



## Report of the Leader of the Council

### Northampton Borough Council

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016

#### **Local Government Simplification**

Members will be aware that Councils in Oxfordshire have announced that they will no longer prepare proposals for local government simplification which impact outside their county area. Members will also be aware that the new Leader of the County Council, who I congratulate on her appointment, has announced that she considers that, given the need to implement that County Council's Next Generation model for service commissioning and delivery, discussions regarding potential local government reorganisation should take place over a longer timescale.

It is this Council's stated position that local government reorganisation including a unitary Council based on Northampton should be supported. I will continue to work with the Leaders of all Councils in Northamptonshire to review and promote consideration of local government reorganisation, and to work with officers to develop the case for a unitary council based on Northampton.

#### **LGSS**

In 2018 the current arrangement for this Council to delegate certain services to the LGSS Joint Committee arrangements between Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire County Councils will come to an end. Work has therefore started on reviewing the options for the future of these services. The Council also faces further major changes in services in 2018 when the contract with Enterprise Managed Services comes to an end.

To facilitate consideration of these major future contractual changes and in order to consolidate the Council's core capacity to deal with culture and organisational change, notice has been given to LGSS to bring the delegation of Human Resources and related services and Legal services to an end one year earlier in 2017. LGSS will continue to provide Finance and related services, Revenues and Benefits and IT Services, with the future options for these services to be considered over the coming year.

#### **Rough Sleepers Strategy**

Cabinet will shortly consider a new strategy to manage the issue of rough sleepers in Northampton. This strategy has been developed in partnership between the Council, voluntary and community organisations, statutory agencies and many interested people working with this issue. The purpose of this strategy is to reduce rough sleeping and promote positive change for this key need group.

#### **Cultural Quarter**

The Cultural Quarter continues to develop positively for the town. Following on from the development of the Premier Inn, the works underway to create the Guildhall Hotel, the plans for the new Museum and Art Gallery, the construction of the new County Council HQ, the planned new screen for Errol Flynn Filmhouse, the new Hygge Bar and the project to build a creative industries hub in the Vulcan Works, Cabinet were pleased to agree the further development of those works in partnership with the University this month.

This further development will bring students, the International Institute of Leather Technology and related University activity into the Quarter working alongside the Council and other Quarter partners to further develop this exciting new offer in the town centre.

### **Greyfriars**

I have met each of the developers who are developing proposals for the Greyfriars site. We had very useful and positive discussions and I am pleased that they each showed considerable understanding of and commitment to what the development of this site can do to help enhance the town centre offer. Further meetings will take place over the coming weeks and proposals will come forward for public consideration as soon as possible.

### **Voluntary and Community Sector**

Councillor King reports separately on the decisions made on community funding in 2016/17. I am delighted that this Council has continued its proud record of funding the community and voluntary sector.

In addition to this funding the Council is working very closely with the sector on key issues, to help everyone involved get more from their efforts. The Council has helped access further funds, for example on dealing with issues of domestic violence and abuse, and has also developed delivery partnerships with key agencies, such as with Community Law and the CAB in the One Stop Shop at the Guildhall. The Council has also helped a number of important community and voluntary organisations through the deployment of assets and capital investment.

This Council will continue to work with the community and voluntary sector in a positive and supportive manner.

### **NTFC**

An excellent public parade was held for Northampton Town Football Club on the 8th May. I would like to thank all councillors who attended.

### **Civic Matters**

Members are reminded that the following civic events are coming up and members are encouraged to take part:

- 12th June: Mayoral Civic and Charity Sunday, service at All Saints at 10.30am. Members are requested to process from the Guildhall at 10.20am and to arrive by 10.00am to allow good time to robe.
- 20th June: The Armed Forces Week Flag will be flown from the Guildhall at 10.00am. Members are welcome to attend the flag raising.
- 25th June: On Armed Forces Day there will be a Parade organised by the Royal British Legion from Eastgate to the Market Square where the Mayor and the Lord Lieutenant will take the salute. The Parade will muster from 10.00am and parade to the Market Square at 10.30am. Later in the day, at 4.20pm there will be a fly-past by a Hawker Hurricane. There will be various activities on the Market Square during the day.
- 30th June / 1st July: Members have been circulated with a programme of events at Abington Park Museum to make the 100th year since the Battle of the Somme. This will include an overnight vigil and an act of remembrance at the Museum on the morning of the 1st July.

- 30th July: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment will exercise the Freedom of the Borough on this date, with a Parade, and the Mayor and the Lord Lieutenant will inspect the Parade.

This Parade coincides with the laying up of the Battalion's old Regimental Colour at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where the Regiment has a Chapel. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion carries forward the traditions of a number of forbear Regiments including the 48<sup>th</sup> Foot, the Northamptonshire Regiment.

Detailed arrangements are being made and notice will be circulated to all members in due course.

**Councillor Mary Markham**  
**Leader of the Council**