



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

2nd November 2020

Agenda Status: Public

Chief Executive

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| Report Title | Community Governance review and next steps |
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To report to Full Council the recommendations as set out below of the Cross Party Working Group on the 16th September 2020.

These recommendations are part of the process of putting in place the decisions of Full Council at its meetings on the 20th January and 24th February 2020.

- 1.2 Full Council at its meeting on the 20th January 2020 agreed to establish:

- a) A Town Council for Northampton.
- b) A Community Council for Far Cotton and Delapre.
- c) A Parish Council for Kingsthorpe.

- 1.3 Also Full Council at its meeting on the 24th February 2020 agreed:

- a) Working arrangements for the Northampton Town Council to include warding arrangements and a number of councillors, i.e. 21 wards and 25 councillors.
- b) The number of community/parish councillors for Far Cotton & Delapre (unwarded) being 12 councillors.
- c) The number of parish councillors for Kingsthorpe which is comprised of 5 wards with 15 councillors.
- d) Approval of the necessary statutory orders to implement Full Council's decisions which have now been executed and distributed to the relevant consultees.

- 1.4 Decisions now have to be considered and decided upon by Full Council in order that a number of issues can be moved forward which will lead to the establishment of the three new Councils. This is part of a process that will

need to take place from now on with monthly meetings of the Cross Party Working Group which will result in further recommendations to Full Council up to the period ending on the 31st March 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The recommendations of the Cross Party Working Group of the 16th September 2020 are set out below for Council's consideration and decision and are explained more fully in the report of Richard Walden who is the Consultant working with the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils which is assisting the Borough Council in setting up the three new Councils. The remaining reports of the Cross Party Working Group are as indicated in this report to Full Council.

The report and appendices to the Cross Party Working Group are enclosed with this Council report as Appendix A. Accordingly, the recommendations for consideration are as follows:

- 2.2 That the Chief Executive convenes a first shadow meeting of the Northampton Town Council to consider the matters as set out in the draft agenda on page 17 of the Cross Party Working Group report of the 16th September 2020 (and marked Appendix A in that report).
- 2.3 That the Northampton Town Council be recommended at its first shadow meeting to agree the terms and conditions along with arrangements for the recruitment of a Town Clerk for the Town Council who when appointed will commence duties as soon as is practicable after the 1st April 2021.
- 2.4 That the Cross Party Working Group be delegated power to carry out the interview and appointment of a Town Clerk and have further delegated authority to agree all terms and conditions for such an appointment.
- 2.5 That the services proposed to be transferred to the Town Council as set out in the enclosed report from Richard Walden to the Cross Party Working Group on page 11, section 3.6 (i) be approved in principle subject to further consideration by the Cross Party Working Group and final recommendations to be brought back to a future meeting of Full Council.

NB. Please note that the Highway verge issue will remain the responsibility of the new unitary authority unless transferred at some future date.

- 2.6 That the Cross Party Working Group be given delegated authority to act as a Parish Council Remuneration Panel with any recommendations submitted for approval to Full Council and then for consideration by the Shadow Town Council.
- 2.7 That Full Council approves the transfer of the existing Borough Coat of Arms to the Northampton Town Council with any necessary approvals from the College of Arms.

- 2.8 That the governance arrangements for the Northampton Town Council as set out in section 3.12 on page 14 of the Cross Party Working Group report be approved and recommended to the Shadow Town Council.
- 2.9 That agenda item 4 (pages 31 to 68) of the Cross Party Working Group report dealing with the transfer to the Northampton Town Council of the Borough Council's muniments etc. be noted with any final decision to be made by Full Council once a full list of such items has been agreed by the Cross Party Working Group.
- 2.10 That the transfer of the following properties as referred to in the Cross Party Working Group report (agenda item 5 on pages 69 to 72).
- a) The Guild Hall, Northampton to the Northampton Town Council.
 - b) The Far Cotton Recreation Centre to the Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council.
 - c) The appropriate community centre or centres to be identified in the Kingsthorpe area for transfer to Kingsthorpe Parish Council.

Be approved in principle subject to further consideration by the Cross Party Working Group as the best way forward both in the short and long term for each of the above proposals with any final decision being made by Full Council before the 31st March 2021.

- 2.11 That the report in Agenda item 6 (pages 73 to 76) of the Cross Party Working Group dealing with the issue of Town /Parish Council precepts be noted with further reports to Full Council after further consideration by the Cross Party Working Group.
- 2.12 That similarly the report in Agenda item 6 (page 77) of the Cross Party Working Group dealing with the cost to date of the Community Governance Review be noted.
- 2.13 That the decision of the Cross Party Working Group at its meeting on the 16th January 2020 to give further consideration at a future meeting to the proposal to grant the Freedom of the Borough to the National Health Service etc be noted.

3 Issues

- 3.1 Council will note that the agenda and enclosed reports from the meeting of the Cross Party Working Group on the 16th September 2020 (enclosed as Appendix A to this Council report), provides the necessary background and information to the recommendations in this present report to Full Council.
- 3.2 The Council is asked to consider and approve the first meeting of the Shadow Northampton Town Council (likely to be held in November or December 2020) with at least two further such meetings before the 31st March 2021. This shadow meeting of the Town Council will be comprised of existing Borough Council elected members who will act as the shadow members of the new Town Council until the elections in May 2021 for the new membership of the Town Council. The existing Borough Council members who cover the

geographic area of the new Town Council will therefore make- up the elected membership of the Shadow Northampton Town Council and make any necessary decisions and recommendations for consideration by the Town Council once in full operation after the May elections in 2021. Prior to any shadow meeting of the Town Council the Borough Council members concerned will be informed of their new position on the Shadow Town Council and receive a briefing note along with a pre- meeting to ask questions etc prior to the first meeting of the Shadow Town Council. Members will also be informed of the necessary dates for attendance at the said meetings. Richard Walden's report to the Cross Party Working Group on the 16th September 2020 on page 15 of that report sets out the agenda for the first meeting of the Shadow Town Council. Council should note that similar shadow meetings will also be held for the Kingsthorpe and Far Cotton and Delapre Councils and it is hoped that these meetings will be held early in the new year.

- 3.3 Council should note that it is proposed to give the Cross Party Working Group delegated powers to carry out a recruitment process and appointment of a Town Clerk for the new Town Council and details of this proposal are set out in the enclosed report. The attached Appendix B to this Council report shows the revised pay scales for the post of Town Clerk as agreed at a national level by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services which is now implemented and will be in force in 2021.
- 3.4 The services proposed to be transferred to the Town Council will need further discussion and therefore the recommendation in this Council report only advises approval in principle with further and future reports to Full Council from the Cross Party Working Group with all necessary decisions being made by Full Council before the 31st March 2021.
- 3.5 Likewise the recommendation in this report is that the Cross Party Working Group should be given delegated authority to act as a Remuneration Panel and then make any recommendations in respect of Town Councillors allowances to Full Council with an onward report to a future meeting of the Shadow Town Council.
- 3.6 The issue of the transfer of assets as itemised in recommendation 2.10 above will need further consideration by the Cross Party Working Group, with all the required regulatory processes being adhered to and any necessary consultations taking place. In addition, the duty of the Borough Council to cooperate with the Shadow Authority will need to be followed, to ensure that the Shadow Authority understands and appreciates the decisions of the Borough Council and that all such necessary discussions should take place well before 31st March 2021.
- 3.7 Council will at its future meetings have to have careful regard to the issue of precepts for the three new Councils and the Cross Party Working Group is still engaged in considering this matter before making any recommendations to Full Council which will ultimately make the appropriate recommendations for their precepts to the new Councils.
- 3.8 Most of the content of this present Council report deals with the issue of the Town Council and Council is assured that it will at future meetings be

receiving reports in respect of matters concerning recommended precepts, asset transfers and shadow meetings in respect of Kingsthorpe and Far Cotton and Delapre.

4. Implications (including Financial Implications)

- 4.1 The Council's policy is to create three new Councils and give greater representation and a stronger voice to its citizens in the issues and concerns that will arise in our communities in the future.

5 Resources and Risk

- 5.1 The issue of the costs that have arisen during the Community Governance exercise are set out in agenda 6 of the Cross Party Working Group papers enclosed with this Council Report.

6 Legal

- 6.1 There are no legal issues at this stage except the need to comply with the requisite legislation.

7 Environmental implications

- 7.1 None at this stage.

8 Other Implications

- 8.1 None at this stage.

9 Background Papers

- 9.1 As enclosed.

George Candler
Chief Executive