

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

A6 TOWNS FORUM

Meeting held: 12th October 2016

Present: Councillor David Soans (KBC/DTC) (*Chair*)
Councillor Ruth Groome (KBC/RTC)
Councillor June Derbyshire (KBC/DTC)
Councillor Karl Sumpter (KBC/RTC)
Councillor Margaret Talbot (KBC/RTC)
Councillor Michael Tebbutt (KBC/DTC)
Councillor Christopher Groome (BLTC/NCC)
Councillor James Hakewill (RTC/MPC/NCC)
Councillor Clive Cross (RTC)
Councillor Ray Brooks (DTC)
Councillor Allan Matthews (DTC)

Also Present: Martin Hammond (Kettering Borough Council)
Jon Hall (Kettering Borough Council)
Insp Julie Mead (Northamptonshire Police)
Sgt Scott Little (Northamptonshire Police)
Ruth James (Committee Administrator – KBC)

16.A6TF.17 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Dearing (KBC/DTC), David Watson (RF), Ian Jelley (KBC/RTC) and Mark Cox (RTC).

16.A6TF.18 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the A6 Towns Forum held on 27th July 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

16.A6TF.19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

16.A6TF.20 KETTERING TOWN AND RURAL FORUMS - APPOINTMENT OF A6 TOWNS REPRESENTATIVES

Councillor Mike Tebbutt volunteered to be the A6 Town Forum representative on the Kettering Town Forum.

Councillor Jim Hakewill volunteered to be the A6 Town Forum representative on the Rural Forum.

16.A6TF.21 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

16.A6TF.08

Regarding the proposed meeting between the PCC and representatives from the three forums, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that a date had not been set yet but would be communicated to members as soon as it was known.

16.A6TF.14

The matter of the Surestart closure at Desborough Library was put forward at the last meeting for inclusion on the agenda. Members were keen to know what the vacant space was to be used for. The Deputy Chief Executive provided a verbal update. NCC Estates Department were currently marketing the space and were doing their best to ensure that the premises were occupied as soon as possible. In regard to the Burton Latimer Surestart, it was reported that there was no known threat to its closure.

16.A6TF.22 POLICE STATISTICS

Inspector Julie Mead attended the meeting and introduced herself. Inspector Mead explained that she had just taken over the Corby and Kettering sector. The forum heard that it was now possible to follow the police and their current work through 'Twitter' as the police used this as a live feed. To connect to Twitter a smart phone, tablet or computer was required and instructions were provided on how to create an account:

Go to <http://twitter.com> and find the sign up box
Enter your full name, phone number, and a password.
Click 'Sign up for Twitter'

The following Twitter contact details were provided for Insp Mead and Kettering Police.

Enter **@Inspjulesmead** to follow Inspector Julie Mead

Enter **@KetteringPolice** to follow Kettering Police

Sergeant Scott Little reported to the meeting details of crime affecting the A6 towns. There had been a large increase in burglaries and as a result Kettering was now designated a priority area, with extra resources being allocated to combat the issue. This included extra plain clothes and hi-visibility patrols as well as patrols targeting insecure properties. There had also been an increase in shoplifting; the police were working with businesses to address this. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had seen a small increase in the last six months. This was mainly related to parking and neighbour disputes. Sergeant Little advised the forum in regard to specific offenders that had been arrested and sentenced.

Members heard that the police were working proactively in regard to Halloween and Bonfire Night. 'Operation Pumpkin' had involved visits to schools and there were posters and leaflets available offering advice on 'Trick or Treat' and other issues relating to these events. Members were keen to see the leaflets distributed; Sergeant Little offered to drop off leaflets and posters to venues that the forum suggested. Also he would send the pdf for these to the Town Councils.

There followed a time of questions and answers about crime related issues summarised below –

Rise in burglary figures:

The way the crime figures were collated partly contributed to the rise in burglary figures. However higher levels of this type of crime were a problem across the area, not just the A6 towns. The police were trying to break the figures back down into individual boroughs and towns across the region. The issues with insecure properties had been due to downstairs windows and doors being left open or unlocked, open upstairs windows had not provided an access point. The police were also working with Neighbourhood Watch Groups. Some of the offenders were local but there was also a group that was travelling around the area. It was not thought that the completion of road works had contributed to the rise in burglaries by providing a quick exit route for offenders.

Crime numbers:

Members reported problems getting through to the 101 number. They were advised that this was because calls were prioritised according to the seriousness of the complaint; also 999 calls take precedence to the 101 number. Concerns were also raised regarding the issue of crime numbers. It was reported that when calling into 101, some residents had only been given an incident number and not a crime number. Sergeant Little explained that on dialling 101 the caller is asked a series of questions. Depending on the answers the call handler determines whether the police attend, or should the call be put through to another team to book on as a crime. If incidents are not determined to be a crime then a crime number is not allocated. However, even if

the police do not attend a reported incident, the caller will get a follow up visit from a PCSO the following day.

Online bullying:

Sergeant Little responded to members concerns about cyber-bullying. He reported that this type of crime was very difficult to police and extra resources were being put into this area. Police had engaged with local schools holding discussions with students. A lot of calls were received relating to Facebook and if a crime had been committed it was dealt with accordingly. Inspector Mead added that 'violence without injury' offences were covered under the 'Malicious Communication Act' and resources were being allocated to deal with the increase.

Car tax:

Members asked if there was any evidence to show there was an increase in car tax avoidance since the removal of car tax discs. They were advised that the BBC website had reported the DVLA had lost millions of pounds. The Environmental Protection Manager advised that concerns regarding vehicles thought to not be taxed can be reported through Customer Services at KBC.

Thanks were extended to the police for their attendance at the forum.

16.A6TF.23 DOG CONTROL ORDER AND DOG WALKING AREAS

KBC's Environmental Protection Manager attended the meeting and gave a presentation on 'Dog Control Public Space Protection Order'.

The meeting heard that three existing dog control orders were due to expire in 2017 and a public consultation had been undertaken between early July and 30th September to ascertain what the public wished to see in their place.

The consultation document had consisted of 11 questions designed to generate discussion and a total of 163 responses had been received which were in the process of being collated. The results would be presented to the Research and Development Committee on 27th October and the Executive Committee in November. Members discussed the presentation and made the following suggestions:

- Allocation of specific dog walking areas within existing parks and play areas.
- Inclusion of sports grounds and pitches as considered areas for dog controls.
- A complete ban on dogs in recreation grounds that had to be used by local schools as playing fields – both Burton Latimer

and Desborough had schools with no grounds for recreational use.

- Dog owners prosecuted if they had failed to carry bags with them for the collection of dog foul. This practice had been introduced at Daventry District Council.

Members were advised that in terms of the restriction and provision of dog areas it was difficult to find a balance and this would be considered and looked into as part of the outcome from the consultation. It was AGREED that the comments above be formally included as the Forum's response to the consultation.

16.A6TF.24 FUTURE FORMAT OF A6 TOWNS FORUM

A report was submitted which provided information to the forum on the decline in attendance at its meetings. The Deputy Chief Executive opened the discussion and members were asked for suggestions to amend the format of the meetings. A discussion took place and the following suggestions were made:

- Hold the meetings at different venues for the summer months, rotating around the A6 towns, remaining at the KBC offices during the winter.
- Reduce the number of meetings to twice a year.
- Adopt a theme for each meeting; suggestions included planning; parking; extension of an invitation to Danny Moody from Northampton Association of Local Councils (NCALC) to provide a presentation.
- Take steps to encourage stakeholders, local organisations and agencies to attend.
- Include interesting topics/items for discussion to encourage outside bodies to attend.

The Chair reinforced that members needed to encourage town and parish councillors to attend meetings and that the ideas above would be explored/put into practice as appropriate.

16.A6TF.25 LEICESTERSHIRE AND NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RAIL ACTION COMMITTEE (LANRAC) REPORT

Councillor Chris Groome presented the LANRAC report. He set out the background to the committee and the work it undertook in regard to rail services, but more particularly the upgrading and electrification of the Midland Main Line in and around the Borough. . The group had developed a good reputation and was working hard to ensure that Kettering was not cut from any proposed programme of improvements to the railway network. This has been achieved by the rescheduling of the electrification programme and the work to increase capacity in and around the Borough. Members noted that the lobbying work

undertaken by the group had helped get East Midlands Councils noticed at Westminster to help attract more investment into the region.

RESOLVED that the report be noted

16.A6TF.26 A6 COMMUNITY TOILET SCHEME

A report was submitted to update members of the forum in regard to the A6 Community Toilet Scheme. Members were asked to consider if there were any potential locations or businesses that could be approached in Desborough and Burton Latimer to become part of the scheme.

Members suggested that publicly owned buildings in the town were put forward for consideration. It was reported that the library and doctor's surgery were used, but no signs were displayed to show they were included in the scheme. There were two new cafes in the town that could be approached. Members expressed concern that the regular market traders in Desborough had no facilities to use.

It was reported that Burton Latimer had similar problems. A farmers market took place once a month with no facilities available. The doctor's surgery in Burton Latimer was not central to the town so could not be utilised by the scheme. A potential set of premises was described, but it was felt that they would each only sign up if they knew there were not the only premises available.

An update was provided in regard to Rothwell. The toilets were open as volunteers helped to keep them running. The costs had been kept to around £3000 per year.

The Chair requested that the two Town Councils add the matter to future agendas for discussion.

It was therefore

AGREED That Councillor Ruth Groome and Cllr Mike Tebbutt approach businesses in Burton Latimer and Desborough respectively to gauge the level of interest, and that a pack of information be provided to those two members beforehand to assist them.

16.A6TF.27 CYCLING FACILITIES

A report was submitted to update members of the forum in regard to the cycle routes, following on from a briefing note that was circulated at the previous meeting of the forum.

Members were advised that the previously reported matter, regarding the cycle route along the A14 between Rothwell and Desborough which was overgrown, had been reported

Concerns were raised about lorries parking along the A14 in a layby near to the Esso Garage and McDonald's. The narrowness of the layby meant lorries were parking across the area used by walkers and cyclists, who were being forced into the road when travelling from Rothwell to Kettering. Pressure needed to be maintained on Highways England to resolve this issue. It was noted that the development of Lorry Parks that had received planning consent had not commenced and these were desperately needed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted

At this point it being 9.05pm, it was

RESOLVED that the meeting continue in order to conclude the remaining business on the agenda

16.A6TF.28 NEWSROUND

Burton Latimer

Councillor Ruth Groome reported that Burton Latimer had late night shopping taking place on 25th November and Bosworth's Garden Centre was holding a fashion show on 2nd November.

Rothwell

Rothwell were holding a Christmas Gala event on Friday 2nd December from 6pm until 8pm.

Desborough

Desborough were also holding a Christmas Gala event on Friday 25th November.

16.A6TF.29 FEEDBACK FROM OTHER FORUMS

None.

16.A6TF.30 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

- Neighbourhood Watch update from Jane Calcott
- Reinstatement of Joint Action Groups (JAG's)
- Engaging with local traders and the Chamber of Trade

16.A6TF.31 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

16.A6TF.32 DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting would take place on 30th November 2016.
The following meeting would take place on 1st February 2017

(The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 9.15 pm)

Signed.....

Chair

RJA