



Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

28th April 2014

As part of our commitment to help local businesses and bring new life to our Town Centre, we have extended our free parking scheme to allow people to park for free at weekends and for two hours on weekdays. The scheme will make it cheaper for people to visit our Town Centre, and even more convenient for them to stay and enjoy the things our town has to offer.

The economic regeneration of our town has been continuing to gain momentum with announcements that global brands Cosworth and Churches Shoes have committed to expand their businesses in Northampton. This Administration has been working closely with these and other companies for many months to help them expand and create new skilled jobs in our town that will benefit local people and the wider local economy. The commitment of firms such as these is a real vote of confidence in what this Administration is achieving in Northampton, and demonstrates why we have been named as the top place in the country to do business in a recent Experian business report.

On 9th April Cabinet approved the extension of licensing for Houses of Multiple Occupation and the structure of the Arms Length Management Organisation to provide better management of social housing in the borough. These two decisions will help improve standards and living conditions for thousands of people across our town, and together with the creation of 100 new council houses, reinforces this Administration's commitment to support council and private tenants in Northampton.

Over the Easter weekend work began on the demolition of the old Greyfriars building with the removal of the bridges linking the building to the Grosvenor Centre. With the bridges removed, demolition work on the main building can begin and the site will be cleared to make way for much needed new retail development in the heart of our town.

On 14th March I was honoured to take part in the ceremony to break the soil at the new development at Sixfields. Delivering this long overdue project has been a major achievement for this Administration, and along with the submission of planning applications from The Saints and Steelbacks, shows that we are delivering on our promise to support Northampton's sports clubs, and repairing the damage done by the previous administration.

The £400,000 project to help restore Delapre Abbey is underway, and is the latest project to safeguard Northampton's much loved heritage assets, and to bring them back into popular use. This Administration is committed to protecting our history and investing in our future, and projects such as the restoration of Delapre Abbey achieve both of those goals for the benefit of the whole town.

The Borough Council has joined forces with The Northamptonshire Credit Union to provide the public with access to their services here at the Guildhall. On 4th April I was privileged to launch the project that will make it easier for the credit union to help people who are experiencing financial difficulties or are in need of financial advice.

Community Safety

All Crime, Violence and Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) continue its downward trend and exceed the annual Community Safety Partnership targets. To date there has been a 16.3% reduction in overall crime (3,265 less crimes) and a 16.4% reduction in violence (579 less crimes), continuing the consistent downward trend and exceeding the annual target. SAC also continues on its downward trend with 25.4% reduction (1038 less crimes), with very low volume in January and February 2014.

Multi-Agency Weeks of Action continue in priority locations, the most recent being held in Spring Boroughs/Semilong and Spencer/St James. As seen in other areas, engagement with the local communities has been good, with a wide range of agencies providing advice and support around a number of topics.

The Killing with Kindness campaign continues with a multi-agency event held on the Market Square on 3rd April 2014. The Community Safety Partnership is now formalising activity for 2014/15, and is utilising the data from the annual Partnership Strategic Assessment.

Councillor David Mackintosh
Leader of the Council