



Report of the Leader of the Council

Northampton Borough Council

14th July 2014

To mark Armed Forces Week flags were flown outside of The Guildhall and the public were encouraged to come to the Town Centre and welcome home the brave soldiers of the 9th/12th Lancers who are part of our community. This was the first time the regiment had had the opportunity to march through the streets of Northampton since being awarded Freedom of the Borough in 2012. Northampton is immensely proud of the brave men and women of the 9th/12th Royal Lancers, and it was a huge honour to be able to show our appreciation by welcoming them back to the UK and have them parade through our town as part of Armed Forces Day on 28th June.

On 8th June we commemorated the seventieth anniversary of the D-Day landings to remember the brave men and women who fought against tyranny. The town held a special service at the War Memorial in Abington Square, followed by a military parade through the Town Centre, where more than 100 representatives of the Armed Forces, both serving and retired, along with members of the cadet forces gathered to show their respect. This year our country stands united in showing our respect for our armed forces, past and present. It was good to see everyone at the War Memorial in Abington Square. Every community was touched by the events of World War 2, and when it mattered we all came together, so it was fitting to see everyone come together again as our thoughts turn to events 70 years ago.

On 2nd June we hosted the latest event to announce new projects, and update the public on ongoing projects, under the Northampton Alive banner. Under this administration the regeneration of the town has really taken off, with cranes on the skyline and 40 projects underway or already completed across Northampton. With our partners we are driving Northampton forward and turning it into a town we can be proud of again.

Northampton has again received national recognition as a great place to do business. A report published by the think tank Centre for Cities has listed our town as one of the top ten places in the UK for new small and medium sized businesses. This is testament to the hard work being undertaken to attract investment and jobs to Northampton and foster a climate where people can do business.

Last month figures were published which show a fall in unemployment in the town. With the economy now recovering from the recession, and businesses like Carlsberg, Church's Shoes and Cosworth creating jobs, it's clear our plans to stimulate the local economy are working. There are now more jobs and fewer unemployed in Northampton than when we took control in 2011, and it is important that we continue the work we have been doing to make Northampton the prosperous place we all want it to be.

The summer events programme has got off to a great start with another successful Delapre Beer Festival, the Grand Prix event in the Town Centre, Northampton Music Festival, Films on the Waterfront in Becketts Park, and of course we still have the second Alive at Delapre to look forward later in the month. It is great to see so much happening in and around our town as events such as these bring people into Northampton to enjoy all the great things we have to offer.

On 1st June the victorious Northampton Saints joined their supporters in the Market Square to celebrate winning both the Aviva Premiership and Amlin Challenge Cup. Over 30,000 people lined the streets of the town, and we had the privilege of welcoming the players and coaching staff and congratulating them at The Guildhall. Once again The Saints have done us proud bringing not one but two trophies back home and being crowned champions of England. It was fantastic to meet with the players at The Guildhall to let them know, on behalf of the town, how proud we are of their achievements and what they mean to our town. It was great to see so many people on the streets, which were a sea of black, green and gold.

Community Safety

Serious Acquisitive Crime continues on its downward trend with an overall reduction of 5.1%, a reduction of 6.6% in burglary and 5.1% in vehicle crime. Criminal Damage continues on its gradual downward trend with a 0.6% reduction.

I was pleased to officially open The Castle Community Hub (formerly Spring Boroughs Community Café) with Cllr Mary Markham and representatives from Northamptonshire Police on 21st June. Led by the Police and the Borough Council, the facility is now providing an improved multi-agency presence within the area, creating opportunities for the community to engage on a regular basis.

The first Week of Action is being held on Semilong from 21st July. As with previous events there will be a range of agencies involved, providing a number of activities, opportunities and support for the community. Planning is underway for a further four weeks of action during 2014/15 in hot spot locations across the town.

Councillor David Mackintosh
Leader of the Council