



Councillor Helen Howell

Annual Report 2017/2018

Represents Stanwick (Comprising The villages of Hargrave and Stanwick)

Roles within East Northamptonshire Council

Planning Management Committee (formerly known as Development Control Committee)
Licensing Committee
Scrutiny Committee (Vice Chairman)
Local Government Reform Working Party
Roles on Outside Organisations

Health, Adult Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee - Northamptonshire County Council
Stanwick Lakes Management Board (reserve)
Northamptonshire Parking Committee (reserve)

It has been a very busy year at East Northants Council, and now with the news of a pending change to local government within our County we are going to be even busier trying to get ready for the total change, more about that later in the report. This report contains a summary of activities over the year.

ENC wins active workplace award

East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) won the Active Workplace of the Year Award at the Northamptonshire Sports Awards 2017.

Each year the awards recognise and thank the individuals and organisations who work so hard to help make sport happen in the county.

Tresham Garden Village project secures £275k funding

A project to develop the old Deenethorpe Airfield site into a garden village has received a £275k funding boost from the Government.

This is the second year of capacity funding since Tresham (previously referred to as Deenethorpe Airfield Garden Village) was selected as one of 14 garden village projects that the Government is supporting through capacity funding and assistance from the Homes and Communities Agency. This support is helping East Northamptonshire Council and the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning and Delivery Unit to work with the landowner in preparing a detailed masterplan and delivery strategy.

Planning Application fee changes

East Northamptonshire Council is to implement the 20% increase in planning fees on 17 January 2018.

This follows the parliamentary approval of The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 on 20 December 2017.

Key site acquired by East Northamptonshire Council

We have acquired a key strategic site in the centre of Rushden as part of our bid to generate income in the face of further cuts in government funding.

The purchase of the town centre site, occupied by the retailers Wilko and Iceland, is part of our new Enterprising East Northants initiative, which is seeking to drive economic growth across the district. We're also putting in place a more commercial approach to the way in which we do business in order to generate income to address reducing financial support from the Government.

Leader of the Council, Steven North said:

“This is a win win situation; not only are we reducing the burden on local Council Tax payers by securing ongoing rental income, but we’re now well-placed, as landowners, to lead and drive forward projects that will reinvigorate Rushden town centre to ensure that we maximise the opportunities presented by the Rushden Lakes Scheme. I’m very keen to ensure that we play a leading role in shaping the future prospects of the district and critical to this will be new ways of working.”

Council agrees Rushden East master-planning vision

The vision for a new Sustainable Urban Extension that will provide good quality housing and employment within high quality and well-connected environments has been approved

Councillors endorsed the broad master-planning vision and objectives that will help create “new and distinctive neighbourhoods that will offer a high quality of life for all”.

Located to the east of Rushden and Higham Ferrers, beyond the A6 Liberty Way, the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension forms part of the council’s planning strategy and is included in the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS), which was adopted in July 2016.

The Sustainable Urban Extension will “enhance the image of Rushden and Higham Ferrers and will be well-connected to and integrated with both towns. It will contain around 2,500 new homes along with new employment, social and community facilities, and a high quality landscape setting that enhances biodiversity.”

The purpose of the development is to achieve sustainable development to meet rising population pressure which also helps to protect rural areas from over-development.

Steven North, leader of ENC explains: “The eastern expansion of Rushden will build upon the existing strong sense of local community, and will help form a distinctive place, whilst ensuring that it appropriately integrates and connects with the existing towns of Rushden and Higham Ferrers.

“Rushden East will be a mixed-use development which offers a good balance of jobs, homes and local facilities that can be accessed by all. Good transport links, connections with Rushden and Higham along with high quality green space and infrastructure will make this a very desirable place to live, work and play.”

Rushden East will provide affordable and starter homes, homes for older people, larger executive homes, and opportunities for custom and self-build homes in an area where demand is high.

Councillors, officers and developers are working on a master-plan which will go out for consultation where the local community and stakeholders will have the chance to comment. The master-plan will describe how the new development will look and provide a structured approach to creating a clear and consistent framework for development.

The development is likely to be completed in the early 2030s and is currently being promoted by a development consortium which includes the Duchy of Lancaster, Barratts and Taylor Wimpey.

Council announces new Business Charter for district

A new charter that aims to better support local businesses and promote the district to prospective businesses has been given the go ahead by East Northamptonshire Council.

The Enterprising East Northants business charter signals a commitment to a new way of working that maximises East Northamptonshire's potential and ensures that the council and businesses work together to improve the economic wellbeing of the district.

Leader of East Northamptonshire Council, Steven North explains: This charter reaffirms our support for local businesses and the crucial role that enterprise has to play in supporting thriving communities.

“East Northamptonshire is an affluent district with a rich cultural heritage, a positive ‘feel-good’ atmosphere, high quality recreational facilities and an exceptional natural environment. It is a district that people aspire to belong to and with the council committed to supporting business it has all the ingredients to be one of the most desirable locations in the UK for business.

“A key part of achieving our aim is to refresh the terms of engagement between the council and local businesses so that together we can grasp the economic challenges and opportunities faced now and in the future. We’re making sure that all council services are aligned and make a positive contribution to the local economy.”

The Charter details the council's commitment to:

- Champion and support local business
- Deliver the highest quality of service for businesses
- Provide good value for money
- Seek the views of businesses to help plan services
- Deal with businesses honestly and with integrity

£206k of council funding for East Northants residents so far

East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) is helping more communities in the district with funding for local projects, from King's Cliffe to Rushden.

Each district councillor is allocated £1,000 per year to award to parish/town councils, community groups, voluntary organisations and charities working in East Northamptonshire.

Thanks to ENC's Member Empowerment Fund (MEF) which began in June 2011, communities have benefitted from over £206,000 of grant funding to support their projects so far, including most recently:

- Installation of entry gates to Great Addington to improve speed reduction measures
- Replacement of artificial playing surface for Thrapston Cricket Club
- Purchase of wildflower plants and seeds to improve the new pond area on Maltings Green in King's Cliffe
- Funding towards the purchase of a memorial bench to be placed at the War Memorial in Irthlingborough
- Replacement uniforms for Rushden Town Band for their performances in Rushden and the surrounding area
- Purchase of junior beginner archery kits for the Archers of Raunds club

Funding boost for the Greenway

The Greenway walking and cycling route in Rushden is to be transformed thanks to Heritage Lottery funding and a brand new project.

The project, run by the Nenescape Landscape Partnership Scheme and East Northamptonshire Council, is called Out to Water, Into History. It will focus on improving the stretch of the Greenway from Rushden Lakes to the town centre with new signage, welcoming gateways, better landscaping and as the name suggests, the project hopes to

encourage users to travel between the river and Rushden, creating clear links with other points of interest along the route.

The project will take five years to complete and anyone who wants to get involved is encouraged to join the 'Friends of the Greenway' group which can be found on facebook where events and activities will be updated regularly.

Council Tax increase of £5 a year

East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) has decided to increase its share of Council Tax due to the uncertainty about future Government funding.

At the Budget meetings on 26 February and 5 March, a number of options were discussed to safeguard services in the future. The increase agreed unanimously will be an extra £5 per year for a Band D home, or 10p a week.

The Council takes only around 8p in every pound of the total Council Tax collected, with the rest of the money going to Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commissioner and town and parish councils. Only 8% of what is collected goes to ENC to run the services for which they are responsible.

What do I get for my Council Tax?

As Council Tax bills land on doormats across the district, we're reminding residents about what they get for their money and where all of the funds go to deliver services.

We collect the Council Tax on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council, emergency services, town and parish councils but only keep 8% of the total collected to deliver district council services.

For a full breakdown of your Council Tax bill, please visit our [Understand Council Tax page](#)

Leader of ENC, Councillor Steven North explains: "Based on a Band D property in the district, for 37p a day residents get their rubbish and recycling collected, safer communities, a benefits service, a sport and leisure service, 24/7 online services, clean and tidy environments, community projects to create public spaces for everyone, planning advice and legislation, food businesses checked for great hygiene, free parking in council-owned car parks and an impressive tourism offer, not forgetting dog wardens, land charges, online mapping, business advice, noise control, safeguarding and early help, plus loads more."

New deputy leader announced

Councillor David Jenney was elected as the new deputy leader of East Northamptonshire Council.

The position became vacant following the sad passing of former deputy leader and councillor, Glenn Harwood MBE last November.

OVO Energy Women's Tour unveils Northamptonshire stage

The OVO Energy Women's Tour will return to Northamptonshire this June, with a stage from Rushden to Daventry on Thursday 14 June.

It will mark the fifth year that the world's top cyclists have returned to the county, which hosted the first ever stage of the race in May 2014.

Following the success of last year's opening stage, Daventry will host a finish for the first time with the stage also including a spectator friendly finishing circuit for the first time, while Rushden makes its debut on the route of the UCI Women's WorldTour event.

Borough and District Leaders meet Local Government Minister

Borough and District Council Leaders from across Northamptonshire today met with Local Government Minister, Rishi Sunak MP

To discuss moving forward following the publication of the Government's Best Value Inspection report into Northamptonshire County Council.

On behalf of all Leaders, Cllr Jonathan Nunn, Leader of Northampton Borough Council, said: "Today's meeting was extremely positive.

"All leaders were hugely impressed by those who attended the meeting and the knowledge of the issue at hand.

"It is good news that all councils in the area of Northamptonshire have the opportunity to be fully engaged in this important process.

"We are all hugely committed to working closely together and with Government to get the best outcome for all of our residents."

District and borough leaders response to statement from the Secretary of State about NCC

The leaders of the district and borough councils across Northamptonshire have acknowledged today's statement by Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, regarding Northamptonshire County Council. In this, he said that his department is writing to the county, districts and borough councils asking them to submit locally led proposals for new ways of delivering local government services in Northamptonshire.

Citing Mr Javid's comments as a clear way forward in terms of the next steps they need to take, they have stated that the current arrangements for delivering local public services in the county need to change.

They added: "This is an opportunity to build a long-term, sustainable model for delivering services across the county and it should include a wider consideration of the delivery of public services, with the needs of residents at their very heart."

Steven North, Leader of East Northamptonshire Council, said:

"East Northamptonshire continues to be a prosperous district with many opportunities for growth and development in all areas including housing, business and community.

"Despite challenging local government finances, East Northamptonshire council remains well run and we're in a reasonably sound financial position with a good asset base. We have excellent dedicated staff who are focussed on delivering good services for our residents and businesses and our customers have always been and always will be our main priority.

"East Northamptonshire is a great place to live, work and visit and this Council will continue to play its part in making it even better."

Empowerment Funds

I am delighted to have been able to assist the following local groups with funds over this past year.

Stanwick Rovers - £200 towards a Defibrillator

Hargrave PCC - £300 towards The Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations

Hargrave Parish Council -£300 towards a gated entrance to assist with traffic calming

Hargrave Singers - £150 towards new sheet music for the choir
Stanwick Pre-School - £175 towards new chairs
St Laurence Church Stanwick - £150.00 towards a new sound system for their events

As a District Councillor we get £1000 to be spent on local organisations and clubs. If you need assistance please contact me to see if you qualify. I am always keen to assist where I can.

My usual contact details are: hhowell@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk Please include the suffix **(action)** in the subject heading. You can also leave a message for me at ENC on 01832 742000.

On Wednesday 16th May we will be holding our annual meeting to elect a new Chairman and Deputy Chairman for the coming year, along with that we will all be allocated our committees, so I will be reporting on this at the next meeting.

I am happy to make home visits or wherever it is convenient.

It is an honour and a privilege to represent Stanwick Ward at ENC and I would like to thank you for your support

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helen".

Cllr Helen Howell