

NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ELECTORS MEETING HELD AT THE OLD COURT ROOM, NORTHAMPTON GUILDHALL

Monday 24th May 2021

PRESENT: Councillor R Ashraf (Town Mayor);

In attendance: Mr S Carter (Interim Town Clerk),

1. WELCOME BY TOWN MAYOR

The Town Mayor had prepared a speech the details of which were as follows.

The Town Mayor advised that this meeting was a chance for residents of Northampton to talk and ask questions about the work of the Town Council. We are legally required to hold this meeting between March and May every year. It was not however, a meeting of the Council.

The Town Mayor advised that she would only consider questions as to the work of the Town Council and given that it had been in existence for less than two months, points made may want to focus on informing NTC where to focus efforts as we go forward. Questions on the work of the former Northampton Borough Council and newly created West Northamptonshire Council should be directed to them.

The Town Mayor gave some background about how Local Government in Northamptonshire changed this year. All existing boroughs, districts and the county council were replaced by two new unitary councils: North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire the latter of which included the current Borough of Northampton.

This left a large area of the Borough, not covered by a parish council and without direct representation. The Borough Council, following an extensive public consultation in 2019, agreed to create a new Town Council as well as a Kingsthorpe Parish Council and a Far Cotton and Delapré Community Council.

Initially the main function of the Town Council will be to give a democratically elected voice to the people of the Northampton on the key issues facing the town. It would also ensure that the town's rich heritage and traditions will be protected and enhanced as well as providing a range of local services including responsibility for many of the events that happen.

NTC had already started this process, speaking with West Northants about services, planning the summer planting around town and taking on the civic history of the town.

There were 25 elected councillors representing 21 Wards. Supporting them was a team of 5 officers led by the Town Clerk who was the Chief Officer. As the Council grows, takes on more services and responsibility the level of staffing was likely to grow. Northampton Town Council is already the largest Town Council in terms of the population it serves in the country.

We believe the Town Council provides both councillors and residents with a real opportunity to make a difference in our town, represent its residents and preserve our rich civic history. We are

keen to engage with local residents and groups as we move forward, for example we will be embarking on a community needs survey in the near future and the input of residents will be crucial. If you would like to be involved with this or kept up-to-date then please speak to Stuart after the meeting.

As stated, this annual meeting is a legal requirement, however, next year we hope that with the lifting or ending of restrictions it will be much more of an event with representatives from many more organisations.

2. QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS BY THE ELECTORS

There were no questions or comments.

The meeting concluded at 18.10