

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

RURAL FORUM

Meeting held: 30th January 2020

Present:

Borough Councillors

Councillor David Howes
Councillor Cliff Moreton
Councillor Mark Rowley

County Councillor

Councillor Victoria Perry
Councillor Chris Smith-Haynes
Councillor Allan Matthews

Parish Councillors

Councillor Richard Barnwell (Cransley and Mawsley)
Councillor Alan Durn (Loddington)
Councillor Paul Gooding (Harrington)
Councillor John Lillie (Brampton Ash)
Councillor Andy Macredie (Pytchley)
Councillor Frances Pope (Thorpe Malsor)
Councillor Robin Shrive (Broughton)
Councillor Bruce Squires (Stoke Albany)
Councillor David Watson (Geddington, Newton & Little Oakley) (**Chair**)
Councillor David Whalley
Councillor Paul Wharin (Warkton)
Councillor James Woolsey (Warkton)

Also Present:

Lisa Hyde (Kettering Borough Council)
Brendan Coleman (Kettering Borough Council)
Pearl Nathaniel (Kettering Borough Council)
Jo Haines (Kettering Borough Council)
Hazel Webb (Kettering Borough Council)
David Pope (Kettering Borough Council)
Eden Palmer (Forum Administrator – KBC)
Sgt Ken Brown (Northamptonshire Police)

19.RF.31

APOLOGIES

Action

Apologies for absence were received from the Chair, Cllr Jim Hakewill and Cllr Hilary Bull (Broughton).

19.RF.32

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

19.RF.33 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

19.RF.34 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Councillor Gooding stated that he had been provided with answers to a number of queries he had made since the last meeting. Sgt Ken Brown would provide answers to remaining police-specific questions outside the meeting.

19.RF.27 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)

A request was made for all parish councils to be included as part of consultations relating to the GTAA. The meeting noted that Philip Hollobone MP had, the previous day, secured a parliamentary debate on the topic of Gypsy and Travellers and the Planning System referencing both Broughton and Loddington. It was **AGREED** that a link to the Hansard report be included in the minutes.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2020-01-29/debates/6C426CC1-F880-4415-ADFA-2393F47A5AE8/PlanningSystemGypsiesAndTravellers#contribution-BCD84625-2059-4740-AE17-6C86A2E2444E>

19.RF.35 **POLICE STATISTICS**

Police Statistics

It was noted that Sgt Rob Offord had been replaced for a period of four months by Sgt Ken Brown due to operational matters. Sgt Brown was welcomed to the meeting.

The Police Statistics for the year to 2nd January 2020 were presented and members noted a 7% increase in crime locally against 10% nationally. Similar increases were detailed for ASB.

General Policing Issues

It was heard that Operation Crooked, created to tackle domestic burglary offences by a target of 20% had achieved a reduction of 31% to date with a positive number of arrests witnessed. There remained an issue in relation to property insecurities, with police promoting a message of prevention and reporting of all offences.

The meeting heard that a new website designed to help homeowners better protect and secure their homes utilising an

interactive online system had recently gone live at the following address - www.protectyourhomenorthants.co.uk

Members heard that the force was set to undergo an inspection of its data integrity and as the accuracy of crime recording improved, reported crime figures were likely to rise.

Recent changes to the local policing structure aligned with planned areas for the new unitary local government authorities were outlined. Superintendent Dennis Murray was the new local commander for the north of the county, with these changes providing the force with greater control over its resources and training abilities.

Sgt Brown would be focussing on a number of areas during his time as rural sergeant, notably regarding drink drive and cannabis-related offences.

Members asked questions in relation to:

- County Lines activity
- Drones assisting rural policing
- Fly-tipping of cannabis farm waste
- Additional police officers for the county

Sgt Brown was thanked for his attendance.

19.RF.36 DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2020/21 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Principal Accountant Pearl Nathaniel and Group Accountant Jo Haines attended the meeting to answer member's questions and to provide a supplementary presentation that detailed:-

- The budget consultation timetable
- The composition of the General Fund (£60.7m), HRA (£15.4m) and Capital Programme (£39.2m) budgets that totaled £115.3m
- Main service pressures and risks (recycling, homelessness, local government grant funding)
- Four key funding streams and forecast changes to these (Fair Funding Review, Business Rates Retention, Council Tax and New Homes Bonus)

Members of the forum heard that the Executive Committee had started the formal consultation period for the Council's budget on 15th January, and that the public Budget Consultation had been held on 23rd January. Members noted that the views of all three Geographic Forums would be sought during the consultation

period which would conclude on 26th February when the budget would be formally considered by Full Council and rent levels and Council Tax set.

A member of the forum asked the following question in relation to the draft budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy:

Item / Issue	Summary of Response Given
<p>The report suggests that increasing Council Tax to the threshold level would generate £163,000 of income. Has that already been included in the budget, as there is an increase in Council Tax income in the figures?</p> <p><i>(Cllr Paul Gooding – Harrington PC)</i></p>	<p>An increase in council tax rates has not been reflected in the budget, the increase in the figures in the report relates to an increase in the council tax base not an increase in the council tax rates.</p> <p><i>(Officer Response)</i></p>

19.RF.37 HEALTH AND WELLBEING FESTIVAL ENGAGEMENT

Hazel Webb of Kettering Borough Council attended the meeting and delivered a short presentation in relation to the annual Health and Wellbeing Festival, providing details of the 2019 event and expressing a desire for increased engagement and involvement for rural areas at the 2020 festival.

It was heard that the 2020 event would be held across 13th and 14th June with a larger main event at Boughton House on the latter date with activities in Kettering the day before. KBC was keen to work alongside parishes to assist in facilitating and promoting any events that were already planned in rural areas or were being set up specifically to form part of the festival. Parishes were encouraged to contact Hazel Webb with any plans, and it was considered that utilising parish websites, newsletters and magazines would be beneficial to engagement.

The meeting heard that attendance and engagement at the 2019 events had been surprisingly positive given the relatively short period available to publicise the festival. For 2020, there would be a longer lead-in with revamped branding, new social media pages and a press release forthcoming to allow for greater engagement with the public.

Members asked questions in relation to:

- Links with Park Run events
- Parishes to be provided with links for social media outlets and promotion tools
- Links and promotion through school, nurseries and community groups

- The costs of attending events (free)

19.RF.38 **RURAL HOMELESSNESS**

The meeting received a report that sought to provide details of processes in place surrounding homelessness, the Council's long-term strategic approach and contact details for available assistance in relation to homelessness in rural areas.

Aside from KBC, it was heard that Accommodation Concern offered out of hours advice relating to homelessness and also undertook homelessness prevention work.

Cllr Richard Barnwell thanked KBC and Cllr Rowley for their assistance in relation to two homeless individuals in the rural area who had been provided with accommodation. In relation to this specific case it was noted that KBC had signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant.

In regard to a question relating to affordable housing, it was **AGREED** that a definition of "affordable" would be circulated given the potential benefit to parishes preparing neighbourhood plans.

19.RF.39 **PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM AND KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL 2021**

Lisa Hyde provided an update on progress in relation to Public Sector Reform and the recent recommendation to create a Kettering Town Council with effect from May 2021.

Local Government Reform

The meeting heard that the Statutory Change Order that would establish in law how the existing authorities would be disbanded and the new unitaries come into being had yet to be laid. It was anticipated however that this parliamentary process would conclude in February as mid-March formed the deadline in order for elections to the shadow authorities to take place in May.

The meeting was advised that the North Northamptonshire Joint Committee received updates on the unitary work programme and the meetings were the best place to obtain updates in relation to progress and preparations relating to the new unitary authority for the north of the county. The next meeting of the committee would take place on 10th February and it was **AGREED** that a website link to the Future Northants website be included in the minutes. <https://www.futurenorthants.co.uk/>

Kettering Town Council

Members heard that a report had been taken to Council on 13th

January at which support was given by members to the creation of a Town Council for Kettering from April 2021 onwards with 20 members elected from across nine wards. Details of expanded Kettering boundaries taking into account new developments around the town were discussed.

It was also noted that the Town Council would have a mayor with the current KBC insignia and regalia passing to the new town council. In addition, the town's Market Charter would also pass to the town council. Cllr Barnwell made an offer to assist in the creation of an inventory of the mayoral regalia prior to its transfer.

19.RF.40 **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

April meeting

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting of the forum be deferred until early June to allow for the upcoming parish elections.

It was requested that an item be brought to the next meeting in relation to the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras in the Borough and the associated data implications following concerns from rural residents.

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 8.22pm)

Signed
Chair

DJP