

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 1

Cllr Duffy to Cllr Hibbert

Domestic violence and abuse is a devastating crime that shatters the lives of victims and families. It is the second highest category of crime in Northampton

Many countries like Australia and New Zealand have found that a major reason why violence continues between the parties is because there is no alternative accommodation for the perpetrator to go to

What provision in Northampton is being made to rehouse the perpetrator?

What provision is there for those in private rental and leasehold properties if they suffer domestic violence and must vacate without the necessary notice, to avoid losing their deposits and therefore making it impossible to move to another property?

Response

The Council's priority will always be to ensure that the victims of domestic violence and abuse are able to remain safely in their home where it is their choice, and where it is safe to do so.

Where a perpetrator is unwilling or unable to move out of the accommodation and they continue to pose a risk to the person(s) they have been violent or abusive to, the Council will inform the victim of their legal options, including injunctions that order the perpetrator not to molest the victim(s) or not to live in the home or enter the surrounding area.

If the Council is the landlord, it will consider the scope for evicting the perpetrator and allowing the victim to remain in their home. However, where there is a probability of violence if the victim remains in their accommodation, the Council would not expect them to remain in, or return to, the accommodation until it is safe to do so. Temporary accommodation may be provided whilst action is taken to exclude or to arrest and detain a perpetrator.

The Council and Northampton Partnership Homes are both represented on Northampton's multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) which leads multi-agency safety planning for high-risk victims of domestic abuse and brings together the Police, independent domestic violence advisers, children's social services, health, social landlords and other relevant agencies. They share information and write a safety plan for each victim and family.

Perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse who are unable to find alternative accommodation should make an appointment to see a Housing Adviser in the Housing Advice & Options Team who will be able to provide them with advice on all of their housing options.

Where a person is living in private rented accommodation and is required to move out of their home suddenly – and without providing their landlord with the required notice – they should ask the landlord not to penalise them financially for the short notice. If the tenant asks the Council for help, the Housing Advice & Options Team will help them negotiate with the landlord and may lend them the deposit to secure another home before their first deposit is returned.

Cllr Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 2

Cllr Duffy to Cllr King

Please can NBC/WNA confirm the Department of Health and Social Care PHE's data agreement has been signed and receipt acknowledged to avoid what happened in Leicester when inaccurate Covid infection information was received

Response

I can confirm that question 2 should be addressed to the Public Health team at the County Council. The Local Outbreak Control Plan has been agreed at a countywide level and appropriate governance structures are being established with elected members involved to oversee this work.'

Cllr A King

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 3

Cllr Stone to Cllr Hadland

First can I say how thrilling it is to see the Cobblers come through at Wembley and lift the trophy. The demand for tickets this season is surely going to grow. This makes the questions we have about the club ever more important. Please may I ask the following?:-

1. We know the Memorandum of Understanding entered into in November 2015 between NBC & the club's owners is legally non-binding. But why are none of its commitments being honoured? This includes the commitment of the club's owners to complete the East Stand from their own funds given to the Council in 2015?

Response

We note there are six questions relating to Sixfields following the recent media stories over this. For some time, the football club have been keen to pursue development of land in the area of the Sixfields stadium, and have put forward ideas for a number of possible development schemes.

Although discussions are ongoing between the Club and the Council there are no agreements in place and any deal must deliver best value for the taxpayer.

The non-binding commitments in the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) entered into in November 2015, were made at a point in time and have, where possible been largely honoured.

There was no commitment given in the MoU for the completion of the East Stand.

In discussions with NBC, Kelvin Thomas and David Bowers did make commitments at the time to build the East Stand but this was not part of the MoU or any formal binding agreement.

Cllr T. Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Enterprise

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 4

Cllr Stone to Cllr Hadland

2. An article in the Athletic stated that a “significant sum” of money had changed hands in 2017 when the Chinese owned 5UsPort Ltd acquired control of NTFC’s holding company, Northampton Town Ventures Ltd. No receipt of any funds is recorded in the statutory accounts of Ventures or its controlling company at that time, the English registered, Fantastical Ltd. Given the existence of serious questions surrounding this transaction, the wider ethical issue of an English local authority dealing with a company under the ultimate control of an offshore tax haven company in respect of the sale and development of public land, can you confirm that full professional due diligence has been carried out on NTFC and all its connected companies to satisfy the Council of their finances, source of funds and the tracing and whereabouts of any Chinese funds?

Response

As with any commercial transaction the Council enters into appropriate checks will be undertaken at the relevant time to ensure that the Council’s interests are protected.

These checks vary in their scale according to the size and type of agreement, but we can confirm that thorough checks will be undertaken in relation to any transaction around Sixfields.

Cllr T. Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Enterprise

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 5

Cllr Stone to Cllr Hadland

3. Kelvin Thomas in response to the recent media reports said in a BBC Northampton interview on 25 June that he expects any new agreement between the club and the Borough to be open to public scrutiny. Can the Council confirm that all the details of the Option Agreement including any letters of intent, MoUs and the like will be open to scrutiny and debate by all councillors and the wider public before anything is signed?

Response

We can confirm that should there be any deal acceptable to the Council we will follow our established governance processes, including formal decision-making by Cabinet. This will allow scrutiny by the public and councillors in accordance with our normal procedures.

Cllr T. Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Enterprise

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 6

Cllr Stone to Cllr Hadland

Please can we have an update on St Edmunds hospital site-now derelict for 17 years.

Response

The first phase, involving securing, reroofing and other improvements to the fabric of the main building, finished in January. Covid19 has delayed the next stages of the work, but further work is expected to start shortly. The owners have said that the programme is likely to be protracted in view of the fact that it is not possible to obtain external funding for this type of project.

Cllr T. Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Enterprise

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 7

Cllr Birch to Cllr Hallam

There has been a huge reported increase in rats in urban areas. Do we have a policy for dealing with rats? If so, can it be circulated please?

Response

The Council investigates reports of rats and provides advice to residents, taking enforcement action as appropriate. The Council considers specific hardship issues on a case by case basis

Cllr M. Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 8

Cllr Duffy to Cllr King

With the reopening of retail and pubs and the need for social distancing and are there enough officers carrying out this important function and how many are engaged in this work within the Borough?

Response

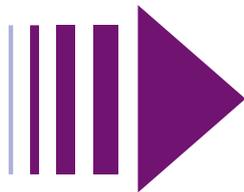
Staff from the environmental health and licensing team have been working with colleagues from the neighbourhood warden team to monitor the situation with premises that are reopening. Wardens are carrying out checks at premises within their areas as part of their routine duties with two members of the team assisting with more focused visits in the town centre and immediate surrounding areas. The officers from the food and safety and licensing teams have been making contact with licensed premises and other businesses that are reopening to provide advice and support about the social distancing requirements. Four members of the team have focused specifically on this work with support from other team members. The environmental health officers across Northamptonshire have worked together to produce guidance for business and a leaflet giving advice to premises that are opening which has been delivered widely across Northampton (electronic copy of the leaflet attached).

The Taxi Marshall contract resumed on Saturday 4 July and will continue through the month of July (reviewed weekly) on a Friday and Saturday evening 7pm-1am.

The Street Pastors are currently working on their preparations to resume patrols, including a review of their volunteer database. They will be looking to resume patrols towards the end of July, as soon as they are practically able to.

Cllr A King

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Community Safety



Helping you

re-open your business following the COVID-19 pandemic

Dear business owner,

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging time for business owners, facing forced closures, financial pressures and staff shortages. It is understandable that the prospect of reopening with new safety measures in place may cause you some concern.

All business owners have a legal duty to ensure the safety of staff and other persons in the workplace, and this duty includes reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

The Government has produced guidance for different types of business to help you assess risks and work safely during the pandemic. This can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

In Northamptonshire, we have Environmental Health teams in your local Borough and District Councils, who are responsible for ensuring that businesses comply with public health, and health and safety legislation. This includes the safe re-opening and trading of shops to minimise the risks of transmission of COVID-19.

The Environmental Health teams will not necessarily be inspecting your premises before they reopen, however, any business owner who is unsure of what they need to do or wishes to discuss the measures they intend to take prior to opening, can contact their local team using the details on the back of this leaflet and they will be happy to support you to ensure the safe reopening of your premises.

Please look inside for our five most frequently asked questions.



Lucy Wightman | Director of Public Health
Northamptonshire County Council

When can I open?

Some shops and businesses are currently able to open to the public. Other businesses, such as those providing takeaway food, can only operate under specific circumstances.

The Government has stated that from 15 June non-essential shops will be able to open and it is hoped that businesses in the hospitality sector, beauty salons and hairdressers will be able to start to trade again in July.

Up-to-date guidance on which businesses are currently allowed to trade can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close



What are my legal responsibilities?

All employers have a legal duty under health and safety legislation to ensure the safety of staff and other persons in the workplace. This duty includes reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Workers have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions at work. This duty includes reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Workers must co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal requirements.



How do I get started?

You must ensure that you minimise the risk of transmission of the virus and adopt COVID-19 secure practices. To do this you must follow the five steps to working safely, which are:

1. Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment
2. Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures
3. Help people to work from home, where this is possible
4. Maintain 2m social distancing, where possible
5. Where people cannot be 2m apart, manage transmission risk

Further information on the five steps can be found at: www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely

Once you have completed these steps you can print off, complete and display the Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020 poster to help provide reassurance to customers and staff.

Download at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb959f5e90e0708370f97f9/staying-covid-19-secure-accessible.pdf>

Where can I find specific guidance to assist me?

The amount of information in the media and on the internet can be confusing. Always use Government guidance to ensure you are meeting your legal obligations. Guidance for working safely during the Coronavirus pandemic is available for different types of work:

- **Construction and outdoor work** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/construction-and-other-outdoor-work
- **Factories, plants and warehouses** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/factories-plants-and-warehouses
- **Labs and research facilities** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/labs-and-research-facilities
- **Offices and contact centres** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres

- **Other people's homes** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes
- **Restaurants offering takeaway or delivery** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery
- **Shops and branches** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches
- **Vehicles** - www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/vehicles

The guidance will assist you in undertaking a COVID-19 risk assessment and putting appropriate controls in place to minimise the risk of transmission. You may need to refer to more than one of these guides to cover all aspects of your business.

These guides will be kept updated and the Government will publish additional guides as and when other businesses are able to reopen. If your business activity is not currently included you can check for future guidance at www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

If you need assistance in how to undertake a risk assessment you can find guidance at www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm

Additional guidance for food businesses can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19

Guidance on how and when to clean your workplace can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

If your building has been closed for any length of time, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease. You can find guidance on this at www.hse.gov.uk/news/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm

Scams to businesses - Since early March, there has been a flood of scams targeting UK businesses. They range from Government grant/tax refund scams to Tech support scams. If your business has been targeted by a Covid-19 scam then head to the Businesses against Scams website: www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/BAS

Diversification of businesses - As a result of the impact Covid-19 has had on businesses many are exploring diversifying their business model to adapt to 'the new normal'. To assist your business to comply, head to a free expert guide on business diversification during the pandemic: www.businesscompanion.info/focus/coronavirus

If your premises is authorised under the Licensing Act 2003, you must ensure that you comply with your licence and the conditions on it. Any change to your activities may require a variation application. Additional seating for patrons on the highway will require a separate licence, issued by Northamptonshire County Council. Please contact your local Licensing Team if you have any queries.

What if I need further assistance or have a specific query?

For further help you can contact your local Environmental Health Department:



env.health@corby.gov.uk
01536 464175.



healthimprovement@daventrydc.gov.uk
01327 871100



healthprotection@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk
01832 742055



healthprotection@kettering.gov.uk
01536 410333



ehfs@northampton.gov.uk
0300 330 7000



HEP@Southnorthants.gov.uk
01327 322323



HealthProtection@wellingborough.gov.uk
01933 231952



For specific advice relating to trading standards matters, please contact Northamptonshire Trading Standards Service Business@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 9

Cllr Beardsworth to Cllr Hadland?

Following their stunning victory at Wembley and promotion, Northampton Town players and supporters can look forward to a bright future.

Like everyone in the town I wish to see our football club prosper and in particular hope that success on the pitch is matched by improvements to Sixfields Stadium and in particular completion of the long awaited East Stand.

These questions follow on directly from those of Cllr. Stone and are therefore numbered appropriately. Both sets of questions arise from discussions we have had with members of the NTFC Supporters Trust.

4. This agreement is being negotiated at a time when the CPS has not yet filed charges and the KPMG Report is not finalised – what protocols are being followed regarding delegation of authority to councillors & officers to agree terms and involving the section 151 officer?

Response

Any agreement will be made in line with the Council's formal procedures with recommendations being taken to Cabinet for a decision to be made. Relevant Officers, including the section 151 Officer will be involved in the normal way.

Full Due Diligence will be undertaken of any agreement in relation to this matter with appropriate levels of scrutiny.

Cllr T. Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Enterprise

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 10

Cllr Beardsworth to Cllr Hadland?

5.What protections will be contained in any agreement for NTFC (meaning its supporters as distinct from its owners) concerning its original leasehold land and the future retention within the club of income from the development rather than it being moved through the club to repay debt to the club's owners?

Response

There have been no changes to the agreement with CDNL since the agreements entered into in 2015.

Any new agreement will need to consider and undertake the obligations relating to the site as an Asset of Community Value.

It will be up to NTFC, which is a separate legal entity to decide how it allocates its finances relating to its business.

Cllr T. Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Enterprise

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 11

Cllr Beardsworth to Cllr Hadland?

6.The media reports state a 50/50 split of “profits” is agreed between NTFC & NBC from the development. Precisely, what expenditure is to deducted from the top line sale proceeds before determining the actual divisible profit?

Response

The terms of any deal have not yet been agreed and discussions are ongoing.

The Council will comply with its duties to achieve best value for the taxpayers of the town.

Cllr T. Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Enterprise

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 12

Cllr Markham to Cllr Hallam?

- 1) Does NBC (or it's contractors) keep a record of areas known to be infested with Japanese Knotweed e.g. maps?
- 2) Does NBC (or it's contractors) carry out periodic treatment of areas known to be infested with Japanese Knotweed?
- 3) Following on from 2) above if not then why not and will a structured programme be introduced with immediate effect?

By contractors I mean those used by Northampton Partnership Homes as well as Street Care Teams. NPH often have to clear gardens that have become overgrown and is responsible for larger landscaped areas around the town.

Response

The NPH Grounds Maintenance Contract requires the Service Provider to train its operatives to recognise Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and other invasive plants and to report these to NPH within 24 hours of identification. We are also compiling a list of less dangerous invasive plants such as ivy or buddleia that can cause potential problems to buildings.

Once identified, the former plants are placed on a 12 month, 4 treatment programme to eliminate the plant and re-inspected every year to determine if any regrowth has occurred. The Service Provider is also required to check boundaries to identify if these plants are growing from an adjoining owner's property/land.

To date, 4 incidents have been identified of which three are in tenant's own gardens (NPH pay for treatment) & 1 incident in an enclosed rear communal garden. NPH have also identified 1 incident on NBC maintained land.

Cllr M. Hallam
Cabinet Member for Environment

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th July, 2020

Question 13

Cllr Beardsworth to Cllr Hibbert?

Over the last 3 months the Council in partnership with the Single Homelessness Forum has been successful in providing shelter and other support to people who have previously had nowhere to live.

Moving on from using hotels to working with our university is also a welcome step. However as the motion to last month's council meeting what happens next is not yet clear.

The partnership has plans to use some of the homes created when various office blocks and other buildings are transformed to permanent homes. This will take months however.

1) Is the council or the Forum aware of the scheme being introduced by Cambridge City Council who are using prefabricated units as a solution for single homelessness?

These units can be on site within days and can be used as part of a supported living programme. Importantly the Cambridge project has government financial backing.

2) Could such units provide a solution here in Northampton until the long awaited permanent homes from other projects come on stream?

Response

Yes, the Council is aware of the six 'micro-homes' that have been produced to help tackle rough sleeping in Cambridge. Our preference, however, is to use larger, brick-built homes.

Although we will always consider new and innovative ways of tackling, preventing and reducing homelessness, we are asking the Government to provide Northampton with enough capital funding to enable us to purchase 30 one-bedroom homes and six HMOs that will provide permanent homes for 30 former rough sleepers and additional supported housing for another 30 people who are sleeping rough or at risk of having to sleep rough.

If the Government funding is forthcoming, I am expecting most of these additional homes to become available (for the benefit of rough sleepers) by the end of March 2021.

In my Cabinet Member Report, I have described our COVID-19 rough sleeping initiative and its success in moving a very large number of rough sleepers into settled housing. Since the end of March 2020, a total of 80 men and women have now been moved on in this way.

Having accommodated a very large number of rough sleepers in the hotels for three months, we are now accommodating 26 people in one of the University's halls of residence until 31 August 2020. During the next couple of months, we will be moving as many people as possible into settled housing and, depending on the number of people still requiring accommodation at the end of August, we will assess and address our future housing requirements at that point.

Cllr Stephen Hibbert
Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing