

Cabinet Member Report for Regeneration & Enterprise

Cllr Tim Hadland



Northampton Borough Council

22nd February 2021

Regeneration and Economic Growth

- Work on the Asbestos removal from the former M&S unit in the town centre has commenced and is due to be complete before the end of March. This will prepare it for a comprehensive redevelopment of the site should the project be successful with the funding bid made through the Northampton Town Investment Plan.
- Design for the £1.5m first phase of works to 24 Guildhall Road, which will create a new home for the NN contemporary Art Gallery, are underway and due to be completed later this month. Once the designs and specification are complete a procurement process for a contractor to undertake the works will commence in March.
- Grants to businesses as a result of the latest government lockdowns that have been imposed from November have started to be paid out to businesses with over a £2m in funds already distributed to local businesses.
- Vulcan Works Cultural Hub – Work is still progressing well on site with the main buildings now really taking shape which is changing the feel of that area of the town. Work has progressed well despite Covid with many of the facades now visible and the St Johns Building nearing completion.
- Future High Street Fund submission: On Boxing Day, the Government announced that Northampton was one of 57 areas which would receive support from its Future High Streets Fund. Northampton has been awarded £8.45 million from the fund with the money set to progress the work on the transformation of the Market Square. The necessary additional information that was required to take the project to the next stage has been prepared and submitted.
 - Four Waterside – plans to continue to the Four Waterside site continue to be developed with the Outline Business Case for the project being taken to the Enterprise Zone Board and the SEMLEP Board where the report was noted and given approval to continue to the next stage. A procurement and delivery strategy for the site is now being developed ahead of the procurement process starting later this year.

Property Maintenance

- Planned compliance work continuing to take place through the new lockdown with associated remedial repairs
- Royal Theatre roof work to start in February
- Repairs to the Billing Road cemetery entrance and gates project to commence end of February pending weather conditions
- Leisure Trust Buildings plant and lighting replacement, framework coordinator setting up interviews with contractors in order to move the project forward no start date agreed as yet

- Streetlight upgrade project completed barring anomalies all new lights under 1 year defect period from December 2020

Corporate Assets

The asset team are working closely with other teams to assist the community bike park project and the regeneration projects of 24 Guildhall Road and the Vulcan Works.

Town Centre

- Car parking usage has seen a significant reduction because of the covid19 regulations, in the period 1 April – 31 December 2020 car parking visitor numbers reached 828,232 compared with the same period in 2019 of 2,041,567 visitors. Parking numbers have fallen by 59.4% .
- The parking figures for January 2021 showed 52,033 visitors compared with 188,374 visitors in January 2020 a fall of 72.4%.
- Footfall numbers for January 2021 are 359,168 compared with January 2020 which were 1,155,829 a fall of 68.9%.
- The council continues to provide free parking for NHS staff and key workers and advertising messages across MSCP's for Public Health and NHS.
- The council continues to work closely with the BID and supporting town centre businesses.

Footnote

Last month I added a footnote as I thought that would be my last report to the Council. I should have known better!

After all, I anticipated retiring from the Council two years ago, and it has yet to happen, through no fault of mine.

This is **definitely** my last report to Northampton Borough Council . after thirty years' continuous membership of the Council. I thank all colleagues, both members and staff, for their support, good humour and tolerance over the years, and wish you and the new Council well for the future.

Cllr Tim Hadland
Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise