel will meet to choose the final 4 nominees location of the plaques will be agreed, permissions and consents sought and the plaques created and unveiled.</p> |
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|  |                       |                     |             | <p><b>Update August 2020</b></p> <p>Listed Building Consent has been granted for the installation of the Names Boards but there was a special condition imposed. This has been addressed and an application made to Planning Department to discharge the Condition. The response date for this is expected to be 14<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p>Quotes have been obtained for the lettering on the Boards and is Circa £2K per board (the lettering used is gold leaf)</p> <p>There has been some discussion over Mary Bouverie due to one of her distant relations and a paper will be submitted to CMB for the final go-ahead.</p> <p>Blue plaques part of the project hasn't moved forward due to the Covid19 lockdown. However, the project is underway again and a meeting in early September has been scheduled with a view to going to public consultation in October 2020.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to promote our</li> </ul> | Leader of the Council | Communications Team | Autumn 2019 | The communications manager has contacted the council's twinning association leads with a view to discussing this as a possibility. There is a twinning  |

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| <p>cultural heritage with Marlborg are investigated.</p>  | <p>Marketing and Communications Manager</p>           |  |                | <p>visit due from Marburg to Northampton in 2019 and an attractive offer is being developed for them to enjoy and feed back on their return.</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/> Any such activity will need to be revisited once we are past the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic</p>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding is sought to maintain and upkeep monuments around the town, such as Eleanor Cross, the Tram Terminals and other historic buildings.</li> </ul> | <p>Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise</p> | <p>Head of Economic Development and Regeneration</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>There are limited funding streams in relation to heritage assets and in order to tap into them the monument must be on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register. The Queen Eleanor Cross is on the risk register funding has been sourced from Historic England regarding the project. The cross is the only monument on the list. Very few heritage funding organisations offer grants to public bodies for maintenance and upkeep purposes. We have successfully secured funding for the Notre Dame project, (the site is not protected formally).</p> <p>In addition there are plans for a monument clean-up at St Giles Church in preparation for Mayflower 400. The year-long commemoration marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mayflower's pioneering voyage starts in November 2019. The Mayflower 400 events programme will share the values of migration, tolerance, freedom and democracy and tell the story</p> |

of a ship and its passengers and the trail will attract visitors to Northampton

**Update March 2020**

Work is now complete on renovation of the Eleanor Cross and it has received some high-profile coverage in Britain magazine (and of course more locally).

**August 2020**

Visual structural surveys have been completed for all of the Monuments within the borough. Works required as a result of these will be considered as part of future year capital bids.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Co-Ordinator role similar to that of the Tourism Executive of Leicestershire Promotions Limited is established in conjunction with Britain's Best Surprise aspirations for a Destination Management Organisation.</li> </ul> | <p>Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety</p> <p>Marketing and Communications Manager</p> | <p>Marketing and Communications Manager</p> <p>Funding Required</p> | <p>To be considered as part of the Unitary programme</p> | <p>Initial discussions have taken place with Britain's Best Surprise over its involvement in delivering the new Destination Management Plan for Northamptonshire. Further discussion is needed as there is currently an aspiration at board level to hand responsibility over to local authorities in Northamptonshire for delivery. If sufficient funding can be identified countywide, there might be scope for this to be delivered independent of local authority control, but still meeting their aspirations.</p> <p><b>Update October 2019</b><br/>There might be scope to consider this as part of a place marketing exercise which Northampton Forward is set to embark on in the coming months</p> <p><b>Update March 2020</b><br/>It is proposed that this action is transferred to be considered as part of the Unitary programme</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Cultural Strategy for the Borough is developed to look at investment, opportunities,</li> </ul>  | <p>Leader of the Council</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>   | <p>Chief Executive</p>  | <p>In Progress</p>                                       | <p>Discussions began in the autumn 2018 with the Chief Executive of the Royal &amp; Derngate on how best this could be developed. Further discussions are planned to progress the development of a Cultural Group that will lead on the creation of a new</p>   |

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| <p>infrastructure to promote Northampton and grow the cultural sector, to make an application to be the City of Culture 2025.</p> |  |  |  | <p>Cultural Strategy for the town.</p> <p><b>Update August 2019</b></p> <p>Further discussions took place in March 2019 and wider discussions have since taken place. The meeting in May 2019 involved representatives from the university, Screen Northants, NN Contemporary, Business Improvement District, Engine Creative and NMPAT.</p> <p><b>Update October 2019</b></p> <p>In early October the Chief Executive and a range of colleagues from across the cultural sector in Northampton met and started to explore the development of a Cultural Compact for the town. Toby Norman-Wright, Senior Relationship Manager from the Arts Council, was also at the meeting and he is very keen that we submit a proposal to them to be one of the early adopters. A Cultural Compact is essentially a partnership beyond just the cultural sector, but also involves the business sector as well as health, and the voluntary and community sector. The view is, once established, to develop several key priorities as well as a broader cultural strategy for the town. This will very much play into the wider work that we are doing and where we see culture as a unique selling point of Northampton</p> |
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|  |  |  | <p><b>Update December 2019</b><br/>A proposal was submitted to the Arts Council for funding to develop a Cultural Compact for the town. In December ACE confirmed we had been successful in securing monies to develop the Compact. Work on this will begin early in 2020</p> <p><b>Update March 2020</b><br/>Work is continuing with regard to the development of the cultural compact and an action plan is being developed and a Job Description and Person Specification is being written for the appointment of a cultural compact director. The director will lead on the production of an ambitious and outward looking 10 year strategy and a highly focused 5 year business plan to amplify the social and economic impact of culture, secure additional investment and drive measurable progress towards a set of shared priorities and ambitions.</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/>Limited progress since March due to Covid and the cultural sector in Northampton have been focused on their own areas of activity. Work has now started regarding advertising a role to progress this which will be advertised in in September 2020</p> |
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**Recommendation 2:**

As part of the induction process for Councillors, a leaflet of pamphlet on the history of Northampton is given to all Members. The same leaflet is available for events such as Heritage weekends.

| Action | Lead Cabinet Member & lead responsible Officer     | Resources required/available                               | Target date                                   | Achievement/Completed   |
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|        | Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety | Funding may be required to design and produce the leaflets | In Progress and due for completion April 2020 | <p>A timeline of significant events and dates has been developed as background research for what will be the new history galleries in the redeveloped Central Museum and Art Gallery. This can be developed into a useful and meaningful leaflet for use at events such as Heritage weekends and also for museum visitors and Councillors. It is envisaged that the majority of the information will be available online as part of the Museums Digital offer, this will negate the requirement to produce a large number of paper copies.</p> <p><b>Update December 2019</b><br/>First stage of the museum website is under development and will launch in March 2020.</p> |

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|   |  |  |  | <p>This is primarily core visitor information and public programme. Digital downloads of this nature will form part of phase 2 development, timescales to be agreed.</p> <p><b>Update March 2020</b><br/>The new museum website is due to launch on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2020. The first stage of the website is focusing on visitor information and public programme activity as all staff resource has been dedicated to the museum development. The timeline, along with more detailed collections content, will form part of the second phase.</p> <p><b>Update August 2020</b><br/>The museum website launch has been delayed due to Covid 19. The website will be launched towards the end of September as part of the pre-opening marketing for the museum re-opening.</p> |
| <p><b>Recommendation 4:</b><br/>Giving consideration to Unitary Status, civic pride and ceremonies are protected.</p> |  |  |  |  |

| Action  | Lead Cabinet Member & lead responsible Officer | Resources required/available | Target date | Achievement/Completed  |
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| Undertake a Community Governance Review in preparation for a new Town Council | Leader<br><br>Chief Executive / Borough        |                              | Completed   | A specific task and finish group has been established to progress this. A community governance review is being undertaken<br><br><b>Update August 2019</b><br>A Cross Party member group was established |

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| for Northampton | Secretary |  |  | <p>in Autumn 2018 to begin work on a community governance review (CGR). CGR Phase 1 consultation was undertaken and finalised in late Spring 2019 with a report to Council in June.</p> <p><b>Update October 2019</b><br/>Phase 2 consultation is due to finish on 8<sup>th</sup> November leading to a final report to Council.</p> <p><b>Update March 2020</b><br/>Phase 2 of the consultation was completed and a report was taken to Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> February with all recommendations, including the making of the Community Governance Reorganisation Order creating a Northampton Town Council of 21wards and 25 councillors, agreed. The report is below:</p> <p><a href="http://www.northamptonboroughcouncil.com/councillors/documents/s61690/CCommunity%20Governance%20Report%20with%20all%20appendices%20as%20one%20document.pdf">http://www.northamptonboroughcouncil.com/councillors/documents/s61690/CCommunity%20Governance%20Report%20with%20all%20appendices%20as%20one%20document.pdf</a></p> |
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**Recommendation 5:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report in six months' time.

| <b>Action</b>   | <b>Lead Cabinet Member &amp; lead responsible Officer</b> | <b>Resources required/available</b> | <b>Target date</b> | <b>Achievement/Completed</b> |
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| Monitoring of the accepted recommendations – O&S Committee 11 November 2019, as per O&S Committee meeting 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2019 | Tracy Tiff  |                                     | 11 November 2019   |                              |

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## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7 September 2020

### NI157a %age major planning applications determined in 13 weeks or agreed extension

#### Type of Major Applications

The classification/threshold of major applications is set by the MHCLG as follows:

##### Large Scale Major Development

- 200 dwellings or more; or 4 hectares or more site area
- Offices/Research and Development/Light Industrial 10,000 sqm or more; or 2 hectares or more site area
- General Industrial/Warehousing 10,000 sqm or more; or 2 hectares or more site area
- Retail Distribution and Servicing 10,000 sqm or more; or 2 hectares or more site area
- Gypsy and Travellers 200 or more pitches
- All other large scale major developments 10,000 sqm or more; or 2 hectares or more site area

##### Small Scale Major Development

- 10 to 199 dwellings; or 0.5 to 2 hectares site area
- Offices/Research and Development/Light Industrial between 1,000 to 9,999 sqm; or site is 1 hectare and less than 2 hectares
- General Industrial/Warehousing 1,000 to 9,999 sqm; or site is 1 hectare and less than 2 hectares
- Retail Distribution and Servicing 1,000 to 9,999 sqm; or site is 1 hectare and less than 2 hectares
- Gypsy and Travellers 10 to 199 pitches
- All other small scale major developments 1,000 to 9,999 sqm; or site is 1 hectare and less than 2 hectares

Both large scale and small scale major applications have a determination period of 13 weeks, unless an Environmental Statement is submitted with the application, then the determination period will be 16 weeks.

#### Legislative Background

The time periods for decision making for planning applications are set under paragraph 34 (2a) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015 (as amended). For major applications, the period is “13 weeks beginning with the day immediately following that on which the application is received by the local planning authority”.

Paragraph 34 (2C) allows for extension of time to be agreed between the applicants and the Local Planning Authorities.

Development Management are required to complete PS1 & 2 returns to MHCLG quarterly to report the number of applications received and determined during the quarter. The PS2 element of the return details, by application types, the number of applications determined with

8/13 weeks or with an extension of time agreed with the applicant/agent. If any applications are determined 'out of time' they would be reported within the PS2 return. Planning Services also records this data internally monthly for input into the corporate performance monitoring system (P+).

### **Performance in 2019/20; 2018/19**

Development Management have achieved 100% performance, with extensions of time, for major applications in both of the time periods.

### **Why Extensions of Time are required**

The government acknowledges that most major applications can be complex and there could be many related technical issues to be resolved to make development acceptable. In addition, it is very likely that major applications would require S106 agreements to secure planning obligations e.g. affordable housing, education contributions and highway improvement works.

The negotiation of the details of the S106 agreements could often be protracted, in particular when viability assessments are required. The process would often bring the decision period outside 13 weeks. Hence extensions of time are allowed and stated in the planning legislation.

It is considered to be good practice that the Borough Council makes use of this tool in agreement with the applicant. This ensures that the Council can fully assess the impact of the proposal, and negotiate any amendments, before completing the complex legal agreements in order to ensure that the impact of the proposal is mitigated and managed. Extensions of time can also ensure that the public has the opportunity to comment on all aspects of the proposal, as well as giving the applicants the confidence that the applications are being dealt with in a timely manner.



**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 September 2020**

#### **BRIEFING NOTE:**

#### **SCRUTINY PANEL 1 – FOOD POVERTY**

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned Scrutiny Panel 1 to undertake comprehensive Scrutiny activity regarding food poverty
- 1.2 Membership of the Scrutiny Panel comprises Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair); Councillor Cathrine Russell (Deputy Chair); Councillors Bottwood, Roberts and Smith. There are two co-optees to the Scrutiny Panel.
- 1.3 The scope of the Review was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and evidence gathering has now re-commenced after being put on hold in March 2020.

#### **2 UPDATE**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Panel met in July 2020 and considered a number of conclusions and recommendations for inclusion in its final report. The Scrutiny Panel will meet again in September 2020 to finalise its report and the Chair will present this to the Committee at its November 2020 for consideration and approval.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Scrutiny Panel Protocol, the Chair of this Scrutiny Panel will provide written progress reports to future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.

#### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the progress report is noted.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, on behalf of Councillor Dennis Meredith, Chair, Scrutiny Panel 1 – Food Poverty

19 August 2020

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**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 September 2020**

#### **BRIEFING NOTE:**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME**

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group to undertake comprehensive Scrutiny activity regarding gangs and knife crime
- 1.2 Membership of the Scrutiny Panel comprises Councillor Graham Walker (Chair); Councillor Jane Birch (Deputy Chair); Councillors Aziz, Lane and Russell.
- 1.3 The scope of the Review was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and evidence gathering has continued. Meetings were postponed in March 2020 and have now re-commenced.

#### **2 UPDATE**

- 2.1 The Working Group has a meeting scheduled in September 2020 and it is envisaged that the Chair of the Working Group will present the final report to the Committee at its November 2020 meeting.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Scrutiny Panel Protocol, the Chair of this Scrutiny Panel will provide written progress reports to future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.

#### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That the progress report is noted.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, on behalf of Councillor Graham Walker, Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Working Group – Gangs and Knife Crime

19 August 2020

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**NORTHAMPTON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 September 2020**

#### **BRIEFING NOTE:**

#### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – O&S PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: TRIAL OF BUY BACK PROPERTIES: THE USE OF THE BUY BACK ARRANGEMENTS TO REDUCE THE COUNCIL'S USE OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group to undertake pre-decision Scrutiny regarding the use of the buy back arrangements to reduce the Council's use of temporary accommodation.
- 1.2 Membership of the Working comprises Councillor Emma Roberts (Chair); Councillors G Eales, Lane and Smith.

### **2 UPDATE**

- 2.1 The Working Group held two meetings to undertake this pre-decision scrutiny exercise..
- 2.2 At its meeting held on 17 August 2020, the Working Group undertook pre-decision scrutiny on the report - Housing Acquisition Options', seeking the necessary authority to extend the Housing Revenue Account borrowing to cover the cost of purchasing new and existing homes, that was to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 19 August 2020.
- 2.3 The Working Group noted that the properties would be let as permanent homes to homeless households that have been living longest in the most expensive temporary accommodation (TA). Although it was originally intended that the homes would be used as TA, it was later decided to use the homes as permanent accommodation in order to rehouse people as quickly as possible and avoid the extra cost incurred in respect of furnishings and voids.
- 2.4 The Working Group enquired about the 30 one-bedroom homes that are to be purchased and let at social rents – subject to Homes England

agreeing to provide the required amount of capital funding; these would be purchased on the open market and let to rough sleepers.

- 2.5 The intention was to expand the scheme to include new homes and homes that have not previously been owned by the Council.

### **3 CONCLUSIONS**

- 3.1 In concluding the pre-decision scrutiny exercise, the Working Group highlighted the need for governance, due diligence and oversight to ensure that properties are repaired, refurbished and let as quickly as possible.
- 3.2 The Working Group further concluded that it would recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that it continues monitoring this issue. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing was supportive of this further monitoring that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is provided with regular updates on the housing acquisitions programme.
- 3.3 The Working Group conveys its thanks to the Director of Housing and Wellbeing for the speed in providing the report to the Working Group and acknowledged the high quality of the report.

### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 That it is recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that it receives regular updates on the housing acquisitions programme to future meetings.

Author: Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, on behalf of Councillor Emma Roberts, Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Working Group

19 August 2020