

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Monday, 11 January 2021

Councillors Present: Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair); Councillor Graham Walker (Deputy Chair); Councillors Tony Ansell, Aziz, Gareth Eales, Penny Flavell, Andrew Kilbride, Sam Kilby-Shaw, Dennis Meredith, Emma Roberts, Cathrine Russell and Zoe Smith

Councillor Tim Hadland – Cabinet Member
Councillor Mike Hallam – Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor Stephen Hibbert – Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing
Councillor Anna King, Chair, CSP and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Engagement

Officers Kevin Langley, Director of Economic Development
Phil Harris, Director of Housing and Wellbeing
Vicki Rockall, Community Safety Manager
Chris Carvell, Environmental Services Manager
Geraldine Mahney, Customer Services Manager
Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager
Ed Bostock, Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES

There were none.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 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 UPDATE ON HOUSING ACQUISITION SCHEME

Phil Harris, Director of Housing and Wellbeing, presented the briefing note to the Committee, highlighting the salient points.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- In response to a query regarding HMO (Houses in multiple occupancy), the Committee heard that 15 units would be provided, they would each have ensuite facilities. These properties must be acquired in this financial year.
- In answer to a question relating to budgets going forward, Phil Harris confirmed that this will still be the Housing Revenue Account and NPH, as the ALMO, will continue as the ALMO going forward.
- The purchase of family homes will be part of the budget. One bedded properties are only available this year; family homes are included within the Housing Capital Programme.
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that should a Council property that had been purchased under the right to buy scheme, was to be sold within ten years, it must be offered to the Local Authority, for its value, as “first refusal” under “buy back arrangements.” In addition, Officers do see other properties advertised for sale, the properties do not have to be ex-Council properties but must be either freehold or leasehold by the Council.

The Chair requested that a further update is provided to the Committee at its February 2021 meeting.

Councillor Hibbert and Phil Harris were thanked for their informative address.

AGREED: That a further update is provided to the meeting on 15 February 2021.

6 CSP PERFORMANCE

Anna King, Chair of the CSP, presented the briefing note that detailed the community safety partnership priorities and the key points were highlighted to the Committee.

The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

- Multi-Agency meetings will re-commence shortly and be held remotely.
- In answer to a query relating to the enforcement of breaches to legislation in relation to Covid-19, the Committee heard that a lot of enforcement has taken place. For example between 24 December and 31 December 2020, 202 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued; 130 gatherings were intercepted. There was a lot of Police presence.
- Wardens have been making visits regarding untaxed vehicles
- In answer to a concern about anti-social behaviour and fly tipping, Councillor King confirmed that the Park Rangers are vigilant, and should Members see any fly tipping for this to be reported.

Councillor King and Vicki Rockall were thanked for their comprehensive updated

AGREED: That the update is noted.

7 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook performance management scrutiny of:

MPE02 – Number of new jobs created on NWEZ.

Councillor Hadland presented a briefing note detailing information regarding the above and highlighted the main points. From the briefing note, the Committee had no questions for the Cabinet Member.

CS14a – Percentage of OSS customers with an appointment seen on time

The Committee received an in-depth briefing note that provided information about the above.

The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

- It was confirmed that it is not advertised that the One Stop Shop is open, but Officers are working closely with partners and face to face appointments do take place. The Committee was pleased that the One Stop Shop is open.
- Due to lockdown, the Daphne Bus initiative is not taking place.

ESC04 – Percentage of household waste recycled

The Cabinet Member for Environment presented a comprehensive briefing note. The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

It was noted that expectations of 33% for chargeable garden waste had been surpassed.

PP53a – Percentage of service requests

The Committee noted a briefing note regarding the above and asked questions, made comment and heard:

- The parks are very busy currently and bins are getting full quickly
- It was noted that Covid19 is driving service requests and it is endeavoured that there is as least as possible impact on services as possible, for example services to black bin and recycling collection remains unchanged. It was acknowledged that there could have been improved communication regarding the changes to some services such as food waste and graffiti.

- The waste collection service was commended.

The Committee commented on the missed bins target and asked for a full report to the next meeting on this.

AGREED: That a briefing note on an overview of missed bins targets including lessons learnt is provided to the next meeting of this Committee.

8 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

It was reiterated that a report on ESC01 – missed bin collections would be reported to the next meeting of this Committee.

It was further requested that a briefing note in respect of HML07 – number of households prevented in becoming homeless is presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

AGREED: That a briefing on ESC01 and a briefing note on HML07 is presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

9 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS

The Committee received a verbal update on Cabinet's response to the following reports, noting that Cabinet's response would be formally considered at its meeting on 20 January 2021:

Food Poverty

The Cabinet Member highlighted key points:

- DEFRA has provided a grant that will be administered by the Hope Centre, by a Multi-Agency Group.
- Councillors are assisting on community projects
- Free2Talk is leading on a project providing laptops for school children
- When the report has been received by Cabinet, a copy of the Overview and Scrutiny report will be provided to the MPs, highlighting specific recommendations

Knife Crime

The Cabinet Member highlighted the salient points:

- Work is taking place regarding the remote delivery of the Community Safety Conference
- Knife crime and gangs is a key priority for the Community Safety Partnership

AGREED: That a further response on Cabinet's response to the two Overview and Scrutiny reports – Food Poverty and Gangs & Knife Crime is presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

10 MONITORING OF ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received the action plan detailing progress against the accepted recommendations contained within the report- Culture and Tourism.

The Chair highlighted that some of the recommendations have been passed to Northampton Town Council and queried how these would be taken forward. Discussions would take place. A meeting is scheduled to discuss blue plaques and the green berets. The Committee commented:

- All the recommendations should also transfer to West Northamptonshire Council
- An updated action plan should be presented to the next meeting of this Committee

AGREED: That an updated version of the action plan – culture and tourism is presented to the next meeting of this Committee.

11 POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

There was none.

12 URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 19:30 hours.