

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 12 November 2018**

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair), Councillor Graham Walker (Deputy Chair); Councillors Aziz, Jane Birch, Alan Bottwood, Gareth Eales, Paul Joyce, Dennis Meredith, Cathrine Russell, and Brian Sargeant

Councillor Brandon Eldred, Cabinet Member for Finance  
Councillor James Hill, Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning  
Rick O'Farrell, Head of Economy, Assets and Culture  
Shelley Parker, Facilities Manager  
Paul Everard, Planning Policy and Heritage Manager  
Mike Kay, CEO, NPH

**Officers** Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

**Members of the Public** Norman Adams

**Press** James Averill, Democracy Reporter

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rufia Ashraf, Penny Flavell and Luke Graystone.

**2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2018 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

**3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

Norman Adams addressed the Committee on agenda item 7.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)**

Councillor Brian Sargeant declared an interest in agenda item 6 – hiring of rooms at the Guildhall as he would be hiring a room next year.

**5. HIMO RESEARCH**

Councillor James Hill, Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning, and Paul Everard, Planning Policy and Heritage Manager, presented the briefing paper on HIMO research, highlighting the salient points.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

In response to a query it was confirmed that this would be a local Policy.

Councillor Hill and Paul Everard were thanked for their address.

## **6. HIRING OF ROOMS AT THE GUILDHALL**

Councillor Brandon Eldred, Cabinet Member for Finance, Rick O'Farrell, Head of Economy, Assets and Culture, Shelley Parker, Facilities Manager, presented the briefing paper on hiring of rooms at the Guildhall, highlighting the salient points.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- In response to a query it was confirmed that the Office of the High Sheriff is offered room hire, free of charge, due to the prestige position within the borough and county.
- Marketing of the future catering contract would target caterers from all communities
- The Guildhall is positively marketed for events such as wedding receptions.
- The Guildhall has approved caterers for the catering
- Should a booking be taken for more than one room, a discount of 10% is applied
- The bar, in the Court Room, is used at events where it is requested

Councillor Eldred, Rick O'Farrell and Shelley Parker was thanked for her address.

## **7. TENANCIES AND HOUSING STOCK**

Norman Adams addressed the Committee commenting that in his opinion the report on Tenancies and Housing Stock contained historical data and was not up to date with a differential figure of 7. He commented on the date (HRA self-financing in 2012) the Council bought all its own housing stock and the changes made to right to buy. He referred to a Government commitment that right to buy sales would be replaced 1 for 1 but the housing stock in Northampton has decreased by 670 since 2012. Mr Adams commented that NPH has done good work and concluded his address by conveying his concerns about the declining housing stock.

Mr Adams was thanked for his address.

Mike Kay, Chief Executive, NPH presented the briefing paper on tenancies and housing stock, highlighting the salient points. He explained the reason for the difference in figures responding to Mr Adams and gave details of housing stock that had been developed and acquired in the last 18 months, providing details of further developments proposed with planning consent and those currently going through planning. It was anticipated that by 2019/20 we would be building more homes than those lost through right to buy.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- In response to a query regarding the Government's Right to Buy Policy, Mike Kay advised that nowhere in the country had the policy of one for one replacements been achieved.
- Discounts for right to buy are: up to 50% for a house, 70% for a flat – this funds around 30% of a replacement property(ies).
- There is a big need from the Councils waiting list, in particular for one and two bed properties.

Mike Kay was thanked for his address.

## **8. MONITORING OF O&S REPORTS**

### **8A NBC OWNED STREET LIGHTING**

Rick O'Farrell, Head of Economy, Assets and Culture presented a briefing paper on NBC owned street lighting, highlighting the salient points.

The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

- One third of the street lighting required replacement as it is not economically viable to repair them, a design plan is being worked up; it will probably consist of less lights, with better LED lighting which will be more cost effective to run.
- The Committee requested that it is made know to the public that the new lighting will be of better quality and will be improved lighting.
- Urgent action was taken on lighting that was categorised as dangerous.
- The Committee requested that it is investigated whether the street lighting can be included within the Report It app.

Rick O'Farrell was thanked for his address.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

## **9. CABINET RESPONSE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS**

The Committee noted Cabinet's response to its reports:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Dementia Friendly Town

The reports would be added to the Monitoring Work Programme and the Cabinet Member and Officers would be asked to attend the next meeting to provide an update.

## **10. SCRUTINY PANELS**

### **11. SCRUTINY PANEL 1**

Councillor Russell, Chair, Scrutiny Panel 1, presented the briefing note detailing the work of the Scrutiny Panel so far.

AGREED: That the information is noted.

### **12. SCRUTINY PANEL 2**

Councillor Sargeant, Chair, Scrutiny Panel 2, presented the briefing note detailing the work of the Scrutiny Panel so far.

AGREED: That the information is noted.

### **13. SCRUTINY PANEL 3**

Councillor Walker Chair, Scrutiny Panel 3, presented the briefing note detailing the work of the Scrutiny Panel so far.

AGREED: That the information is noted.

### **(A) SCRUTINY PANEL 4**

Councillor Smith Chair, Scrutiny Panel 4, presented the briefing note detailing the work of the Scrutiny Panel so far.

AGREED: That the information is noted.

## **14. O&S EVALUATION OF O&S REPORTS WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Lane Chair, of the Working Group , presented the briefing note detailing the work of the O&S Evaluation of O&S Reports Working Group so far.

AGREED: That the information is noted.

## **15. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTING AND MONITORING WORKING GROUP**

The Chair presented the terms of reference of the Reporting and Monitoring Working Group 2018/2019 for the Committee's approval.

AGREED: That the terms of reference of the Reporting and Monitoring Working Group 2018/2019, as attached at Annex 1, are approved.

## **16. POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE DECISION SCRUTINY**

There were none.

## **17. URGENT ITEMS**

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 19:16 hours