

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

19th February 2020

Present: Councillor Russell Roberts (Chair)
Councillors Lloyd Bunday, Mark Dearing, Scott Edwards, David Howes, Ian Jelley and Mark Rowley

Also Present: The Mayor (Councillor Keli Watts)
Councillors June Derbyshire, Anne Lee, Clark Mitchell, Mick Scrimshaw, Shirley Stanton and Mike Tebbutt.

19.EX.52 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lesley Thurland.

19.EX.53 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair.

19.EX.54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

19.EX.55 MATTERS OF URGENCY

None.

19.EX.56 PUBLIC SPEAKERS

The following people requested to speak under the Council's Right to Speak Policy:-

Councillor Mick Scrimshaw
Councillor Anne Lee
Councillor Clark Mitchell

19.EX.57 ISSUES REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The following two items had been referred from the Research and Development Committee:-

- Domestic Abuse (Item 12)
- Pets Policy (Item 13)

19.EX.58 WORK PROGRAMME

The Council's Work Programme, to be published on 20th February, was noted.

19.EX.59 KETTERING TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL AND DWELL TIME IMPROVEMENT

The Chair agreed to bring this item forward (No. 14 on the agenda).

A report was submitted which provided Members with information to enable them to consider options which could help to contribute to an increase in footfall and visitor dwell time within Kettering town centre.

Cllr Scrimshaw thanked the Executive Committee for considering town centre car parking in the report. He put forward a suggestion that two hours free parking should be given across the board and asked that this option be considered in addition to the three options contained within the report, which would encourage more people to visit the town centre as well as potentially increasing footfall.

In consideration of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration emphasised the Council's ongoing commitment to improving the town centre, along with the work in connection with the Heritage Action Zone and improvements to road junctions. Reference was made to the Town Centre Area Action Plan and the recommendations of the Town Centre Task and Finish Group. It was noted that the preferred option would be subject to review after nine months of operation.

In consideration of the four options put forward, it was felt that, if two hours free parking was given at any time, people could inadvertently over-stay and be issued with a penalty notice, This option could be technically difficult to implement, with additional technology or physical barriers required. Additionally, the approximately £300,000 projected loss of income was considered by members of the committee to be excessive.

During further debate, members put forward the view that Option C (Free after 3.00 pm Mon-Thurs) would encourage increased footfall for the

benefit of town centre shops and also benefit other businesses, such as the swimming pool, and could encourage people to stay in the town centre to visit restaurants after 6.00 pm.

Members were reminded that the preferred option was subject to approval by Full Council. Any additional suggestions would need to be costed and implications included in the budget for 2020/21, which was due for consideration by Council on 26th February.

Councillor Scrimshaw was thanked for his suggestion.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the findings from the consultation conducted to date with members of the public and local stakeholders be noted;
- (ii) Option C (No charges after 3.00 p.m. Monday-Thursday) be recommended to Council as the Executive's preferred option;
- (iii) the preferred option be implemented within the Council owned car parks for a pilot period of one year, with a review report considered after nine months; and
- (iv) reserves be used to fund the preferred option, as outlined in Paragraph 7, Table 1 of the report.

19.EX.60 DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS 2020/21: GENERAL FUND, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

A report was submitted which provided updates to the budget that had occurred since the last meeting, and reported back comments that had been submitted during the budget consultation period (to date) to enable the Executive to:

- (a) reconsider the main budget issues and drivers and consider their impact on the medium term;
- (b) make budget recommendations to full Council, including the recommended level of council tax for 2020/21;
- (c) formally approve the level of council house rents that will be charged for 2020/21; and
- (d) recommend two debts for write off in accordance with the Council's constitution.

It was noted that the Northamptonshire Structural Changes Order (SCO), had become law on 13th February 2020. Although Kettering Borough

Council had a duty to set its budget for 2020/21, this would be the final year of the Council's existence.

In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance drew members' attention to a recommended housing rent increase of 2.7%, which had been supported by the Tenants' Forum, and submitted a recommendation for a zero percent increase in Council Tax.

RESOLVED that the Executive:-

- (a) approve the debt write off (as detailed in section 9.2 of the report);
- (b) receive the comments received from the consultation process (to date) as detailed at Appendix B of the report;
- (c) approve that the average weekly council house rent be increased by 2.7% to £80.96 (on a 52 week year) for 2020/21 (effective from 6th April 2020).

That the Executive **RECOMMEND** to Council:-

- (a) the Revised General Fund Budget (2019/20) and Draft General Fund Budget for (2020/21) – as detailed at Appendix A – Section 1*- as amended for item 14;
- (b) the following Council Tax levels for 2020/21 in relation to Kettering Borough Council and the associated Medium-Term Financial Forecast;

Band	A	B *	C	D	E	F	G	H
Annual	£136.93	£159.75	£182.57	£205.39	£251.03	£296.67	£342.32	£410.78
Weekly	£2.63	£3.07	£3.51	£3.95	£4.83	£5.70	£6.58	£7.90
Increase per week (pence)	0p	0p	0p	0p	0p	0p	0p	0p
Increase	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

* Represents the average level of the household bill within the District

- (c) The Housing Revenue Account Estimates for 2020/21 – as detailed at Appendix A - Section 2*; and
- (d) The Capital Programme (2019 - 2025) – as detailed at Appendix A - Section 3*

* Please note that these references to Appendix A refer to the 'Draft Budget Booklet – 2020/21) that was circulated as Appendix A to the January Budget report to the Executive Committee on 15 January 2020. A copy of these papers can be found at https://www.kettering.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1804/executive_committee

19.EX.61 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2020/21**

A report was submitted which reported the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 for approval.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Treasury Management Policy Statement as detailed in Appendix A of the report be approved;
- (b) the Annual Treasury Management Strategy as detailed in Appendix B of the report be approved; and
- (c) it be **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the Prudential and Treasury Indicators be approved as detailed in Appendix B of the report.

19.EX.62 **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2020/21**

A report was submitted which sought approval for the Capital Strategy for 2020/21. It was noted that the Capital Strategy was required to be approved by Full Council.

Councillor Anne Lee addressed the Committee, referring to Procurement on Page 82 of the Strategy. Councillor Lee suggested that wording be added to the second bullet point as follows:-

“... giving priority to local suppliers to boost the local economy and having regard to climate change.”

The Chair thanked Councillor Lee for her suggestion, it being noted that the legalities of adding this requirement would be investigated by the Portfolio Holder for Finance before the next full Council meeting, particularly as the Capital Strategy related to procurement of assets and not general procurement.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment indicated that he was happy to also discuss the climate change element of the suggestion with Councillor Lee.

RECOMMENDED that the Capital Strategy, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.

19.EX.63 **KETTERING TOWN CENTRE TASK AND FINISH GROUP –
TIMELINE**

A report was submitted which sought approval of the timeline following review of the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group by the Research and Development Committee at its meeting on 28th January 2020.

Councillor Mick Scrimshaw addressed the Committee, asking that the recommendation at C4 be actively promoted. He also referred to Recommendation B2, highlighting the need for financial support from the Council for start-up businesses in the town, which may need Kettering Borough Council resources to investigate options and attract independent shops.

Councillor Anne Lee welcomed Recommendation C3, citing a local initiative to promote poetry to improve mental health, indicating that she was still awaiting a response.

Going forward, members of the Committee agreed there was a need to consider the longer-term vision for improving and maximising the sport and leisure offer within the town centre. However, it was noted that long term plans would now have to be taken forward through a joint programme by the unitary authority that would come into being from 1st April 2021.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration assured members of the Committee that the Council was committed to doing as much as possible to improve town centres and work with everyone concerned in the limited timescale available. Any suggestions in the longer term would be taken forward.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the timeline update report as set out in Section 2.1 Table 1 of the report be approved;
- (b) the observations outlined within section 3.2 Table 2 of the report be noted; and
- (c) it be recognised that there are other towns and villages in the borough that could benefit from a similar review.

19.EX.64 DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

A report was submitted which sought approval to adopt the new policy on responding to Domestic Abuse within Kettering Borough Council tenancies.

Councillor Anne Lee addressed the Committee, congratulating officers for their comprehensive report and policy. She welcomed the use of Council facilities for interviewing victims, which meant they did not have to travel to the Sunflower Centre in Northampton.

RESOLVED that the new Domestic Abuse Policy be adopted.

19.EX.65 PET POLICY

A report was submitted which sought approval to adopt the Pet Policy for Kettering Borough Council’s tenants.

Councillor Clark Mitchell addressed the Committee on the subject of smaller pets, pointing out that some could grow to be very large, such as lizards and pythons. Also, people could acquire a large collection of reptiles and smaller animals which would require monitoring. He also referred to the policy in respect of tenants in sheltered accommodation and the elderly, urging the Council to give consideration to individual cases where people’s pets were their only company.

In response, it was noted that tenants were visited on a regular basis, Pets were only permitted in sheltered accommodation in exceptional circumstances, but cases would be dealt with on an individual basis and rehoming would not be enforced where there was no need to do so.

During debate, members recognised that pets were important for people’s health and wellbeing.

It was noted that the policy had been endorsed by the Tenants’ Forum.

RESOLVED that the new Pet Policy be adopted.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.20 pm)

Signed
Chair

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