

**NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL  
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held at 18.00 on 8 December 2021 in  
the Godwin Room at Northampton Guildhall**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Birch (Chair), Holland-Delamere (Vice-Chair), Fuchshuber, Hallam, Hibbert, Lane, Marriott, Miah

Officers: Mr S Carter (Town Clerk) and Mrs J Thorneycroft (Administration Officer)

**16. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been submitted by Cllrs Ashraf, G Eales, T Eales, Ismail, Hibbert and Soan

**17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**18. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS AND TO ASK QUESTIONS AS TO THE PROGRESS OF ANY ITEMS**

**RESOLVED:** That the Chair be authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

Members were informed that the Knife Angel Project would be taking place in May 2022.

Members were informed that students would be presenting their ideas for the Covid memorial in Becketts Park in the new year.

**19. TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE GRANTS SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 13 SEPTEMBER 2021 FOR CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF IT RECOMMENDATIONS**

It was highlighted that due to illness the quorum had not been met at the meeting, therefore because time was a factor, an informal meeting had taken place and notes present to the committee for consideration.

It was noted that the recommendation for the application for Spencer Football Club was to defer. Cllr Marriott highlighted that they met all the criteria. The committee agreed.

**RESOLVED:** that Spencer football club be awarded a grant of £2,535 from the General Grants Fund.

It was noted that the grant to the Frank Bruno Foundation had been recommended for refusal as it did not meet the criteria and it was noted that we were asking for a lot of money. However, the committee asked if the Clerk could further liaise with them regarding future applications.

It was also noted that the Sub-Committee would be reviewing the grants policy in the new year to ensure that it suited the aims and objectives. It was suggested that a maximum amount should be considered for the general grants to avoid a large percentage of the pot being allocated to one project. This would be considered as part of the review.

**RESOLVED:** That, subject to amendment regarding Spencer FC as stated above, the recommendations contained within the notes be adopted.

Cllr Lane stated that he wished to come off this committee as he was struggling to make the meetings.

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr Hibbert (current substitute) replace Cllr Lane and that Cllr Lane be a named substitute.

## **20. TOWN OF SANCTUARY**

A report was circulated explaining that Northampton Town Council had been approached about becoming a town of sanctuary.

**It was explained that Northampton was** home to over 300 child refugees who arrived as unaccompanied asylum seekers, separated from their families. They come into the care of the Local Authority. Many were employed by the NHS, including consultants, in adult social care, for the LA, and in many other occupations. Becoming a place of sanctuary is a process in three stages.

The process is captured in a portfolio that is submitted for accreditation and asks the town council to demonstrate:

- **LEARN** The Town Council helps staff and wider community, learn about what it means to be seeking sanctuary and the issues surrounding forced migration.
- **EMBED** The Town Council are committed to creating a safe and inclusive culture of welcome that benefits everybody, including anyone in their community seeking sanctuary.
- **SHARE** The Town Council share their values and activities with their local communities.

It was highlighted that neighbouring authorities such as Cambridge, Oxford, Milton Keynes, Bedford, Leicester, Birmingham, were all part of this network and that WNC had also just agreed to join the network.

The University of Northampton, The Derngate Theatres, Delapre Abbey, St Peters and St Paul in the Park had also agreed to become places of Sanctuary.

**RECOMMENDED:** That Northampton Town Council submit a portfolio and become a town of sanctuary.

## **21. POETRY PROJECT**

The committee Chair informed the committee of a project to make poetry accessible throughout the town, on buildings, paths etc. It was explained that the Poetry project was the initiative of local teacher James McInerney.

It was explained that the Poetry project was a free to use project that was about having positive, empowering and motivational messages on display in public areas to promote wellbeing and raise awareness of mental health issues.

The committee was very much in favour of this project and asked if there could be a local take on some of the poems. For example, the use of local language, and whether the murals could be incorporated.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council looks to work with local partners and stakeholders on the Poetry Project and that Mr McInerney be invited to a future meeting to speak more on this project.

## 22. 2022/23 EVENTS

The committee noted the upcoming events for 22/23 namely:

Event	Date in 2022	Venue
1. Bands in the Park	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in April to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in September	Abington Park
2. Oak Apple Day	29 <sup>th</sup> May	Town Centre
3. Beer Festival	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> June	Beckets Park
4. Northampton in Bloom	June to September	Across NTC Wards
5. Northampton Town Festival	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Racecourse
6. The Queens Platinum Jubilee	3 <sup>rd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> June	Not yet known
7. Music Festival	June	Town Centre
8. Armed Forces Day	25 <sup>th</sup> June	Town Centre
9. Diwali	October	Town Centre
10. Carnival	Usually 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday in June	Racecourse and town centre
11. Party in the Park	August	Abington Park
12. Pride	September	Town Centre
13. Remembrance Day	Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	Town Centre
14. EID Festival	July	
15. Fireworks Event	Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> November	Racecourse
16. Christmas Event	Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> November?	Town Centre

It was noted that the fireworks had been booked for 2022 in order to secure the booking. Officers were asked to investigate whether some sort of drone display would be feasible, as there were many who objected to the fireworks. It was confirmed that the feasibility would happen but timing means that the firework contractor would have to be booked now especially as the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022 was a Saturday and therefore demand would be high.

In response to a question about having all bands for Bands in the Park confirmed and publicised by March, officers explained that this would be difficult. The process to book bands had started but resource and covid meant that having it all confirmed and published by then would be unlikely.

Regarding Oak Apple Day, it was commented that historically this had been a town event but recently the Lord Lieutenant had taken an element of control. However, if the town council were to pay for it then the town council should have control.

**NOTED**

### **23. CHRISTMAS PROJECT UPDATE 2021**

The Assistant Town Clerk's report was circulated with the agenda. Tabled was a social media update regarding the marketing of the Christmas and firework events.

It was reported that the Christmas Lights Switch On Event on Market Square had taken place on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Activities on the day included a stage on the Market Square with entertainment, choirs, bands, local pantomime characters from the Deco and the Royal & Derngate and BBC Radio Northampton. The lights were switched on by Father Christmas, the Mayor and invited guests at 5pm.

The report went on to detail the Christmas Decorations in the town:

4 x 40 ft Spruce Christmas trees, 1 each located in the Market Square, Guildhall o/s Ask, All Saints Plaza and Abington Square.

2 x 14 ft Spruce Christmas trees in front of the Guildhall

Various cross street Christmas Lights installations at Abington Street, Guildhall Road, Drapery, Gold Street, Bridge Street, Derngate, All Saints, North Gate Bus Station, Guildhall, Market Square, Abington Street Memorial Garden, St Giles Square and All Saints.

A Santa's Grotto had been provided in the Grosvenor Centre throughout the full Christmas period. Gifts for the children comprised of activity packs with crayons and specially commissioned Northampton colouring book which had been jointly funded by NTC and the BID.

The Annual Frost Fair (Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November) on the Market Square consisted of a Christmas Parade from midday, entertainment on the Market Square stage and a Christmas craft market.

The Golden Ticket Prize Draw provided by the Town Centre BID launched on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> November until midday on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December. Four lucky winners will each win £500 as part of the £2,000 prize fund, entries can be hand posted into special BID post boxes found in shops and businesses in the town centre.

The Augmented Christmas Trail 'A Christmas Story' funded by the town council was launched on the Explore Northampton App on the day of the Frost Fair. It was explained that A Christmas Story was available for families to complete the trail until January 2022. The trail gave an opportunity for

families to explore the world of augmented reality and find and have their photo taken with Father Christmas. Children could follow the trail to 10 different locations around Northampton's town centre to unlock each part of the story and see Father Christmas augmented life-sized through a smartphone.

There were three Christmas Saturdays on 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December. This consisted of stage performances, choirs, dancers and activity on the Market Square plus additional roaming activity and street entertainment including stilt walkers, unicyclists, jugglers etc. in and around the town centre. This had been part funded by the town council.

Christmas Crafts with the Mayor in Santa's Grotto from 18th to 22nd December

Christmas Shop Window Competition – local businesses were taking part in an annual Christmas window competition. Votes for the favourite shop window could be cast from 1st December. The Mayor had been invited to be part of the judging panel to decide the winners of various categories of the competition.

Shop Local Showcase to promote local businesses.

24 hour Christmas Radio Station - Nlive Radio would be playing back to back festive favourites throughout December. The Grosvenor Shopping centre and multiple town centre businesses would be promoted to 14,000 current weekly listeners of the main station.

Christmas FREE PARKING -WNC car parks (multi storey and surface). It was noted that shoppers in Northampton could enjoy free parking within WNC multi-storey and surface car parks from 3pm every day and all day at weekends from 20 November through to 1 January.

The expenditure for the additional £15,000 Christmas budget as agreed at the Executive Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 was reported to members and is outlined below:

<b>NTC – Additional Christmas Spend Year 2021</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>
Christmas themed Augmented Reality Family Trail - A Christmas Story	5,670
Roaming Street Entertainment	6,500
Support to BID - Prizes Santa's Grotto	1,425
Printing Costs	680
Promotional Foamex Boards x 3	165
Promotional Fliers	82
Additional Social Media promotion	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,622</b>

**NOTED**

Mrs Thorneycroft was thanked for her report.

## **24. QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE**

The Town Clerk had prepared a report regarding the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and seeking the committee's view on what it would like to do.

It was explained that the focal point of the celebrations would be the extended bank holiday weekend of Thursday 2nd -Sunday 5th June. *"An extended bank holiday, from Thursday 2nd to*

*Sunday 5th June, will provide an opportunity for communities and people throughout the United Kingdom to come together to celebrate the historic milestone. The four days of celebrations will include public events and community activities, as well as national moments of reflection on The Queen's 70 years of service."*

The council needed to consider what events if any, it would like to host to mark the event.

Thursday 2 June had been earmarked for the lighting of Beacons across the UK and Sunday the 5th June would see *"The Big Jubilee Lunch: Every year since the idea began in 2009 The Big Lunch has encouraged communities to celebrate their connections and get to know each other a little bit better, coming together in a spirit of fun and friendship. In 2022 The Big Lunch will bring the Jubilee celebrations into the heart of every community.*

Possibilities included hosting a 'Big Lunch' street party in one of the parks, or the Market Square or in the Great Hall. This could double as a formal way of launching the town council to community groups etc. Or the Town Council could assist community organisations or resident's groups in organising their 'big lunches' with grants to help meet costs.

It was noted that the organiser of the Beer Festival which was to be held around this time had approached the town council about using their marquees on Becketts Park at no charge.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council aim to put on an event to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and that a working part consisting of Councillors Lane, Marriott, Birch, Holland-Delamere and Fuchshuber be set up to deliver it.

## **25. COMMUNITY NEEDS ANALYSIS – PROPOSAL**

Tabled for committee members was the proposal from Prof Griggs to start the research process for the Council's Community Needs Audit. The proposal is attached to these minutes at Appendix A.

It was commented that this kind of engagement was something that members should be doing. In response it was stated that this was true, but this proposal could act as a starting point and a model that councillors could use when going out in their communities.

The proposal followed a presentation from Prof Griggs and his students to the committee via zoom a week prior. Members commented that they would like to have a say on where the students go in order to interview their respondents and also if there were any aspects that could be worked on with the University of Northampton then that was to be encouraged.

It was confirmed that only travel and subsistence costs would be charged so the cost of this part would be minimal.

**RESOLVED:** that the proposal as detailed at appendix A be accepted.

## **26. AFGHAN REFUGEES – WELCOME EVENT**

The Chair asked the committee for their support to host an event to welcome the Afghan refugees to Northampton. It had been hoped to this sooner but the pandemic had hindered this plan. The aim was to put on an event at the Guildhall with food, activities etc. This event would both welcome the refugees and allow them to network with local communities. There was likely to be some costs for hire etc. It was highlighted that working with WNC on an event would be crucial as they have to day to day dealing with them and they would be able to advise what is appropriate.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council look to arrange a welcome event for Afghan Refugees and that we liaise with WNC in order to do so.

**27. BUDGET PRINCIPLES 2022/23 – COMMUNITY SERVICES ELEMENT**

It was explained that as part of the budget setting process, each committee was required to consider its budget and make a suggestion to the Policy and Finance Committee. The Community Services Committee was responsible for the following:

- 4170 – Community Grants Scheme - £50,000
- 4221 – Community Needs Analysis - £150,000
- 4501 – Christmas Event - £41,000 (additional spend to complement spend)
- 4502 – Fireworks - £7,500 (additional spend to complement event)

Budget coming from WNC for events (to reduce by a third in 2022/23), reduction covered by Services Contingency Reserve

• Christmas (lights, testing, installation, replacements, trees, maintenance etc)	£145,000
• Bloom - (considered by Environmental Committee)	£46,800
• Fireworks	£35,000
• Music Festival -	£10,000
• Bands in the Park	£9,000
• Diwali -	£3,000
• Christmas Marketing	£2,898
• Minor events	£2,000
• Misc	£204
• Staff cost	£37,000
• <u>Event Support/Other events (Remembrance, Oak Apple etc)</u>	<u>£30,738</u>
• Total	£321,640

It was commented that the Town Council wanted to assign a further £30,000 to events for Eid, Carnival as well as for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee (£10,000 to each). This was agreed, noting that events were a key offering for the town council.

It was noted that the £150,000 in 4221 Community Needs Analysis was not likely to be spent in the coming year and there would be a large amount added to earmarked reserves, as previously agreed. It was suggested that £100,000 from this budget be reallocated to Community Grants 4170. This would assist the communities in Northampton who do great work and need funding and make a name for the town council. These suggestions would go forward to the Policy and Finance Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.25 hours.

Signed.....Chair

## **Appendix A**

### **Proposal for Research Collaboration**

#### **De Montfort University**

Policy Commission  
Local Governance Research Centre  
Department for Politics, People and Place

### **Identifying the Needs of Young People – Community Audit and Northampton Town Council**

#### **Briefing Note**

This briefing sets out the parameters of a research collaboration between Northampton Town Council and the Local Governance Research Centre at De Montfort University.

#### **Background to the Policy Commission and the Local Governance Research Centre (LGRC)**

The LGRC is an internationally recognised research centre of excellence for the study of local government. Its research, which is informed by an engagement with practice, focuses on the stewardship of local places, both in the UK and abroad. The LGRC has recently undertaken the first national survey of local councils in over 30 years in collaboration with the Society for Local Council Clerks.

Each year, the LGRC supports a Policy Commission which enables final year undergraduate students to undertake research for a public or community organisation under the direct supervision of academics. In recent years, students have delivered research projects for local housing associations, national local government associations, local resident groups and the university itself.

#### **Current Proposal**

The proposal is for current students on the Policy Commission to support the Council's community audit, specifically undertaking research that engages young people across Northampton in a dialogue over the future of the town and the needs of young people. Students on the Policy Commission are strategically placed to engage with young people from all communities.

The research would take place from January 2022 to May 2022. It would be undertaken under the direct supervision of Professor Steven Griggs, Director of the LGRC, supported by Neil Barnett (Leeds Beckett University) and Dr, Steven Parker (LGRC). Policy Commission students would work as researchers on the project which would be overseen and managed by academics. They would undertake interviews and focus groups with young people, generating and analysing data. The findings and recommendations of the research would be drawn up and assembled by the team led by Professor Steven Griggs. All work and the communication of findings would be governed by the ethical guidelines of De Montfort University.

#### **Programme of Research: Identifying the Needs of Young People**

The Policy Commission works to the principles of co-production, seeking to engage multiple voices in the policy process as a means of supporting sustainable change in organisations and communities. Against this background, the Policy Commission proposes a two-step process as a strategy of identifying the needs of young people across Northampton:

1. Vox pop interviews with people across Northampton, seeking to gather views and opinions on what it means to live in the town. Here the interviews will engage local people on three broad questions: ‘What do you think about living in Northampton?’; ‘What do you think could be improved about Northampton?’; and ‘What do young people need in Northampton?’ Exact wording of the questions will be finalised in consultation with the Council.

Students will set up a ‘have you say’ stand in the market square and capture views, which will hopefully be filmed. A social media campaign will raise awareness the event. This exercise could be undertaken in the town centre, but the exact location(s) will be decided in collaboration with the Council.

2. Three focus groups will be undertaken with schools across Northampton, engaging young people from for example Key Stages 3,4, and 5. Each focus groups will last approximately one-hour. In the first instance, young people will be asked to comment on a set of statements drawn from the vox pop exercise as a means of triggering a debate over the needs of young people.

Part of the focus groups will be dedicated to raising awareness of the role of the local council by offering pupils a short presentation of the role and powers of the council as a means of grounding the dialogue in the practices of the Council

#### Timetable

The gathering of data will begin in January 2022, with students undertaking a mapping exercise and critical review of available studies, establishing the social, economic and political context for young people in Northampton.

Vox Pop interviews will take place at the end of January 2020. This will involve the creation of a ‘Have You Say’ stand at a location in Northampton. The exercise will last one day, enabling students to capture a sample of views and comments from passers-by.

Initial findings will be presented to the Council in mid-February and feed in to focus groups held in March. Schools will be selected after consultation with the Council.

<b>Identifying the Needs of Young People</b>					
<i>Task</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>
Literature Review					
Vox Pop Interviews					
Focus Groups					
Data Analysis -Report Writing					

#### Outputs

The research will deliver two primary outputs to feed into the Council’s community audit:

1. Interim report on findings of vox pop interviews, including video presentation.
2. Final report analysing findings of focus groups and recommendations emerging from the research.

Professor Steven Griggs

08 December 2021