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Dear Castle Ward residents  
Please find below my 6<sup>th</sup> monthly Borough Councillors report.

Any comments or queries please contact me as above, many thanks.

**20<sup>th</sup> January** (Lib Dems had opposition business)

**Questions**

*Cllr Danielle Stone to Cllr Mike Hallam*

What measures have been put in place to safeguard our citizens, including the most vulnerable (such as homeless) in light of the recent severe weather and floods?

*Cllr Danielle Stone to Cllr David Mackintosh*

What are the issues with the local authority working with the public health authority and what can be done to improve our working practice?

**MOTION** (lost) *Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Mason seconded:* "This council is mindful of our responsibility to protect our citizens in the event of bad weather, flooding and other environmental disasters. This Council asks Cabinet to put in train the necessary refresh of all emergency policies and procedures and training for local authority staff, members and partners".

**MOTION** (lost) *Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Capstick seconded:*

"This Council notes fuel poverty is becoming an ever increasing issue in the town. In order to ameliorate this and to help bring down the cost of domestic consumption this council resolves to work with energy companies on a favourable tariff for consumers willing to bulk switch to the same provider".

Upon a requisition for a recorded vote:

*There voted for the motion: Councillors Aziz, Beardsworth, Begum, Capstick, Conroy, Eales, Glynane, Gowen, Mason, Mennell, Meredith, Stone and Strachan.*

**10<sup>th</sup> March** Opposition Group Business: Councillor Palethorpe made a statement on "Current Regeneration Issues".

**Questions,**

*Cllr Stone to Cllr Eldred:* Why was information about International Women's day so late in being made public?

*Cllr Stone to Cllr Eldred:* Who appoints chairs to the forums and using what criteria?

*Cllr Stone to Cllr Eldred:* Has there been any monitoring of the spending of the Councillor Community Fund? For example, the impact it is having across the town.

**Tory Motion on St. Edmunds Hospital and Labour tabled an amendment**, which was lost: *Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Eales seconded an amendment:* That the

final paragraph be deleted and this final paragraph be inserted instead so that the motion reads:

“This Council recognises the importance of the St Edmund's site as a key gateway to the town. It is regrettable that the buildings have fallen into a state of disrepair, but Council welcomes the fact that this Administration is working with the developers of the site and English Heritage to drive forward the renovation of the buildings and bring them back into an appropriate use.

This Council asks the Administration to accelerate negotiations with developers and English Heritage. This site has been derelict for long enough. This Council therefore would welcome a planning application for the site but in the meantime asks the Cabinet to immediately explore all options including the serious possibility of a Compulsory Purchase Order.”

### **28<sup>th</sup> April**

Opposition Group Business: Councillor Stone made a statement on ‘Women’s Issues’.

**MOTION** (won) *Councillor Mason proposed and Councillor N Choudary seconded:*

“This council is committed to ensuring that all people can live free of fear of violence at home, and is totally opposed to the domestic violence that led to women in our county making 12,000 complaints to the police in the last year for which figures are available

This council is aware of the difficulties that agencies working with women who are victims of domestic abuse are facing. This council recognises that this is a safeguarding issue and resolves to work with the relevant agencies in the town to find local solutions to these difficulties. This council further resolves to work with county wide agencies to develop a strategy for support that meets the needs of the women and the children at risk of abuse and who are victims of abuse.”

**MOTION** (won) *Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor N Choudary seconded:*

“This Council notes the proliferation and concentration of betting shops is contributing to community decline, especially the decline in valued community assets like pubs. England’s poorest spend £13bn a year on the gambling machines in these shops according to a study published by the Campaign for Fairer Gambling. The ongoing spread of betting shops has also been linked to gambling addiction and crime.

This council also notes that gambling machines in the Betting Shops and in pubs is adding to the vulnerability of our local communities.

This Council therefore resolve to write a letter to Central Government asking them to create a separate planning use class for betting shops so that local authorities have new powers to address the problem.”

**MOTION** (lost) *Councillor Capstick proposed and Councillor Palethorpe seconded:*

“This Council notes that the WNDC finished on 31st March. This Council believes ongoing WNDC projects must still be monitored to ensure their completion. This Council resolves to establish a working party to monitor the progress on the completion of the WNDC legacy projects. The working party would receive bi-monthly reports of progress and in turn the Working Party reports back to Full Council”.

**2<sup>nd</sup> June** Opposition Group Business: Councillor Capstick made a statement on ‘Derelict Sites’ (which includes St. Edmunds Hospital).

**MOTION** (amended by Tories but passed) *Councillor Eales proposed and Councillor Capstick seconded:*

“This Council notes that Cllr Wire seconded a motion on 12th September 2011 supporting the joining up of St. James Mill Road and the road end in St. James Retail Park. This Council notes how long this policy has been in existence, disappointingly without resolution. Linking up these particular roads would ease congestion on Peters Way and the roads in St. James and Far Cotton, which also means less pollution. It would increase the economic viability of the southwest district and particularly the Waterside Enterprise Zone and the new Rail Station. Also the major problem of heavy traffic on Saints and Cobblers match days would be much improved.

This Council asks the Cabinet to continue in putting pressure, by whatever means they see as necessary, on the Secretary of State for Transport and Network Rail to have the rail line dismantled as soon as realistically possible.

However, if this course of action proves problematic (as suggested in the Northampton Chronicle & Echo 15/5/2014), then an alternative option, such as a bridge, should be considered and implemented at the earliest opportunity.”

**MOTION** (lost) *Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor N Choudary seconded:*

“This Council notes the Sekhemka statue is due to go to auction on 10th July.

This also notes Arts Council England (ACE) has warned that the sale could jeopardise Northampton Museum’s Accreditation status.

This Council further notes that the Museums Association’s (MA) ethics committee has urged Northampton Borough Council to rethink its sale of an ancient Egyptian statue.

This Council ask the Cabinet one last time to reconsider selling of the statue, so it can be enjoyed by the people of Northampton and visitors to the town.”

**MOTION** (lost) *Councillor Palethorpe proposed and Councillor Stone seconded that:*

“This Council notes the ‘People’s March for the NHS’ starts in Jarrow on 16th August and finishes in London 6th September. This march is highlighting the detrimental impact Government policies are having on the NHS. This Council further notes it follows the spirit of the Jarrow Crusade in October 1936, which saw 207 people troop to London to highlight mass unemployment in Britain.

It will be going through 23 major towns and cities and will arrive in Northampton on September 2nd. This Council supports the NHS. It is one of our most important institutions. This Council is pleased the People’s March for the NHS is passing through our town and we will welcome them to Northampton when they arrive.”

**14<sup>th</sup> July** (Lib Dems had opposition business)

**MOTION** (amended by Tories but passed)

*Councillor Stone proposed and Councillor Marriott seconded:*

“This Council notes that Victoria Street has been designated the location for the arrival and departure for the National Express and other long distance buses.

This Council therefore resolves to utilise part of the car park in Victoria Street to develop amenities such as a transit area, information board, disabled friendly access and facilities and toilets for the bus users.

This Council furthers resolve to investigate the possibility to adapt an empty unit on the Drapery to provide a passenger centre and transit area.”

**MOTION** (amended by Tories but passed) *Councillor N Choudary proposed and Councillor Stone seconded that:*

“This Council notes Northampton Carnival Arts Consortium is a small group of dedicated and hard- working volunteers who spend hours of their own free time bringing to the town a great inclusive multicultural event.

This Council gives its support to the Northampton Carnival Arts Consortium and recognises their fantastic work. This Council therefore asks the Cabinet to work with them from this September to ensure plans are put in place for 2015 in a timely and responsible manner, having due regard to the venue, route and support for fundraising.”

In addition to my role in the Chamber I have also worked on Scrutiny panels looking at the impact of welfare reforms and looking at what needs to be done to regulate the private housing sector.

I also sit on the licensing committee.

### **In the Ward**

In the ward I have supported community events like Northampton in Bloom, the opening up of St Edmunds churchyard, Guerilla Gardening, the Spring Boroughs carnival float and the Spring Boroughs Festival. Our carnival float won third prize this year!

I have supported the weeks of action and taken regular part in walkabouts to identify neighbourhood issues.

I have campaigned with residents to stop the depedestrianisation of Abington Street, petitioned for the council to take on the St Edmunds hospital site.

I have worked with the homeless to get them housed and with families to get them into more appropriate accommodation. I have taken up issues around decent homes.

I continue to report fly tipping and environmental concerns. I have been successful in getting some anti-social behaviour dealt with and stopped.

At present I am trying to establish how many families in social housing are having to use their living room as a bedroom. Please let me know of any families affected by this.

I publish regular blogs and distribute regular leaflets. I am available for residents to see me most Thursdays at the drop in centre at Castle Hill United Reformed Church. I can arrange to see residents at any other time.

For further information please see my website [www.daniellestone.co.uk](http://www.daniellestone.co.uk) or follow me on twitter @dalwahabi

**In July the Labour Group welcomed our new Labour Councillor for St James Rufia Ashraf.**