



CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Cabinet Response to Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Impact of the move of the University
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	20th January 2021
Key Decision:	Yes
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	No
Directorates:	Economy & Assets
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Cllr Tim Hadland, Regeneration & Enterprise
Ward(s)	All

1. Purpose

On 11 September 2019, Cabinet received a report on an Overview & Scrutiny Panel Review of the Impact of the move of the University, the purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to approve the response to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel’s findings and recommendations.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) Accepts Recommendations 1, 2, and 3 in the Overview & Scrutiny Panel’s report on the Impact of the move of the University; and
- (b) Accept Recommendations 4 and 5 but keep these under review as noted in the report.
- (c) Congratulates the task and finish group on a high quality and comprehensive report and thanks the group for the time and effort given to produce it.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 At its work programming event in April 2018, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to carry out a pre-decision review of the impact of the move of the University has had on the town. An in-depth review commenced in May 2018 and concluded in March 2019.
- 3.1.2 This review links to the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan, especially around 'Shaping place and driving growth (Through improving education and skill provision within the town and the regeneration of a derelict site on the edge of the town centre)
- 3.1.3 The key lines of enquiry were:
- To understand the work currently being undertaken by the University of Northampton, Northampton Borough Council (NBC), and other partners regarding the move of the University.
 - To gain an understanding of the social, cultural, physical, economic and environmental effects of the move of the University
 - To gain an understanding of the challenges, including all areas of the town, in respect of the move of the University
 - To gain an understanding of the implications of the move of the University
- 3.1.4 A number of meetings were held to gather evidence from a broad range of stakeholders. During this process, a significant amount of evidence was heard.
- 3.1.5 The Overview & Scrutiny Panel's Report includes 5 recommendations mainly focused on how the University can forge better links with the town centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

3.2 Response to Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations

- 3.2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet accepts 3 of the 5 recommendations in the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's report. Its response to each of the Panel's recommendation is set out below.
- 3.2.2 **Recommendation 1: That the University of Northampton is asked to investigate the possibility of using an empty unit in the town centre to showcase the University.**
- Cabinet Response
- 3.2.3 In previous years the University have been using space within the Market and on their campus to showcase what they have to offer for prospective students.
- 3.2.4 With the opening of the new Students Student union, The Platform, on Georges Row this has given the University a location within the town centre that they are able to use for their events, engagement and to Showcase the University.
- 3.2.5 Recommendation 1 has been implemented

- 3.2.6 **Recommendation 2: That frequent liaison with Community Groups continues; and the public is encouraged to use the facilities on offer at the University.**

Cabinet Response

- 3.2.7 The University and partners such as Northampton Borough Council and The Northampton Town Centre Business Improvement District who have continued to engage with local residents' groups, Friends of Becketts and are part of the Town Centre Task Group to promote the Universities facilities and encourage better use of the campus by members of the public.
- 3.2.8 The University of Northampton have representation on all of the local community forums where they continue to promote and offer the use of the facilities.
- 3.2.9 Recommendation 2 has been implemented
- 3.2.10 **Recommendation 3: That the University of Northampton is asked to confirm that it will finance the Parking Permit Scheme for Thomas Chapman Grove and Malthouse Close and to also confirm that it can provide a form of parking enforcement for this Parking Scheme.**

Cabinet Response

- 3.2.11 The University worked with Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council as well as local residents to deliver this parking scheme which was funded by the University. This project has now been implemented and is complete.
- 3.2.12 Recommendation 3 has been implemented
- 3.2.13 **Recommendation 4: That the University of Northampton is asked to investigate the installation of a noise barrier between the student accommodation and Thomas Chapman Grove and Malthouse Close.**

Cabinet Response

- 3.2.14 This has been investigated and is planned to be delivered as part of a future phase of development when further planting and screening will take place.
- 3.2.15 Since the time of the scrutiny report there has been a reduction in complaints from residents. The need and scale of the screening will be assessed, working closely with the local community groups, when the next phases take place.
- 3.2.16 The screening of the Taxi drop off point was also raised with this area seen as another that needed screening which will be looked at as part of this recommendation.
- 3.2.17 While this recommendation hasn't been implemented it remains under consideration.
- 3.2.18 **Recommendation 5: That the BID, University and NBC look into ways of generating initiatives to bring community uses of empty buildings in the town centre**

Cabinet Response

- 3.2.19 Conversation have been ongoing between the organisations over ways to encourage and bring community uses into empty shop units in the town centre but given the onset of Covid discussions were paused while immediate pressures are addressed.

3.2.20 This recommendation will remain under consideration moving forwards

3.3 Choices (Options)

3.3.1 Cabinet may choose to agree to any or all of Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations in full or part.

3.3.2 Overview and Scrutiny committee have provided Cabinet with a robust and detailed report to support its recommendations.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 The recommendations of this report are within policy and have no policy implications.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 There should be no direct costs associated with these recommendations by NBC or successor authority, other than officer time.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report

4.4 Equality and Health

4.4.1 Services to the public will not be directly impacted as a result of the recommendation of this report. There are therefore no direct equality or health implications.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 A wide range of stakeholders were engaged with as part of this review including :

- Cabinet Member for Housing
- Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise and Planning
- Ward Councillors, NBC
- Town Centre Manager
- Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC
- Environmental Health and Licensing Manager
- Private Sector Housing Manager
- Head of Protecting Vulnerable Persons, Northamptonshire Police
- Representatives from the University of Northampton and the Student Union,
- Manager, Student Homes, Northampton
- Letting Agencies, Northampton
- Executive Director, Town Centre BID
- Director, PubWatch

- Residents' Associations, groups such as Friends of Parks Groups etc.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.6.1 This report will contribute to the priority corporate outcomes of

- Creating a thriving, vibrant town by improving the impact of the move of the University enabling greater engagement with the wider public.

5. Background Papers

5.1 Scrutiny Panel – Impact of the move of the University of Northampton - [Scope of Review](#)

5.2 Cabinet report on Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Scrutiny Committee – [Impact of the move of the University, September 2019](#).

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