



Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

2nd June 2014

On 18th April I was honoured to attend a service to remember Australian servicemen buried in Northampton as part of the commemorations for ANZAC Day. The Service paid respects to nine servicemen who died of wounds and disease in local military hospitals in Northampton during the First World War. As part of our commitment to the Armed Forces, it is important we recognise the bravery of our Armed Forces and our Commonwealth Allies like Australia and New Zealand.

The exciting line up of spring and summer events in and around the town is now underway. On 7th May I was privileged to attend the closing ceremony of Stage One of the first-ever Women's Cycling Tour in Northampton Town Centre. It was a great event to have in Northampton and it was pleased to see so many people lining the streets to cheer on the race.

The ever popular Delapre Beer Festival, which was saved from cancellation by this Administration, took place at the end of May. This year it was a pleasure to see the Phipps NBC brewery take part in the festival after recently returning to Northampton after four decades.

The regeneration of our town has been ongoing with the first demolition work at the old Greyfriars Bus Station taking place over the Easter Weekend. This was done with minimal disruption, and demolition is due to be completed by the end of the year.

Work has also begun started on the £400,000 repairs at Delapre Abbey. The work is part of our commitment to this valuable heritage asset, and our pledge to bring it back into wider use to attract more visitors to the town and for the benefit of residents.

On 1st May I attended a ceremony with Local Growth Minister, Kris Hopkins MP to mark the beginning of Cosworth Engineering's new £12 million Advanced Manufacturing Centre. This will be the first facility of its kind in the UK and we have worked hard to ensure that it will be located here in Northampton. It is another vote of confidence in what we are achieving here in Northampton, and will help create up to 70 new jobs and cement Cosworth's future in our town.

In May the plans for Project Angel were approved by the Planning Committee. The development will transform derelict land in the heart of Northampton into a new headquarters and office building, saving tax payers millions of pounds and generating a massive cash injection to the Town Centre. The site is within the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone and forms an important part of our Town Centre improvement strategy.

The new student accommodation at nearby St John's will be in full occupation later this summer, bringing more than 400 students right into the heart of our town. Within a few years, the University of Northampton will consolidate its campuses at the former Nunn Mills power station site, bringing thousands more students right to traders' doorsteps.

When this Administration took control of the council in 2011, Northampton Borough Council had been rated as the second worst authority outside of London for bringing homes up to the decent standard, and tenants were suffering as a result. Northampton Borough Council has historically been a bad landlord, which is why we have restructured the Housing Department and have set up Northampton Partnership Homes to give tenants the landlord they deserve rather than what they have had to put up with in the past. This has been a key policy for this Administration, and I am pleased that from January next year Northampton Partnership Homes will take control of 12,000 council homes, and we have taken a major step towards improving the lives of our tenants.

Community Safety

Northampton has seen significant reductions in crime during 2013/14, ending the year with an overall reduction in crime of 17.1%. All key crime types have fallen, with Serious Acquisitive Crime achieving an overall reduction of 27.7%. This was primarily due to low levels of vehicle crime and undercutting the high volume of dwelling burglaries last winter. Nationally Northampton has had the 6th greatest reduction of all Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) for this period. Anti-Social Behaviour has seen a mixed performance with a 17.1% reduction in criminal damage but a 1.5% increase in reported anti-social behaviour incidents. Reductions in violent crime have continued to see a reduction of 17.4% for the year. All but one month of the year had fewer violent crimes than the equivalent month in 2012/13.

Councillor David Mackintosh

Leader of the Council