

**NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

*This is a record of decisions taken by the Town Clerk in accordance with the authority delegated to him by the Council at its meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021. All decisions were taken having consulted remotely by Zoom members of the Environmental Services Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and were in accordance with the views of those members.*

**Minutes of the meeting held at 18.00 on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021  
Using the Zoom Video Conferencing Platform**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Joyce (Chair), Hallam (Vice-Chair), Ashraf, Meredith, Miah, Stevens and Tarasiewicz

Also present were Cllrs Birch, Kilbride, Sally Romain and Nicola Elliot (Northampton Litter Wombles), Mark Mullen (Northampton BID Operations Manager) and Jamie Chalmers (West Northamptonshire Council)

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

Before formally starting the Chair welcomed everybody to the first meeting of the Environmental Services Committee and asked that everybody introduce themselves.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been submitted by Cllrs Alwahabi and Soan.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**3. Northants Litter Wombles**

Nicola Elliot and Sally Romain from the Northants Litter Wombles (NLW) gave a presentation to the committee on the work of the NLW. They explained that the NLW had been created during lockdown as a Facebook group. They had initially concentrated on litter picking and improving the local environment, however, this had progressed as the group had grown, and they were now looking at education and working with local authorities in furthering their goals.

With regards to what assistance Northampton Town Council could provide, NLW stated that working together and support was what they were looking for. NLW were looking to organise a litter conference in the near future and it could be that NTC could assist with that. They also encouraged councillors to join their Facebook group and attend local litter picks.

It was formally agreed that going forward, NTC would give their support to NLW and look at ways that we could work together on anti-litter initiatives.

**RESOLVED:** That Northampton Town Council formally support NLW and look at ways we can work together on anti-litter initiatives.

The Chair thanked the representatives for addressing the committee and congratulated them on the great work they are doing in Northampton and beyond.

#### **4. NORTHAMPTON BID LITTER INITIATIVE – SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION WITH TOWN MAYOR’S LITTER INITIATIVE**

Mark Mullen from the Northampton BID gave a presentation to the committee on the BID’s plans to clean the town centre as part of the ‘welcome back’ initiative as the town centre reopened following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Mullen explained that the BID (Business Improvement District) had just been elected for its third term and was working on a number of projects to encourage people back to the town centre. Mr Mullen was keen to work in partnership with the town council on a cleanse of the town and it was noted that the Town Mayor also planned to hold litter picks. He highlighted the advantage of joining together on these litter picks.

Similar to the NLW it was agreed that NTC should work closely with the BID on the cleansing of the town centre and other projects going forward.

**RESOLVED:** That Northampton Town Council formally support Northampton BID in their cleansing of the town centre as part of its reopening and that both parties look at how they can work together on anti-litter initiatives and other projects going forward.

The Chair thanked Mr Mullen for giving his time up to present to the committee.

#### **5. TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENTS AND MARKET SQUARE PRESENTATION**

Mr Jamie Chalmers from West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) gave a presentation to the committee on plans for enhancements to the Market Square in the centre of Northampton. He explained that WNC had approximately £8.5 million from the Government’s ‘High Street Fund’ to undertake these enhancements.

It was explained that the Market Square would be enhanced with the planting of trees, the market moved to the south of the space, a water feature and an art installation. The surface of the market square would be replaced; the market stalls would also be replaced. This would transform the area and the market itself. Mr Chalmers explained how WNC were keen to work with stakeholders including NTC and consult with them as plans progressed.

The committee supported the enhancements stating that it was overdue. They commented that that it was important that WNC involved all aspect of the community as these plans progressed so they felt that they had some sort of ownership of the project. Mr Chalmers agreed and stated that there was £250,000 for public art in the budget and they aimed to get communities involved as this progressed.

Mr Chalmers was thanked for his update and the committee looked forward to being involved as the project moved forward.

## **6. NORTHAMPTON IN BLOOM**

The Administration Officer, Mrs Thorneycroft, had circulated an update on Northampton in Bloom with the agenda. It was explained that NTC had taken on responsibility for Bloom quite late in the year and it had been a complicated task in sorting out the planting and ensuring that it was as spread out as much as possible throughout the wards. Mrs Thorneycroft went on to explain that councillors had been allocated up to £1000 for each ward and asked to identify a suitable location. This had been looked at and planters placed where this was possible however, not every suggestion could be enacted due to a number of reasons, including time restraints, suitability, getting permissions, highway safety etc.

Going forward, Mrs Thorneycroft highlighted that planning for next year needed to be started very soon and encouraged members to let her have any suggestions.

Cllr Kilbride stated that he would like some planting in his ward as soon as possible. Mrs Thorneycroft stated that this would be investigated but that the budget was almost spent and that as previously stated, it may not be possible due to reasons beyond NTC's control.

Mrs Thorneycroft was thanked for her hard work on ensuring that the planting scheme had been undertaken by the town council and congratulated on making it a success.

**RESOLVED:** that the annual Northampton in Bloom Presentation and Awards Ceremony be put on hold for this year and to establish a Bloom working party.

## **7. CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM**

Circulated with the agenda was a report regarding a proposed Climate Change Forum. The shadow Council had agreed to create a forum and continue the work of the former Northampton Borough Council.

The committee were very much in favour of this and highlighted that WNC had established a similar forum and that it would be advisable to engage with that to ensure that there was not replication. Cllr Colin Morgan at WNC was the member responsible for Climate Change and officers should contact him to see what plans WNC.

It was commented that a first step would be to ensure that the Council buys local wherever possible to minimise carbon footprint. The Clerk confirmed that the Council would always look to purchase from local companies wherever possible.

The committee suggested that Cllr Stevens may want to play a prominent role in the forum given his interest in the area and especially in active travel.

**RESOLVED:** that the Council look to establish a Climate Change Forum.

## **8. COMMUNITY EVENTS TO MARK THE PANDEMIC**

Circulated with the agenda was a report seeking the committee's views on a previous resolution which was detailed as follows:

**RESOLVED:** *That the proposals be supported in principle and the matter be referred to the Community Services and Environmental Services Committees for detailed discussions including*

*inviting via the website suggestions from the community for sharing their covid experiences and commemorative ideas which might include:*

- a) An arbour of trees with suitable seating to provide a lasting memorial and a place for quiet reflection,*
- b) A possible enhancement of the Carnival event,*
- c) An exhibition of images from the community of their covid experiences, and*
- d) A commemorative inter faith church service for all local victims, especially for those whose families who were unable to say farewell in traditional ways.*

The committee supported the idea of an arbour of trees, noting that it would be a living commemoration. It was noted that a location would have to be negotiated and with the agreement of another organisation given that at present, the Town Council did not own any green spaces (excluding allotments).

It was suggested that Becketts Park would be suitable location given its proximity to Northampton General Hospital. It was noted that Becketts Park was managed by WNC and that the council would have to negotiate with them on this.

**RESOLVED:** That Northampton Town Council support the idea of investigating the feasibility of planting an arbour of trees at Becketts Park to mark the Covid-19 pandemic and work with WNC to achieve this.

There being no more business, the meeting ended at 19.58.

Signed.....Chair