

Monitoring and Audit Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 16 th September 2020
Time:	<u>4.00pm</u>
Venue:	www.kettering.gov.uk/youtube
Committee Administrator	David Pope (01536) 535661 e-mail: davidpope@kettering.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14th July 2020 to be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
3. Declarations of Interest*
 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
 - Personal Interests
4. Any matters referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to a call-in to be considered - NONE
5. Any responses of the Executive to reports of Scrutiny Committees to be considered where appropriate - NONE
6. The Chair of the Committee to ask members of the public present if they wish to speak on any public items on the Agenda.
7. Any items of urgency the Chair decides should be considered.

Working with and on behalf of local people

8. Reports

<u>Ref.</u>	<u>Report</u>	Presented By
A	Climate Change Action Plan - Update (attached)	James Wilson
B	Kettering Town Centre - Update (attached)	Rochelle Mathieson
C	Key Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welfare Reform (attached)• Homelessness update (attached)	Rob Thompson John Conway /Carly Hohn
D	Key Performance Information Booklet (to follow)	Guy Holloway
E	Work Programme (attached)	Lisa Hyde

** Members are asked to make any declarations of financial or other interests they may have in relation to items on this agenda. Members are reminded to make a declaration at any stage throughout the meeting if it becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is considered.*

*** If a member of the Committee has a question on any matter arising from this item, it would be appreciated if they could contact David Pope so that an update can be provided at the meeting.*

The membership of this Committee is: -

Councillors Jonathan West (Chair), Anne Lee (Deputy Chair), Ash Davies, Jenny Henson, Margaret Talbot, Mike Tebbutt and Greg Titcombe

Substitutes:- John Currall, June Derbyshire, Cliff Moreton, Maggie Don, Mick Scrimshaw

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MONITORING AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Meeting held: 14th July 2020

Meeting held virtually

Present: Councillor Jonathan West (Chair)

Councillors Ash Davies, Anne Lee, Margaret Talbot, Mike Tebbutt and Greg Titcombe

Also Present: Martin Hammond (Executive Director)
Mark Dickenson (Head of Resources)
Jo Haines (Group Accountant)
Dean Mitchell (Group Accountant)
Hazel Webb (Community Services Manager)
Neil Harris (EY external audit)
Mark Watkins (CWAS internal audit)
Daniel Hayward (KPMG external audit)
Anne Ireson (Committee Administrator)

20.MA.01 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Jenny Henson.

20.MA.02 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Monitoring and Audit Committee held on 4th February 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Update on Minute 19.MA.47: It was noted that negotiations were continuing with Home Housing Association regarding the purchase and re-opening of Wellington House, although current advice was that hostels could not re-open due to Covid-19, and therefore the negotiations were centred around what works would be necessary to make them safe in the longer term for re-occupation.

20.MA.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Anne Lee declared a personal interest in Item 8G on the agenda as a trustee of Groundwork.

Councillor Mike Tebbutt declared a personal interest in Item 8G as a member of Kettering Huxloe Rotary Club and supporter of Marlow House in Desborough.

20.MA.04 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT (8A)

A report was submitted which presented the Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 for endorsement.

During debate, members of the Committee noted that the process required the Annual Governance Statement to be submitted for sign-off to the Section 151 Officer and then reported to the Monitoring and Audit Committee.

Discussion was held on stakeholder engagement in relation to virtual meetings. It was noted that members had adopted a protocol and procedure for virtual meetings, which included a deadline for requests to speak by members of the public. Stakeholders were encouraged to engage with the Council in decision-making and this had been captured in the report. The Council did not have the facilities to accommodate open meetings at the present time, although the situation would continue to be reviewed going forward into 2020/21.

In relation to a question on planned agenda items, members noted that the Covid-19 pandemic and the practicalities of changed priorities for the Council had inevitably had an impact on the Committee's Work Programme, with a focus being maintained on bringing forward statutory items.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Monitoring and Audit Committee's role in the Annual Governance Statement process be noted; and
- (ii) the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 be endorsed.

20.MA.05 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 (8B)

A report was submitted which presented the Annual Internal Audit Report from the Council's Internal Auditors (CWAS) in compliance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 which required the Head of Internal Audit to provide an opinion on the work undertaken by Internal Audit.

Mark Watkins attended the meeting to present the report, advising members that the report had been presented slightly later than usual because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The overall opinion was that significant assurance could be given. Of the 21 audits undertaken during the year where an assurance opinion was provided, only three moderate assurance opinions were provided, with no instances of either limited or no assurance, which demonstrated that the control environment for main systems at Kettering Borough Council was strong and continued to be strong.

Nothing had been found as a significant control issue during the year, but comment had been made on the impact of Covid-19. It was prudent to include this information as it would have an impact in future years. It was acknowledged that managers had faced a significantly challenging time in meeting different needs arising from the pandemic, and Internal Audit would continue to work with managers during the final year of the Council on any outstanding recommendations.

It was noted that Counter Fraud and Corruption and Disaster Recovery would continue to be given a high priority, as in previous years.

Mark Watson and his staff were thanked for their work in connection with the Audit.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2019/20 be received.

20.MA.06 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN APRIL 2020 TO MARCH 2021 (8C)

A report was submitted which presented a draft Internal Audit Plan of work for 2020/21 for consideration and approval.

It was noted that, as part of the Council's statutory obligation to undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control, it was necessary to consider the level and extent of internal audit coverage for the Council's activities. The report had been submitted slightly later than usual due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and a third strand had been added into the key work strands regarding the additional responsibilities the Council had received from central government in response to the pandemic.

Some officer time had been diverted into work associated with discretionary business grants and local government reform and more qualified accountant support had been allocated to increase the skill mix of the team. Additionally, resources had been identified later in the year around the housing revenue account work.

It was confirmed that internal audit would also be looking at delivery of services in connection with the leisure services contract

Members were advised to contact Mark Watson if they had any specific concerns in relation the Internal Audit Plan for 202/21.

RESOLVED that the Audit Plan for April 2020 to March 2021 be approved.

20.MA.07 EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS (8D)

A report was submitted which presented the Certification and Grants letter that summarised the results of the external audit work carried out by KPMG on the certification of the Council's 2018/19 grants claims and returns.

Discussion was held on the method of checking grant claims and the effect on residents who had received an overpayment. It was noted that the net overpayment in 2018/19 had been £7 in an overall Housing Benefit Subsidy Claim of approximately £21.5m.

Dan Hayward and his team were thanked for their work and advice given.

RESOLVED that the Certification and Grants Report for 2018/19 be received and noted.

20.MA.08 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2018/19 (8E)

A report was submitted which provided an update on the Council's Statutory Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2018/19.

It was noted that the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2018/19 had been submitted to the Committee on 26th September 2019. However, EY had experienced staffing difficulties which had affected the audit timetable for the 2018/19 audit and resulted in a delay. Members were reminded of the resolution of the Committee at the September 2019 meeting.

Neil Harris attended the meeting and advised members that an unqualified value for money conclusion would be issued. However, some procedural points were required to be progressed with officers in order to close down the audit file.

Neil Harris thanked officers of Kettering Borough Council for their perseverance, co-operation and resilience throughout the audit.

RESOLVED that the conclusion of the Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2018/19 be noted.

20.MA.09 **EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS - FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDIT PLAN (8F)**

A report was submitted which presented the 2019/20 Financial Statements Audit Plan, which detailed the work EY intended to carry out with regard to the Council's 2019/20 Statement of Accounts.

It was noted that the Plan was provisional at this stage. EY were now in a better position regarding staffing and were scheduling all external audits to the end of November. It would be important to allow officers time to transition to the new unitary authority, and EY would be working closely with officers to mitigate the impact of officer involvement in unitary workstreams.

Highlights of the audit report were summarised and provisions and mitigations in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic were outlined.

In discussion, members noted that teams had been structured across Northamptonshire to build-in officers who had previous experience of local government reform. It would be important to adopt a consistent approach across the county in relation to the transition to unitary authorities.

It was noted that EY expertise in working with private companies would also be used to inform questions to be asked. Aggregation of sovereign council budgets was high on the agenda. Kettering's financial position was strong, with a stable finance team which had good expertise and knowledge, and this had been taken into account when considering the audit report.

RESOLVED that the 2019/20 Provisional Financial Statements Audit Plan be received and noted.

20.MA.10 **KEY UPDATES – MONITORING OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANT AGREEMENTS 2019/20 THIRD YEAR END UPDATE (8G)**

A report was submitted which updated Members on the performance of voluntary sector organisations in relation to their Voluntary Sector Grant Agreements (VSGAs) for 2019/21 and set out the reporting timetable for the 2020/21 VSGAs.

The Community Services Manager attended the meeting to present the end of year monitoring for voluntary sector grants. It was noted that organisations had suffered some impact from the Covid-19 pandemic and details would be reported next year. All the organisations supported

had taken on Covid-related issues and had come up with innovative ideas to progress their services.

It was noted that officers met with all providers on a quarterly basis, along with their lead officer.

Members expressed their congratulations to organisations, commending their huge return across society, and commenting upon the important roles for the voluntary sector as society moved out of the Covid-19 lockdown.

In response to a question regarding a lack of office space for casework, it was noted that officers would look into this and get back to the organisation concerned. It was also noted that Northamptonshire Racial Equality Council would be invited to participate in any commemoration event regarding William Knibb.

The Community Services team and voluntary sector organisations were thanked for their work.

20.MA.11 WORK PROGRAMME (8H)

The Work Programme for the Monitoring and Audit Committee was submitted for consideration. It was requested that a meeting be held in September in addition to the meeting planned for November.

RESOLVED that the following items be included in the work programme:-

- Climate Change – Update (September)
- Air Quality – Update (September)
- Town Centre Regeneration – progress (November)
- Leisure Services Contracts, including update on Kettering Swimming Pool (September or November)
- Statement of Accounts including Auditor's Report (November)

(The meeting started at 4.00pm and ended at 5.51pm)

Signed
Chair

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Report Originator	James Wilson & Rochelle Mathieson	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i>	
Wards Affected	ALL	16 th September 2020	
Title	Climate Change Action Plan - Update		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress that has been made on the actions to be undertaken by this Council to help address Climate Change as set out in October 2019.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 A report was presented to the Executive Committee on 16th October 2019, by the Executive Director, setting out the recommendations for a range of actions that would be taken by this Council over the remaining life of the Authority to combat climate change.
- 2.2 The report also set out the positive commitments that were already being undertaken by the Council and the process of community engagement to deliver these commitments.
- 2.3 Part of the Council’s role in helping to reduce climate change impacts and to meet the Government’s legally binding national target for the country to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 is to be a community leader and influencer. The Council’s own emissions can be addressed through a range of projects and initiatives, however, it will also be down to businesses, organisations of all size and individuals to also take action to achieve this target.
- 2.4 In this regard the Council has created an area on its website to provide factual information on climate change, useful links and information on what it is doing to reduce emissions and what others can also do <https://www.kettering.gov.uk/climatechange>. A micro website <https://thisiskettering.com/climate> has also been established which show cases the work of the Council and other organisations in tackling the climate crisis and this will be updated up to April 2021 when it will hopefully be rebadged and continued as part of the work of the new Unitary Authority.

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3. COMMITMENTS TO ACTION – UPDATE

3.1 The Council's Action Plan set out in October 2019 covers a range of direct actions in themed areas which the Council, as a service provider, was committed to make progress made so far.

3.2 Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

- *Double the amount of tree planting from the current average of 250 per year to 500 per year.*

The Council plants 250 trees per year within its open space areas, parks and developments. The level of planting has been doubled to 500 trees this year, this include;

- February 2020 - Meadow Road Park has 20 new trees, including species such as alder, birch, rowan, field maple and cherry trees through the park.
- Desborough Green Space has over 100 new trees, where some were donated by the Boughton Estates and others were funded by local people.

In addition to this Wicksteed Park planted 420 trees in March 2020 as part of the campaign run by the Woodland Trust.

- *Undertake a programme of reduced verge grass cutting to encourage biodiversity and design an associated communications plan to accompany that.*

The Environmental Care team are running an ongoing campaign called 'Pardon the Weeds – We are Feeding the Bees' which involves operatives considering which verges have early pollen plants within them and leaving these so that bees and other pollinators can access them and cross pollinate. The verges then get cut later in the season. A sign is staked in the verge letting people know why this has not been cut (see phot below). The campaign started in March and is looking to be expanded for next year. Information on this was pick up and recognised by other as far away as Australia and an International Green Apple Award for best Environmental Practice has just been award to the Environmental Care team for the project.



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• We are aware there are growing issues around the use of glyphosate particularly with regards to the safety of the workforce and the effect on pollinators and the wider environment. We aspire, that from next year, we will spray strategically and not everywhere, in readiness for the impending ban on the use of glyphosate.

The amount of glyphosate chemical that the Council uses on sites and in gullies and on paths to reduce weeds has been cut by a third. There are plans to review the use of this chemical further and potentially reduce it further. The service is assessing the formal cleansing rounds of the Town centres and housing areas – where this has historically been used and considering whether to continue existing practice and use or whether more strimming and other methods of controlling weeds can be used.

3.3 Transport

• Begin the roll out programme of installation of Electric Vehicle Charging points in car parks.

The Council has procured a contractor to install EV charging points within various car parks in Kettering. This will provide 4 charging bays at each of the London Road, School Lane and Commercial Road Car Parks, which will increase the level of public chargers available in Kettering town centre by 600%. These works were planned to be completed in April and while there has been a delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic the first EV chargers will be operational by the end of September 2020.

The County Council has also conducted a consultation on the potential location of new on-street electric vehicle charging points in Kettering and Rothwell and other parts of the County as part of their VPACH project. The project is currently progressing slowly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Private companies are also continuing to expand the EV charging network in Kettering Borough and a planning application has been submitted to the Council in respect to changing points to be installed at the BP garage to the north of Desborough on Bear Way.

The Country is awaiting the decision by Government, following consultation on changing building regulations in England, that all new-build houses will be fitted with an electric car charging point. This would significantly increase the roll out of home charging points across the Country and would complement the type of schemes the County Council is implementing to get more chargers in existing urban areas where there is limited off street parking by providing on street chargers.

• Ensure that any new fleet procured will be specified as low emission where an electric vehicle is not yet cost effective or available (e.g. refuse & recycling Trucks)

During the latest fleet renewal process all relevant options including service requirements, cost, infrastructure and the impact of the fleet going forward have been considered.

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The 'light vehicle' fleet is predominantly Ford and comes with the EcoBlue diesel engine which meets Euro6 standards.

The vehicles include fuel saving technologies such as auto stop-start systems, gear change indication to aid economical driving and a selective management systems that uses AdBlue to convert certain emissions in the exhaust gas into nitrogen and water.

The waste collection vehicles have Euro6 standard engines and automatic transmission for increased efficiency. The Service will continue to review the practicality of procuring electric and hybrid vehicles as these become better adapted to commercial usage and tasks.

- *Install secure bike storage racks within Kettering town centre and in other locations to encourage more cycling.*

Attendees to the Town Centre Conference in February 2020 were asked where cycle routes should link to and from the Town Centre. Further detailed options also need to be investigated and collated before consultation on cycling storage facilities can be undertaken with the cycling community. Initial consultation was undertaken on this over the summer specifically a cycle consultation on active travel, and headline stats, which are being fed into the Council's town centre regeneration work are set out below:

- 297 responses were received
- Feedback was received from across the borough
- 48% of respondents cycle for active travel
- 23% cycle 3 or more times a week

The top three reasons prevent respondents cycling to their destinations:

1. Lack of suitable routes
2. Not feeling safe
3. Security of belongings

What would encourage more cycling:

1. Better cycle routes
2. Safe & more secure storage
3. Better signage/knowledge of routes

66% of respondents feel the town centre would benefit from better cycle storage Individuals were asked for locations where cycle storage could be introduced or improved:

1. KGH
2. Kettering Train Station
3. KBC Car Parks

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is considered a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. They create a long-term approach to developing local cycling and

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walking networks, ideally over a 10 year period. Kettering's LCWIP is being led by KBC with £50,000 being provided by NCC for modelling and other technical work and a Transport consultant likely to be appointed by KBC to project manage the scheme on behalf of the Council. Once adopted this will put the Council in a strong position to bid for funding and resources to enhance this infrastructure. It is anticipated that this project will take approximately 12 months to complete. The above consultation will feed into this also.

3.4 Energy Use

- *Extend the scope of the of the 'Homes for the Future' project by completing the remaining pre-war council housing in Desborough and refurbishing further properties in Rothwell*

Provision for these projects is included within the draft capital programme for 2020/21 and pre-contract work is currently underway. Executive Committee is being requested to approve a tender for the Homes for the Future project at Harrington Road and Alexandra Road, Desborough and Cambridge Street and Spencer Street, Rothwell at its meeting on 15 September. This will involve the refurbishment of 12 properties in Desborough and Rothwell. The Homes for the Future project, in particular, aims to extend the useful life of existing older housing by more than thirty years and to upgrade properties so that they offer levels of insulation and energy efficient heating comparable to new build houses. The project will cost approximately £800,000 to deliver and is due to commence on site in October 2020 and it is anticipated that works will be complete by the end of June 2021.

- *Ensure that new Council housing developments include high levels of insulation and energy efficient heating with low running costs.*

New build affordable housing projects at Albert Street, Scott Road, Stamford Road and the Lawrences site will commence on site this year. Each scheme will incorporate high levels of insulation and energy efficient heating in order to minimise running costs.

The Government has consulted on an uplift to Part L of the Building Regulations which will set the new Future Homes Standard (see above) and the responses to this are currently being assessed. This includes proposed options to increase the energy efficiency requirements for new homes in 2020. The Future Homes Standard will require new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency; it will be introduced by 2025. This will enable Kettering to deliver new low carbon homes in the near future. Ahead of this the Council's Planning Service will be working with all developers to investigate whether higher levels of energy efficiency can be achieved on some individual scheme ahead of this becoming legislation. Some planning consents have recently been granted which demonstrate how far thermal insulation and carbon reduction can be taken in new build housing showcasing what can be done.

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3.5 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- *Begin the roll out of recycling litter bins across the borough starting in parks and open spaces.*

Consideration of how recycling bins in public areas can best be introduced still on-going to ensure that the objective of single waste stream (without contamination) can be achieved. Otherwise contaminated waste has to be landfilled and the purpose of segregating waste streams is lost.

- *Further promote recycling services in commercial properties directly managed by the Council.*

The Environmental Care team continues an on-going dialogue with Property colleagues and business tenants of the Council to encourage them to increase recycling and to provide better co-mingled waste streams that are high quality and demonstrate low levels of contamination.

3.6 Procurement

- *Where relevant, request that carbon reduction and climate change principles form part of the Council's procurement process. The supplier will be required to give consideration to climate change and how it impacts in delivering the contract.*

This has now been completed and has been incorporated into KBC's procurement process. Where relevant suppliers will need to give consideration to climate change and how this impacts their delivery of the contract and will be part of the assessment of award of contracts.

- *Ensure that energy efficiency proposals and requirements are considered in the programme of new build Council housing stock that this Council is committed to build in the next 18 months, for example, the developer will be required to demonstrate that the building, infrastructure, design and operation reflects known or anticipated carbon / climate change impacts so that such impacts are minimised as far as is practicable.*

See 3.4 above. This procurement for new build housing stock and also refurbishment of existing stock requiring energy efficiency consideration is already happening.

3.7 Planning Policy and Renewable Energy

- *Promote and support energy schemes that include Wind, Solar and other renewable technologies and include proposals for reduced energy use in new housing and commercial developments.*

The Council's Planning Service takes a positive and proactive approach to seeking high standards of resource and energy efficiency reducing carbon emissions from buildings as required by Policy 9 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document.

Bunzl development – Segro Kettering Gateway Site - This 230,000 sq.ft. warehouse facility is the first to be built at the site to a high eco specification, as part of an outline planning consent to deliver a total of up to 1.2 million sq ft. of industrial and warehouse space.

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Developed to the highest specification, featuring up to 18-metre high eaves and 10 Megawatts of power available on the site, SEGRO Park Kettering Gateway incorporates first-rate sustainability credentials, including carbon neutral build options, rainwater harvesting, solar thermal heating, a minimum BREEAM 'Very Good' rating. The Council will continue to work with SEGRO and other developers to bring forward low carbon and energy efficient schemes.

Grafton Underwood Solar Farm - This application seeks Planning Permission for the construction of a Solar Park for a temporary period of 30 years and will be considered by the Planning Committee in September. The Development Services Department provided a proactive pre-application services to the applicant allowing a positive officer recommendation to be presented to committee.

The proposals are for a solar park, to include the installation of solar photovoltaic panels to generate approximately 38MW of electricity which would enable export of the electricity to the local electricity grid. The Solar Park would generate enough low carbon electricity to power approximately 11,400 homes every year. The proposed Solar Park has the potential to power approximately 27% of the 41,462 dwellings within the Kettering Borough Council Area (Census 2011).

Kettering Energy Park – The Development Services Department continues to work closely with the scheme promoters for the Kettering Energy Park to bring forward a masterplan to enable businesses to locate on the energy park and to take advantage of the local renewable energy being produced by the existing wind turbines and future solar arrays that have planning permission. It is anticipated that consultation on this masterplan will occur imminently.

- *Ensure that tree planting of British native species is included in new developments coming forward and fully implement Policy 21 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Rockingham Forest) which seeks to deliver 40ha a year of new tree planting.*

The Forest for Life – Rockingham Project which was designated as one of only five climate change schemes nationally to pilot a Carbon Sink Forestry project. This was supported through Policy 21 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy which helps to provide developer contributions to allow landowners to plant up to 40ha of trees per annum. Since 2013 a minimum of 16ha of land has been planted with approximately 35,000 trees which have been a mix of native broadleaf trees including Oak, Beech and Hazel providing a range of environmental and landscape benefits. Much of this has been on the Boughton Estate in Kettering. The River Nene Regional Park, which operates this scheme, is now redoubling its efforts to work with landowners to provide grants to allow this planting to continue and at a more expansive pace.

Proposal to advance the strategic landscape planting for Hanwood Park would mean that significant numbers of trees will be planted and established on this development over the next 2 years. The immediate planting proposals around the linear park and Access E, Access F and the Central bowl are due for completion

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in Nov 2020 and this would result in over 5,000 trees being planted. The schedule of planting is set out below.

Ornamental trees:	461 (planted as large individuals)
Native shrub beds:	3917m ² (0.4ha) – estimated 4,500 native woody shrubs
Native woodland:	15533m ² (1.5ha) – estimated 3,750 trees
Native hedges:	624m – estimated 3,120 hedgerow shrubs and trees

3.8 The Council's Business Activity

- *Significantly reduce our paper use and encourage more use of digital & electronic dissemination of information, including for KBC committees and fora.*

Parking & CPE

The opportunity has been taken to implement virtual permits to give customers the ability to not require paper permits. The PCN bags affixed to windscreens are biodegradable. The PCN ticket length has been reduced from the ECN ticket length of 15 inches to 10 inches (saving a third on the paper used).

Planning

The decision has been taken to stop printing paper copies of the planning application weekly list and copies of committee reports, this has saved a significant amount of printing and paper which had been distributed to a large circulation list. A project has also been implemented to digitise historical paper records within Planning and Building Control services. This will reduce storage needs, improve the recall of historical data electronically and decrease the need for retaining paper records.

The current coronavirus crisis has meant that the Council has needed to learn to work in different ways; working from home, using more tele and video-conferencing which will reduce the amount of paper the Council uses and the need to travel to meetings. We will need to take these lessons and learning points forward to ensure that less resources are continued to be used in future when the crisis is over.

- *Reduce work vehicle movements and encourage different ways of working or modes of transport.*

Through the Council's Planning Service planning applications are assessed on the grounds of sustainability which includes accessibility to other forms of transport than the private car. The provision of alternative safe forms of travel to and from new developments helps to reinforce sustainable methods of movement.

- *Review our options for increasing the amount of renewable energy sources within our existing energy contracts*

The Council's energy contracts have been reviewed and these have all now been changed to renewable tariffs which means the Council is powering all of its buildings and services on renewable energy.

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- *Empower our staff to identify ways to reduce waste and conserve natural resources, starting with a staff awareness campaign that will include key messages through newsletters, core brief, staff meetings.*

Council teams are already considering how to increase the awareness and practice within various departments of reducing waste and minimising energy consumption. These messages will continue to be pushed down through the organisation and officers will be empowered to consider spend to save initiatives which could reduce the amount of resources that we use to run our operations and deliver our services.

3.9 Catalyst for Change

- *Encourage and incentivise walking and cycling as a healthy activity. We launched “Beat the Streets” in October, a 6-week programme to encourage walking and cycling across the Borough. Over 5000 people had signed up in the first week. We will seek to ensure that a legacy programme of healthy activities continue beyond this scheme.*

The ‘Beat the Street’ campaign has been a significant success story helping to get people fit and healthy while also reducing the number of vehicle trips for short journeys.

The overall number of participants were 8,629 taking part in the ‘game’ with over 85,000 miles covered. Some further data from the activity is as follows;

- 21 Primary schools took part in Kettering
- One of the six game phase weeks focussed on Go Travel to encourage active travel to school or work, which included the promotion of cycling in the area.
- Children walking to school increased from 54% before BtS to 66% after the game, along with an increase in walking home from school from 49% to 60%
- As part of the legacy plans, we had hoped to run some cycling sessions over the summer holidays, but due to COVID restrictions, these are on hold until the restrictions lessen, as well as working with partners such as Brightkidz to encourage walking to school and encouraging schools to take up the Daily Mile Scheme and for them to engage in awareness weeks/days associated with active travel.
- We had also hoped to run some scooter sessions as well, but again COVID restrictions has also put these on hold.

- *Help deliver more cycle lanes – Provision exists within the S106 Agreements for East Kettering and Kettering Gateway for contributions towards cycle lanes alongside Barton Rd and Deeble Rd and these are in the early design stage with NCC. A continued dialogue with NCC to explore opportunities to include new cycle provision can be maintained through existing channels, but with more emphasis.*

The provision of cycle lanes within larger developments will continue to be delivered as required by the various planning permissions that have been granted. Where contributions have been provided to link cycle ways outside of

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development areas these will help to form part of the funding package which can be utilised to deliver the LCWIP or other cycle infrastructure which is being programmed independently. Further acceleration of design work for Barton Road and Deeble Road cycle lanes required due to a delay caused by the COVID pandemic.

- *Promote an increased programme of community litter picks during 2020. Programme Spring Clean will work with community groups, providing equipment and publicity to encourage litter picks, recycling and to reduce the amount of future littering across the borough.*

The COVID pandemic has resulted in the increased programme being on hold for some months, also Keep Britain Tidy “Great British Clean” have also rescheduled their campaign to September.

Therefore, the Environmental Care service is now liaising with many groups whom are rearranging their community litter picks where the Council supplies equipment and collects the waste, in addition discussing any additional support that can be provided to ensure the Borough is at a high standard of cleanliness. Promotion of school visits is also being carried out with visits by the mechanical sweeper along with Question and Answer sessions set up to promote the recycling and reduction of litter across the Borough.

- *Set up and promote a “Plastics Pledge”. This will be a Borough wide project that encourages individuals, organisations and businesses to sign up to a pledge to responsibly recycle, reuse plastic bags and containers and refrain from buying single use plastic products.*

A Plastic Pledge was to be launched to coincide with Earth Day on 22nd April 2020. This would include an on online campaign shared borough wide. However, in light of the current COVID pandemic it would be preferable to postpone this so that it can be launched when greater impact can be made.

- *Develop a dedicated web presence that will:-
Provide an advice and support package for “green” business.
Gives advice and support to local residents; and
Promote good practice across the borough
Incentivise business to improve practices by sponsoring an annual award for good practice in business.*

As stated in the introduction above the Council has developed a dedicated web presence providing advice and information on what the Council is doing in respect of climate change for residents and businesses. The link for this is <https://thisiskettering.com/climate>

A number of Environmental Awards exist, such as the Green Apple Awards <https://thegreenorganisation.info/awards-home/> an international organisation based locally in Northamptonshire, and it is considered more effective in the remaining lifetime of the organisation to promote Council projects and other activities within the Borough through these established award programmes. In

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future the new Unitary Authority will need to take a decision on how best to incentivise local businesses to adopt best practice and this will be a piece of work for the Economic Development team in the new authority.

3.10 COVID Pandemic - Impact on Climate Change and Air Quality

The lockdowns imposed across the globe and the associated collapse of economic activity have caused large reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (along with life-shortening air pollutants) from transportation and industrial activity. The International Energy Agency (IEA) expects global CO₂ emissions to decline by 8% in 2020 compared to 2019 (IEA, 2020). This temporary drop in emissions, however, will be inconsequential for climate change unless followed up with strong climate policy action. First, what matters for climate change is the stock and the composition of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, not the short-term flows. Second, while past crises, including the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, have all been associated with temporary drops in emissions, these reductions have been more than compensated by stronger growth of emissions in the following years. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other agencies are therefore calling for the current stimulus packages and economic recovery strategies to fully embrace the opportunities to enable a radical transition to a carbon low economy. While there has been a pleasant improvement in air quality in many locations around the world this has to be sustained as the planet moves into the recovery phase.

More locally the Council's Annual Status Report has been submitted to DEFRA and initial comments regarding the report are very positive. Overall nitrogen dioxide levels have reduced within the Borough and air quality specialist consultants have undertaken a review of the diffusion tube locations, including the list provided by members of the M&A committee, and are in the process of actioning the findings of that review. In terms of promoting improved air quality the Electric Vehicle charging points in London Road, School Lane and Commercial Road car parks are due to be fully operational by the end of September. A full report on air quality is due to be given to the M&A committee at November's meeting by which time we should have final sign off from DEFRA for the report we have submitted.

Continued and accelerated work is required at a national and local level to ensure the climate change crisis is addressed and the carbon reduction policies and plans are established which will meet the stated national and local targets.

4. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

- 4.1 The range of actions and incentives outlined in Section 3 of this report require significant consultation and engagement with local stakeholders.

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- 4.2 The Council recognises that these initiatives cannot be undertaken alone and there are a range of stakeholders, groups and organisation that have a wealth of expertise and positive energy that can enhance and support this programme. The best means of engaging with them has been worked out with those local groups, on a case by case and project specific basis.
- 4.3 This will be not only be appropriate for the initiatives where the Council is the catalyst for change but also with regard to service provision. For example, the action to install secure bike racks will also need to engage cyclists in their design and location.

5. POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A number of the proposals contained in this report have a direct financial impact to KBC and a number of the proposals whilst having no direct financial implications, will require existing KBC staffing resources to secure funding or delivery through a third party.
- 5.2 A number of proposals within this report will require further costings to be undertaken, for example the installation of bike storage units – any initiatives that cannot be met from within existing revenue or capital budgets will be brought back to a future meeting of the Executive or Council dependent on the level of resources required.
- 5.3 Where the activity is to be delivered by a third party, such as NCC for on street electric vehicle charging points in Kettering borough or via a Section 106 (Developer Contribution) for cycle ways on new housing developments, the Council will work with the third parties to seek to deliver the necessary outcomes.

6. LEGAL AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Kettering Borough Council being a statutory authority can only act within its legal powers in executing any action to promote climate change. Parliament has not passed any climate change legislation to mandate particular action on local authorities.
- 6.2 Public authorities have specific functions and duties which are neither shared nor replicable. Any adopted plans or policies to further climate change must be within Kettering Borough Council's powers as a borough council in Northamptonshire.
- 6.3 The Council must act within its powers and not encroach, without their consent, on the functions of other statutory authorities or government agencies including the County Council and Highways England.

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6.4 Measures to improve the sustainability of new development, including housing, must be applied within the constraints of the planning process and the National Planning Policy Framework and standards which exceed those laid down in regulation have to be negotiated and cannot be enforced.

7. **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 By its very nature this report has significant positive implications for Climate Change within the Borough Kettering

8. **RECOMMENDATION**

Member note the update report and progress made in respect of the Council's commitments toward carbon emission reduction and climate change mitigation.

Background Papers:

Title

Date

Contact Officer

Previous Minutes/Reports:

Ref:

Date:

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Report Originator	Rochelle Mathieson	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i> N/A	
Wards Affected	All	16th September 2020	
Title	KETTERING TOWN CENTRE - UPDATE		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on the activity and recovery of the Town Centre, including reflecting on progress of;
- i) the Town Centre Task & Finish Groups recommendations which were approved by Executive Committee on 19th February and
 - ii) the Town Centre Delivery Plan 2018-2025

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 19th February the Executive Committee acknowledge and approved the recommendations made by the Town Centre Task & Finish Group and were provided with a proposed timeline and update on progress.
- 2.2 On 27th February the Town Centre Conference #2 was held which provided delegates with an update and engagement opportunity on the following key aspects;
- i) Update and reflections on the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan 2018-25
 - ii) Station Quarter project update
 - iii) High Street Heritage Action Zone
 - iv) Making our Town Green
- 2.3 In March 2020 the impacts of COVID-19 sent shockwaves across the country, with a national lockdown announced due to the global pandemic. The local impact within the Town Centre saw all but essential retail outlets closing their doors, all but essential key workers encouraged to work from home and the most vulnerable of our community shielding within their homes. For the Council this meant that resource was shifted and focused on emergency response, ensuring essential council services remained accessible for our residents, and essential COVID activity for both the community and economy was delivered effectively.
- 2.4 In April 2020 Historic England formally confirmed that Kettering had been successful with our submission to the High Street Heritage Action Zone, and that our bid for £1.48m had been approved, this announcement confirmed the total project worth £4.35m to be delivered between 2020-2024 would commence. However, all press communication was embargoed due to COVID-19, in July 2020 in accordance with Historic England guidance, we conducted a localised press launch and are anticipating a national launch of the programme later this month. This being said, the project team

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have been working hard with Historic England to, in spite of the notable impacts of COVID-19, progress the project which is reflected and supported throughout Table 1

- 2.5 In April and late May 2020, the government announced funding via;
- Retail, hospitality and Leisure Grant
 - Small Business Grant
 - Reopening High Streets Safely Fund
 - Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund

These grant schemes were administered and accessed via the borough council and were aimed at supporting the local economy and preparing for the reopening of non-essential retail and the safe return of footfall within our towns.

Delivery of the above has been a key focus and remains as so, for both the councils Business Rates and Economic Development teams and serves as a key function within the COVID-19 economic recovery action plan.

- 2.6 In July 2020 and in response to COVID-19 the government announced plans for a £900 million Getting Building Fund (GBF), which aims to deliver jobs, skills and infrastructure across the country. Local Enterprise Partnerships were asked to formulate regional submissions of suitable projects. Our project Alfred East Art Gallery, Library and Manor House Museum (GLaM) which totals £3.9m towards capital transformation works of the collection of heritage assets within Kettering Town Centre was identified, and has, in August, received acceptance and is now in the final financial due diligence process to secure £3m towards the overall project which will be delivered by 2022.

3. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 3.1 In light of the above context the timeline in relation to the approved Town Centre Task & Finish groups recommendations has been updated in Table 1 below.
- 3.2 It is important for members to note that whilst COVID-19 has had an impact on, in some instances, logistically being able to deliver on these actions within the original timeline, it has also advanced the strategic direction as set by the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan 2018-2025 and held a spotlight on the opportunities the plan sets out. This has enabled us to accelerate these plans and deliver against the vision for Kettering, which is for it to be a vibrant place at the heart of the community that is characterful, distinctive and fun. This is evidenced having secured a collective investment of over £8m for the Town Centre over the coming four years which is focused on cultural-led regeneration. This investment aims to elevate Kettering as a destination for both visitors and inward investment.

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TABLE 1.

	Recommendation	Timeline and Update
	A. Built & Physical Environment (aesthetics, signage, cleanliness)	
A.1	Significantly improved signage across the town centre and out of town	<p>A review of the wayfinding system - finalised in December 2019.</p> <p>Delivery - Incorporated with the new public realm and street scene improvements anticipated within the town centre from April 2020.</p> <p>Currently assessing the opportunities for Brown Signage</p> <p>Update Contract is in place and installation programme planned October 20 – January 21</p>
A.2	Make use of NCC electronic highways signage at the gateways to the town	<p>As per NCC guidance; The use of these is restricted for the purpose of notifying motorist of potential highway disruption. Where events / activities are likely to have an impact NCC Highways will be notified, eg, Christmas Light Switch On - Ongoing</p> <p>Update Electronic signs are being utilised specifically for COVID related messaging. Additional electronic signs are being implemented where required to support public health messaging in and around the town</p>
A.3	Launch a shop frontage improvement scheme, with the town centre Council owned properties acting as an exemplar	<p>Proposed capital scheme within 2020/21 to be determined. Shop frontage grant scheme will launch in July 2020 as part of HSHAZ – ongoing to 2024.</p> <p>Update Due to COVID-19 restrictions and delay in official national launch shop frontage grant scheme will launch in September 2020 as part of HSHAZ and will remain ongoing until 2024</p>
A.4	Utilise the Council's capital to assist in town centre schemes and initiatives	Match funding committed for HSHAZ by Full Council on 13th January 2019

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		Update Proposed GLaM project currently progressing within final due diligence process which includes match funding confirmation.
A.5	Whilst the realisation of Town Centre residential development was positively received, it should not be to the detriment of commercial and leisure activities, balance should be created between the two	SPD / article 4's - Spring 2020 Results of Retail Study January 2021 Update Commission of the evidence base to inform this work was paused in March 2020 due to the anticipate impact of COVID-19 on the economy. Discussions are now underway to determine the most effective approach in light of the accelerated changing face of retail and the economic recovery of Town Centres.
A.6	Review the Town Centre Area Action Plan to ensure it is relevant to the changing town centre environment	Commence review January 2021
A.7	Consideration should be given to replacing plastic flower planters with a planter more in-keeping with the heritage appearance of the town. The Group are however pleased with the current state and appearance of flowers in the town centre.	This will be incorporated within the Street Scene Improvement project as part of the HSHAZ programme from - Spring 2020 Update Progressing within the HSHAZ programme which has commenced. Public consultation anticipated regarding the public realm and street scene improvements by October 2020.
	B. Business support (for independents)	
B.1	'Seats on streets' as articulated within the Town Centre Delivery Plan 2018-2025 should be actively encouraged and supported	Ongoing
B.2	Take a more proactive approach in attracting independent start-up businesses with a methodology introduced to assist with finances in year one with rent or assist with the application of nationally available Business Rate reliefs in accordance with local discretionary criteria	In October 2019 the Commons Select Committee submitted a report to government calling on a review of Business Rates. The council is watching this brief closely to understand potential impact and opportunity. The Economic Development and Business Rate Teams work proactively together to support

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Committee	MONITORING & AUDIT COMMITTEE	Item A2	Page 5 of 11
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		businesses to access nationally available reliefs. – Ongoing
B.3	Be more actively involved with retailers, traders and landlords and encourage them to work proactively together by being the catalyst for engagement, including; but not limited to, influencing and encouraging ‘meanwhile use’ of vacant units.	<p>This will be picked up in HSHAZ engagement with businesses at the Town Centre Conference in February 2020. A programme of engagement and fact finding will be set out within the emerging Commercial and Economic Development Service Plan to include direct liaison with town centre landlords and regular attendance at Kettering Town Centre Partnership meetings.</p> <p>Update A mix of retailers, traders and landlords attended the Town Centre Conference in February 2020 to engage in a series of workshops and consultation exercises on a variety of Town Centre projects. Regular attendance at Kettering Town Centre Partnership meetings pre COVID-19 replaced with regular liaison as part of the Reopening of the High Street initiatives. Database of landlords within the HSHAZ area has been developed and wider business consultation on public realm options will soon launch.</p>
B.4	Engagement and review of format with retailers for Christmas events and late-night shopping.	<p>Event planning for 2020 to begin Jan/Feb 2020 Programme will be shared with local businesses and opportunities to collaborate explored via the Kettering Town Centre Partnership on a regular basis.</p> <p>Update Currently working on alternative Christmas events plan with local businesses, once plans take structure it will be circulated to local retailers and KTCP for the opportunity to be involved</p>

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C. Leisure and Events		
C.1	Reinforce and recognise the popularity and success of events in the town centre	<p>Continued and ongoing promotion of all events within town centre. Preparations for promoting the Easter event are underway which is next on the programme</p> <p>Update Due to COVID-19 all events have been cancelled. We are currently looking at an alternative plan for some Christmas events that can be COVID secure</p>
C.2	The provision of a facility to allow the public to put on their own events in the town centre should be considered with practical help and support provided	<p>Provision of a support page with practical guidance and information on available event venues / spaces will be launched on the 'ThisisKettering' website by the end of April 2020.</p> <p>Update Currently paused</p>
C.3	Additional evening events at the museum and art gallery should be considered alongside collaborative work with cultural offerings across the town and with other towns	<p>Event planning for 2020 to begin Jan/Feb 2020</p> <p>New Cultural Programme being launched by Historic England in late 2020. It will be assessed in terms of opportunity to support the implementation of this recommendation</p> <p>Update The new Historic England Cultural Programme funding guidance is anticipated later this month and will be open to the local cultural organisations to come to together to bid for funding to deliver an array of activities over the coming four years to complement HSHAZ.</p> <p>GLaM is set to deliver a capital transformation project worth £3.9m, concluding in 2022 which will enable a greater diversity of events and activities supported by accessible facilities.</p>
C.4	Consideration to be given to developing a long-term vision for improving and maximising the sport and leisure offer within the town centre, with the aim of increasing footfall and dwell time	<p>See B.4 This forms part of the event preparations being developed for 2020</p>

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D. Marketing / branding / tourism		
D.1	Significantly improve the promotion of “good news” stories and celebrate the abundant history of the Town	This forms part of the business as usual activity and is Ongoing
D.2	Kettering’s heritage offer needs to be well developed and promoted, with the aim that Kettering becomes a tourist destination, and the Civic Society and public should be involved in its promotion	This will form an integral part of the HSHAZ programme from April 2020-2024
D.3	Additional promotion of events is required, with an increase in social media use, banners and noticeboards in the town centre advertising these, including the promotion of non-Council led activities, initiatives and events	Marketing and promotional channels being considered and heavily promoting council activities throughout the year. Noticeboards – Spring 2020
D.4	A map of the town (civic/business) should be incorporate into an interactive noticeboard in the town centre and produced in hard copy	Wayfinding project - see A1 Delivery aligned to HSHAZ from April 2020 Update This will form part of the street scene improvement installation plans within the HSHAZ and is anticipated early 2021.
E. Transportation and Connectivity (incl. parking)		
E.1	Review parking fee structure with the aim of increasing dwell time	Factfinding and information gathering ongoing
E.2	Periods of free parking could also be considered after 4pm in Council owned car parks to encourage twilight shopping and footfall following school hours	Factfinding and information gathering ongoing
E.3	There was strong evidence to show the popularity of “Pop and Shop” parking, this initiative could be extended to additional locations.	Factfinding and information gathering ongoing
E.4	Install Town Centre secure cycle storage to encourage the active use of cycling as a means of transport.	Factfinding and costing underway. Consultation with local cycling groups/stakeholders to take place by Summer 2020 Update

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		Consultation has been completed with over 290 response received. This is now being fed and coordinated alongside the wider Emergency Active Travel activities being led by NCC to identify suitable locations within the Town Centre and beyond
E.5	Proactively engage with key stakeholders including; Network Rail, East Midlands Railway, Northamptonshire County Council (Highways / Transport planning) and local public transport operatives to seek, and where suitable implement, sustainable public transport plans between Kettering Railway Station, Town Centre, Wicksteed Park, Kettering Conference Centre and rural communities.	This forms part of the Town Centre Delivery Plan and is linked within specific projects, including Station Quarter and pan-Northamptonshire OPE programme - Ongoing
F. Shopping / Markets		
F.1	In collaboration with the Kettering Town Centre Partnership and local stakeholders produce an electronic Business Map ensuring it is kept up to date	See D3
F.2	The Group strongly suggest that consideration be given for the Research & Development Committee to look at the issue of how to improve the Market offer, including rebranding to reinvigorate and attract new traders and customers. As well as, exploring the possibility of an indoor market in the town. It should however be noted the positive progress in terms of planned stall improvements and NABMA recommendations conducted earlier in 2019.	To add to R&D work programme for 2020
G. Public safety		
G.1	Increase use of warden patrols to demonstrate and support public safety	Recruitment of wardens is underway in order to deliver Civil Parking Enforcement scheme. Compliance to delivery target patrol hours will be in place, this will lead to a more visible warden

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		staff across the borough. Continuation of joint working with the Police on Town Centre patrols – by Summer 2020
		Update Recruitment completed and delivery in place
G.2	Review the CCTV set up within the town to ensure cameras are positioned in the most appropriate locations or could be increased in number to boost public safety. In addition, radio links between retailers / night-time economy could be beneficial	CCTV review – post unitary to ensure continuity and effectiveness across North Northamptonshire Proposed capital scheme within 2020/21 to be determined for improvements to system – By summer 2020
H. Footfall		
H.1	Footfall counters should be utilised in the town centre to provide vital data that could assist in providing better understanding of movements	Procurement process has been completed and the footfall counting system is expected to be installed by March 2020
		Update Footfall counters have now been installed and are recording data, teams have received training on maximising datasets.
H.2	The Council to use their own discretion in terms of restricting charity and commercial collections which could be considered as a deterrent for footfall within the town centre	Completed. Team follows a set of guiding principles to determine suitability of all 'commercial bookings' within the town centre.
I. Town Centre monitoring		
I.1	Annual report on the health of the Town Centre to the Monitoring and Audit Committee	Oct/Nov 2020
		Update An annual report on the health of Kettering town centre was presented to the Planning Policy Committee on 21 st May 2020, delayed as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. The addition of new footfall counters and the results of a fresh annual review of the key indicators for the town centre, due to commence in October, will enable a full update to be reported at the M&A in early 2021

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1.2	Retailers should be encouraged to use the Kettering Town Centre Partnership network as a voice to represent their views to the Kettering Town Forum	Economic Development Team have ongoing engagement with the KTCP and support to advertise and promote their offering. - Ongoing
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3. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

- 3.1 Thorough consultation processes has been delivered to ensure the views of local stakeholders and town centre users were fully captured in the development of the recommendations set out within the report.

4. POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Any investment in the initiatives recommended within 2.1 Table 1, will align within the implementation of the Town Centre Delivery 2018-2025, and will relate and be delivered in accordance to the Local Area Action Plan and Town Centre Area Appraisal.

5. FINANCIAL RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Financial implications have and will be assessed in accordance to internal governance procedures as required for individual recommendations. Where recommendations are aligned to a larger programme of activity they have been aligned accordingly.

6. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Officer time is required to oversee any procurement and delivery of approved recommendations and associated activity and where appropriate is considered within the financial implications, as well as the capacity impact required.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Any works procured would need to be done in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 All initiatives will need to be considered in more depth in relation to climate change implications, where individual recommendations are aligned to wider work programmes they will be considered in accordance to operational activity.

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9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 That M&A Committee acknowledge the update report as set out within TABLE 1

Background Papers:

Previous Minutes/Reports:

Ref:

Date:

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Welfare Reform Update

16/09/2020

Current update

- Back office benefit provision unaffected – staff mainly deployed remotely and IT adapted
- Business support and admin continued service both remotely and office based
- Budget Support stopped all drop in and visits
- Initially phone appointments, now doing face to face by appointment only for most vulnerable
- Online CTS only claim introduced to reduce unnecessary contact
- Recovery restarting after suspension

Understanding and Helping Our Customers

Universal Credit & Benefits Update

- Migration – no update due to current circumstances
- Increased LHA rates from 01/04/2020
- Increases in UC
- Discretionary LCTS award of £150
- No update on CAB role



Understanding and Helping Our Customers

Caseload update

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- UC

01/03/20 – 06/08/20	Contracts	Claimants
Total Over Period	3480	4577
Mean pre-16th March	96	119.5
Mean post- 16th March	156.6	206.6
Difference in Mean	60.6	87.1
% increase in mean	163.1%	172.9%

- HB 31/03/20 – 3744 31/08/20 - 3545
Fall due to migration to UC
- LCTS 31/03/2019 – 5220 31/03/20 – 5039 31/08/20 – 5338
Rise solely in working age – further spike possible

Discretionary LCTS

- Majority of credits awarded 18/08/20 – delay due to software issues
- Total Number of Claims 18/08/20 - 3348
- Total Expenditure 18/08/20 - £498,063
- Expenditure as of 08/09/20 - £513,466
- Approx. £73k left to award over next 6 months
- Total original grant £584,294

Discretionary Housing Payments

- 266 Applications to date for 20/21
- 228 awards
- Approx. £55k spent (£150k remaining)
- Slow down on expenditure as Landlords not evicting, recovery suspended increase in LHA rates
- Renewal claims to be reviewed as low take up rate
- Surge in demand expected when recovery starts, sufficient funds to cover this
- Continue to work with customers via the social inclusion team to maximise income/reduce expenditure and reduce dependency on DHP as best as circumstances allow

M&A COMMITTEE- 16TH SEPTEMBER 2020

HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

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Agenda Item 8d

JOHN CONWAY
CARLY HOHN

AGENDA

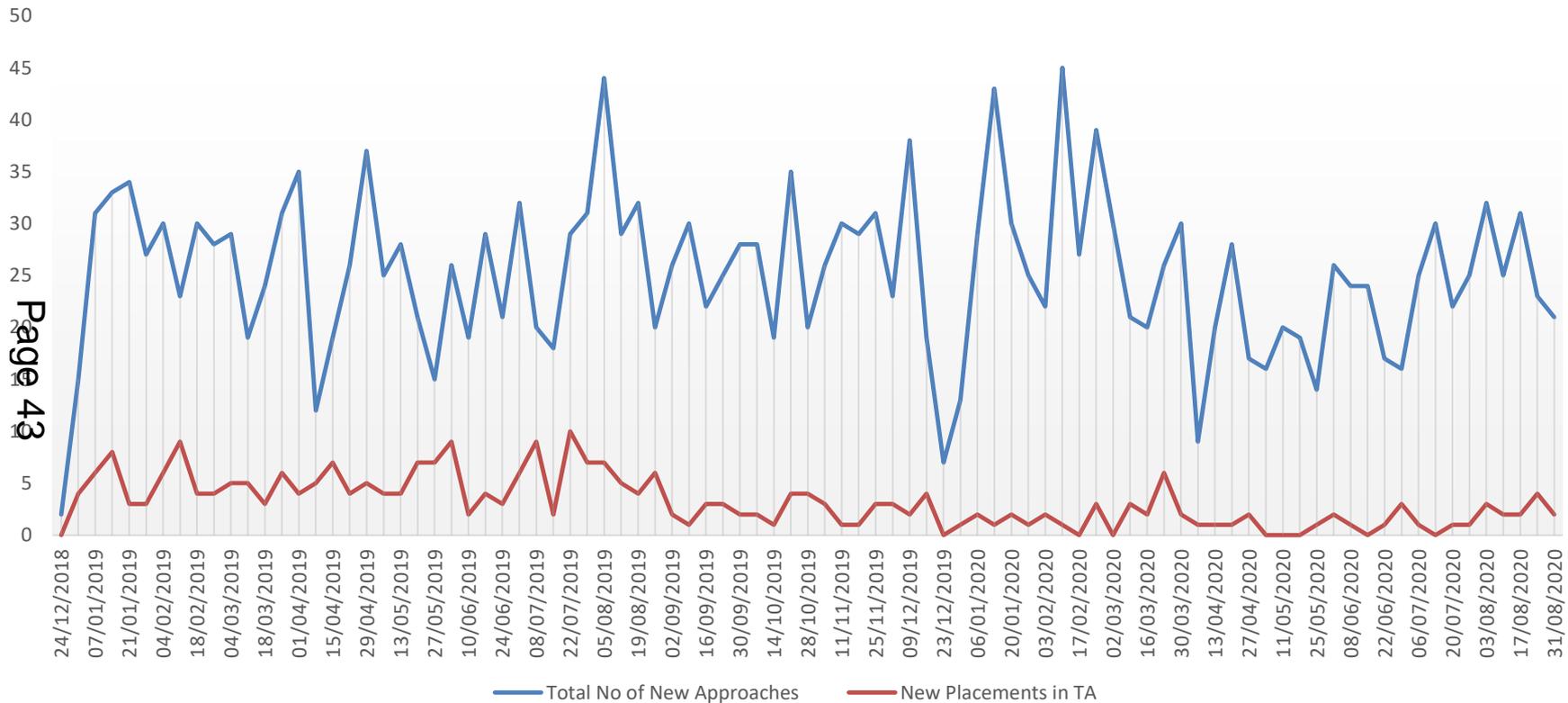
- Headline homelessness trends / data
- Rough Sleeping
 - Covid 19 and ‘Everyone In’ – the KBC approach
 - Current rough sleeping data
 - Next steps
- Private Rented Sector Access scheme:
“Kettering Lettings Plus”

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HOMELESSNESS APPROACHES AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PLACEMENTS

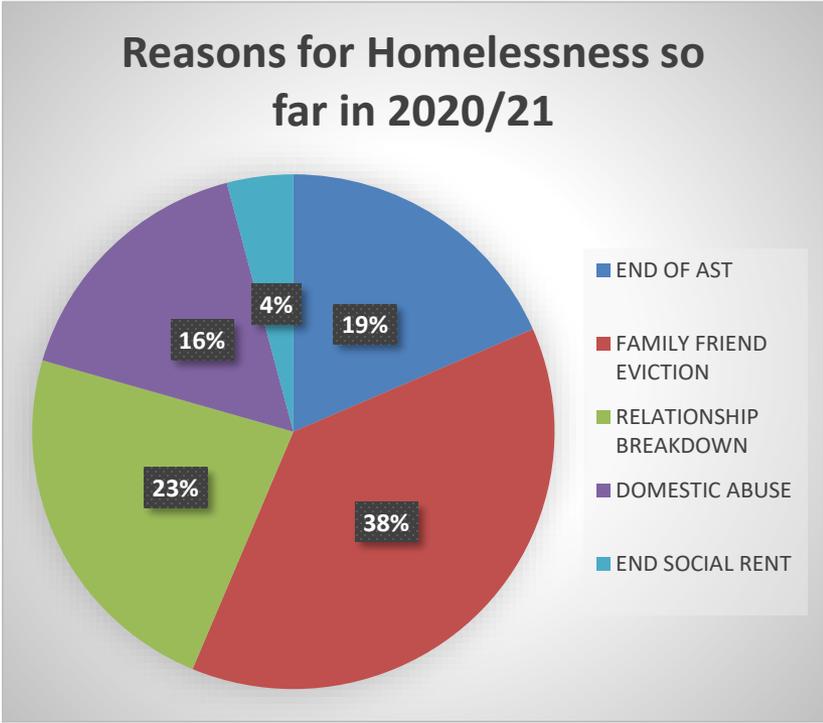
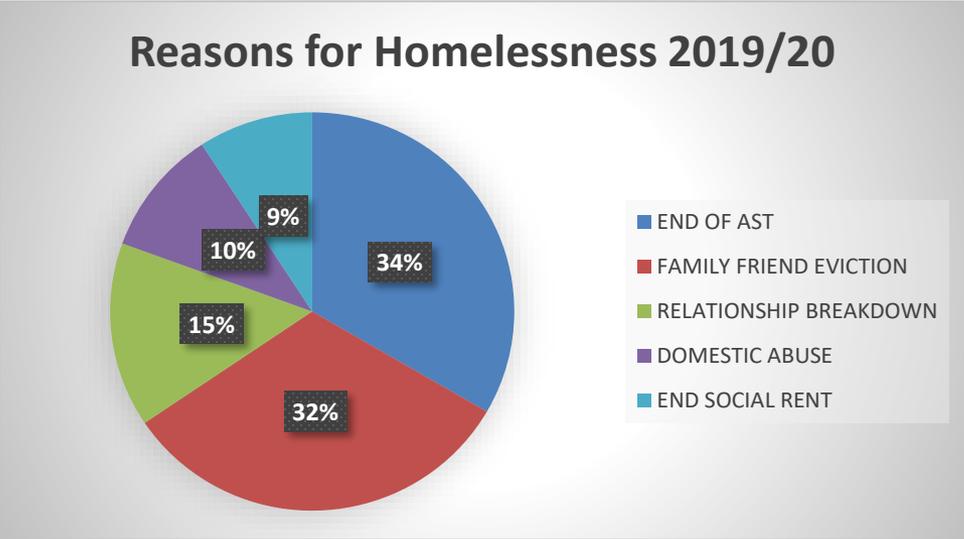
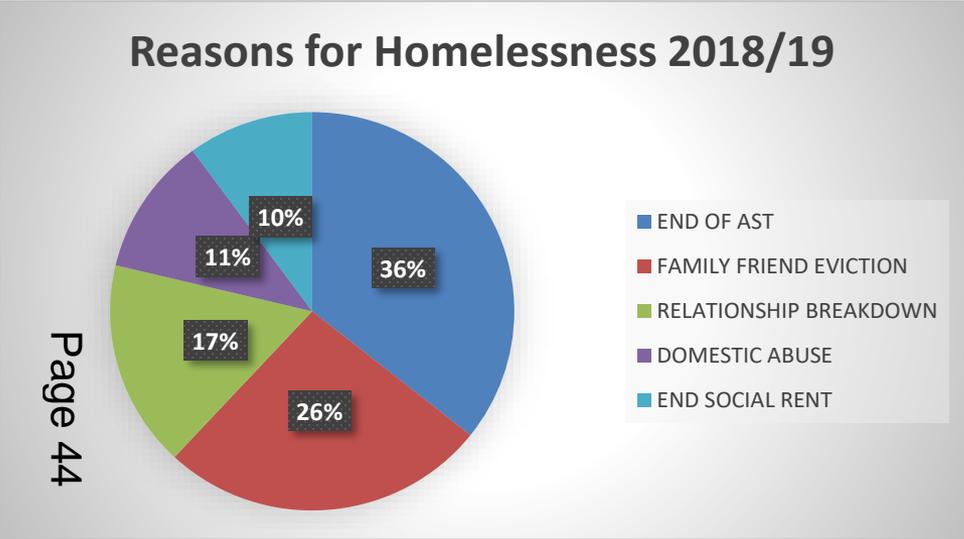
No of New Approaches vs New Placements in TA



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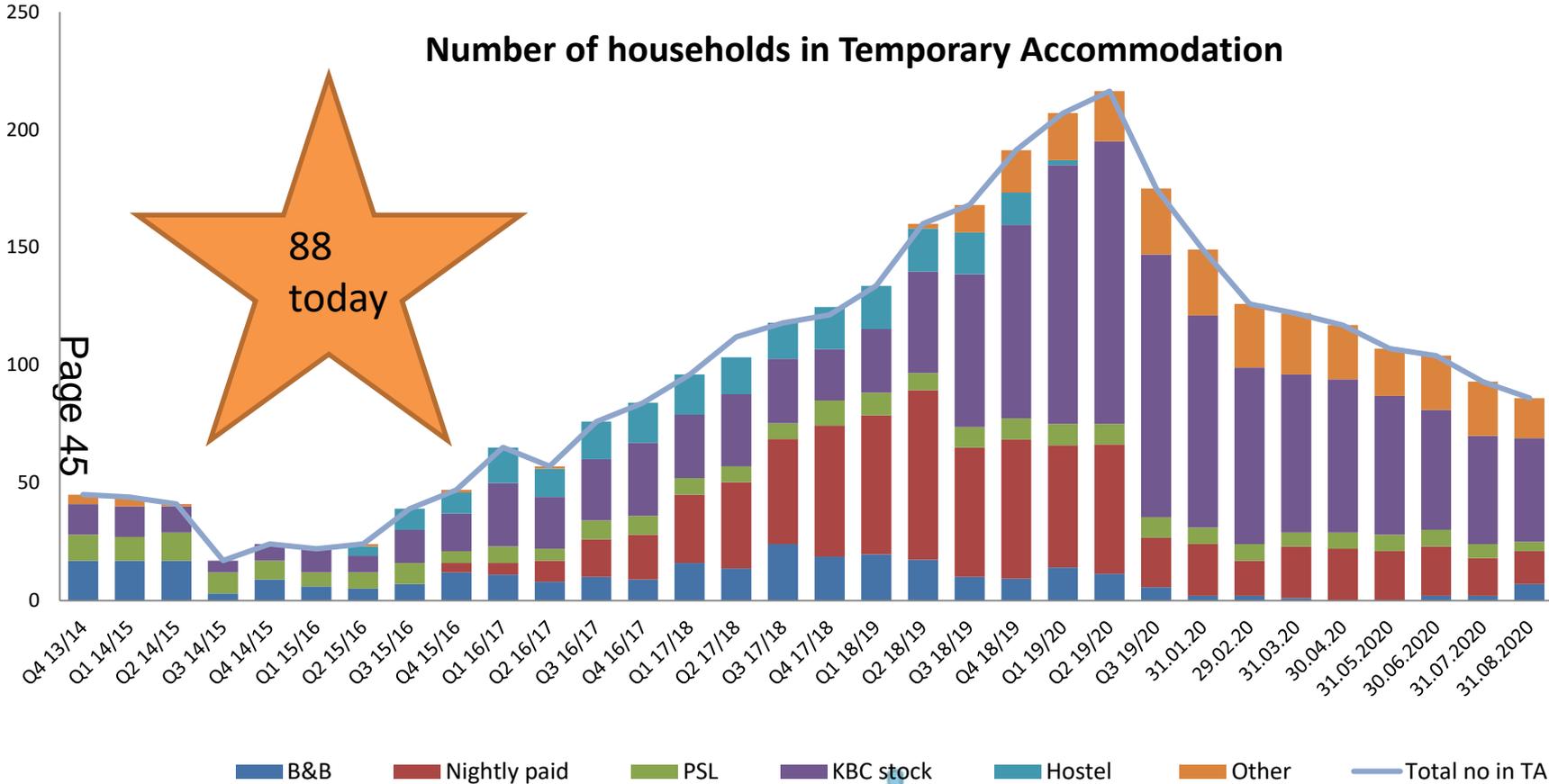
MAIN REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS: IMPACT OF CV19



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USE OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

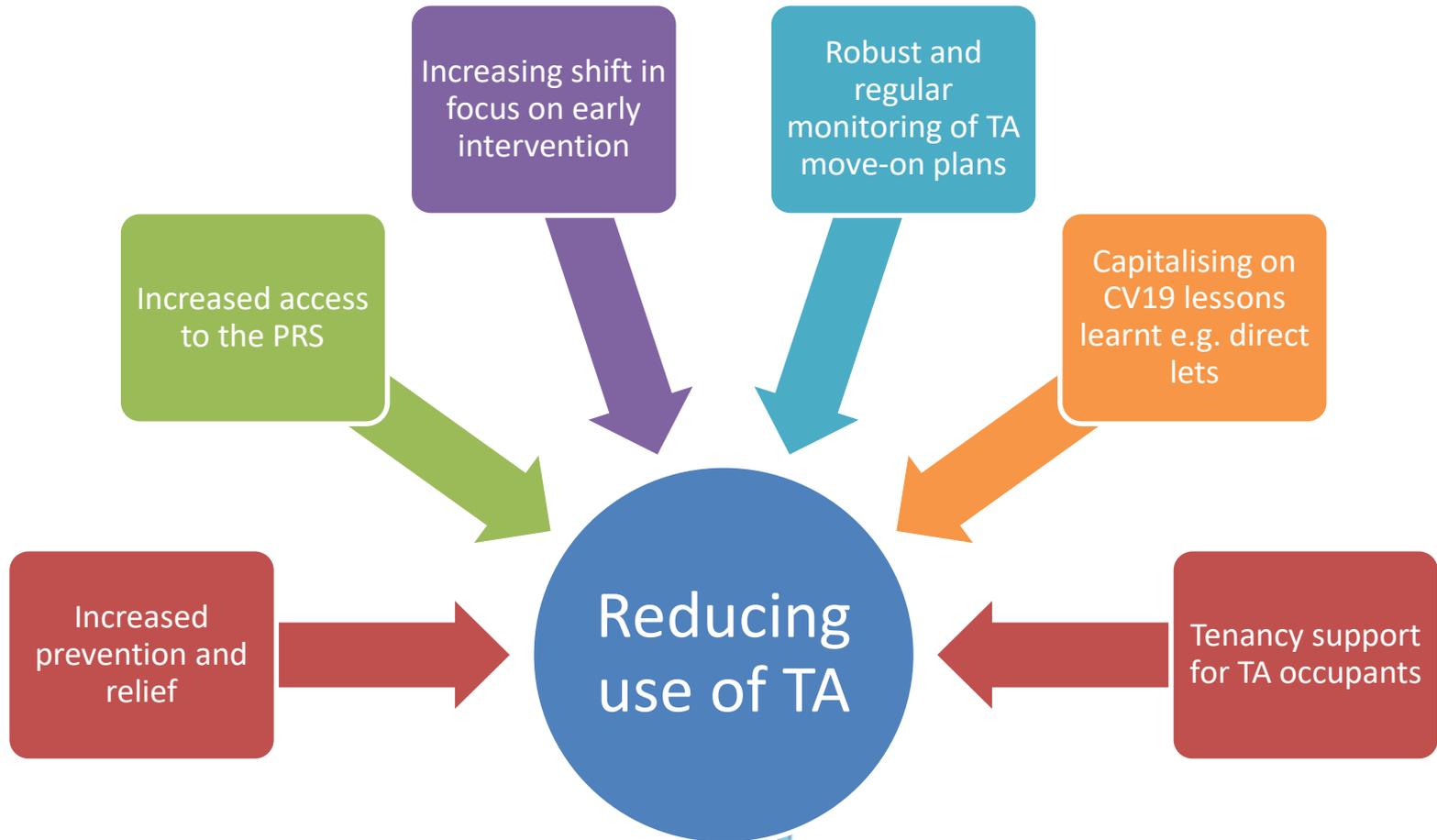
Number of households in Temporary Accommodation



88
today

REDUCTION IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION USE

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TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION SNAPSHOT – 30/8/20 vs 3/2/20

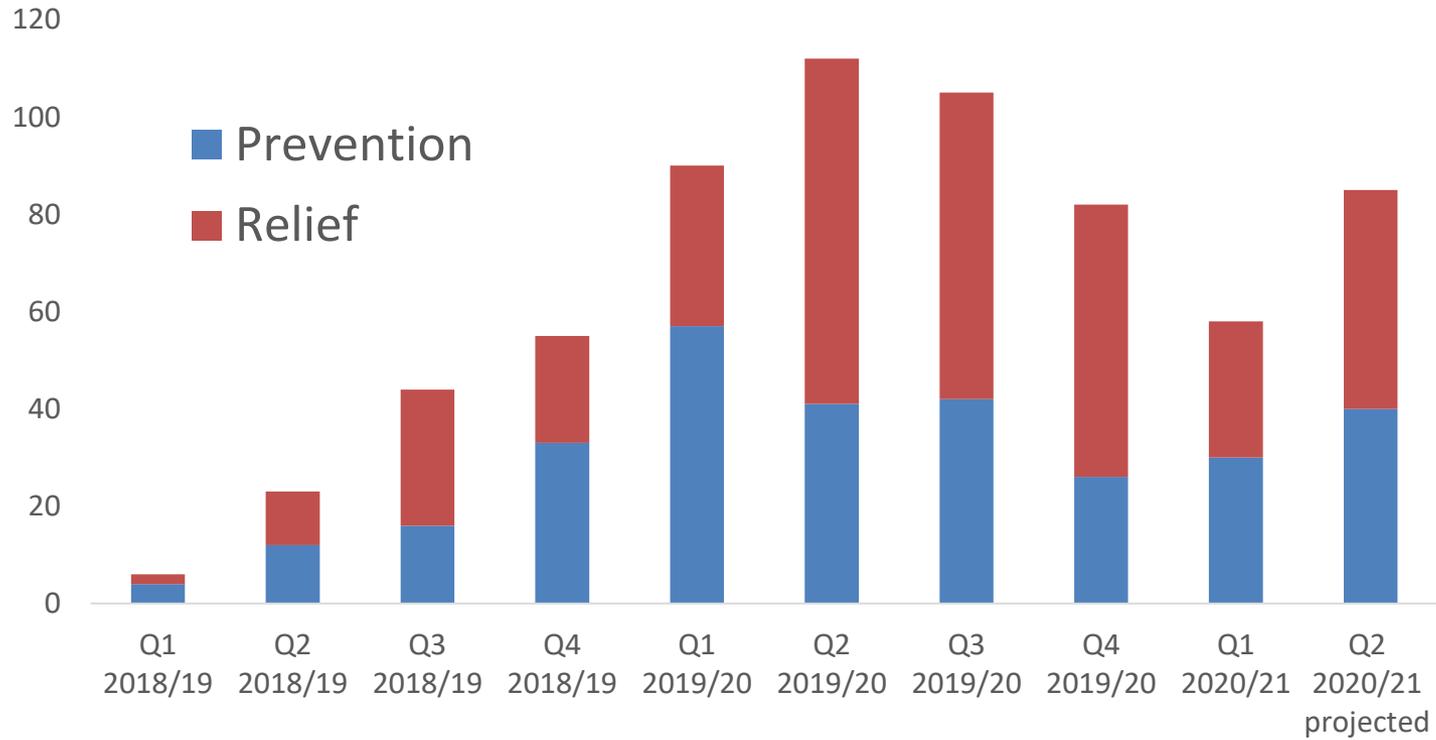
TA Type	No. households 3/2/20	No. households 30/8/20
Acquisition	28	17
B&B	4	7
Own Stock	90	44
PSL	7	4
Nightly Paid	20	14
Grand Total	149	86

Households with Children in TA		
Number of children	No. households 3/2/20	No. households 30/8/20
0	56	41
1	26	12
2	33	18
3	17	5
4	12	8
5	2	1
6	1	0
7	1	0
9	1	1
Grand Total	149	86



POSITIVE PREVENTIONS AND RELIEFS SINCE HRA

Positive prevention and relief outcomes by quarter since HRA

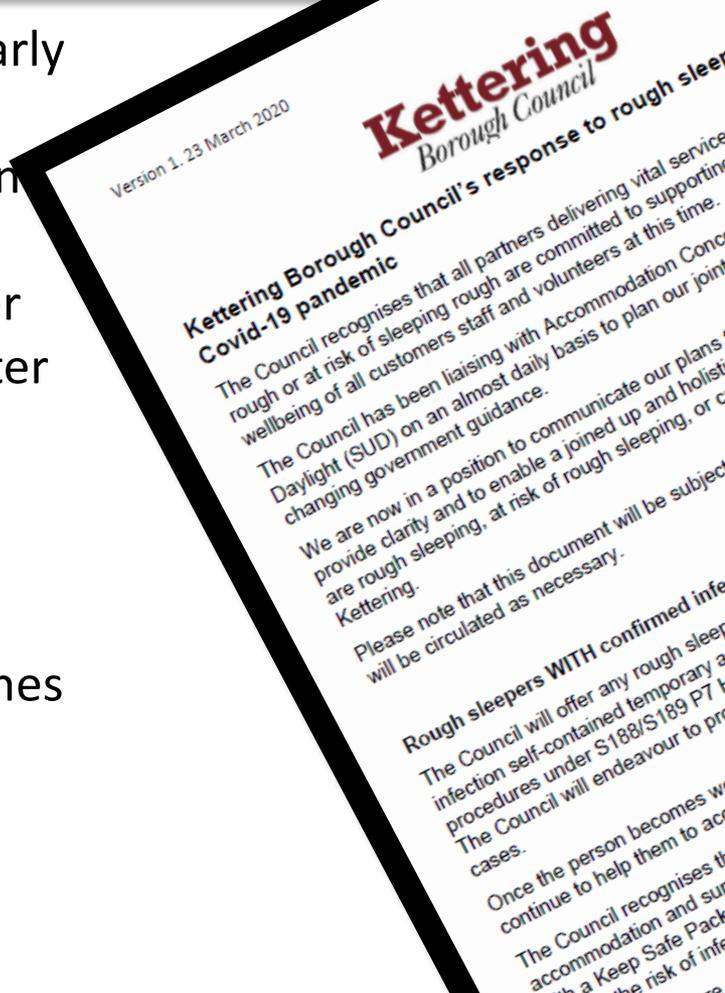


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ROUGH SLEEPING: COVID 19 AND 'EVERYONE IN'

- Determined the KBC response to rough sleepers early and communicated to key partners
- Enabled us to bring 'everyone in' by the government deadline
- By 30th March, all x15 rough sleepers / night shelter users had been accommodated and the night shelter had closed
- Keep Safe packs / Move In packs
- Partnership working – Accommodation Concern, Health, Northants Police
- 'Everyone in' led to significant increase in approaches from people claiming to be sleeping rough



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ROUGH SLEEPING: KEEPING 'EVERYONE IN' AND NEW ROUGH SLEEPERS

- Tenancy Support assessments and plans
- A multi-agency approach
- Repurposing RSI funding:
 - Outreach capacity to In-Reach capacity and tenancy support
 - Personal Aspirational Budgets
- ^{Page}~~Page~~ 50 robust and regular data gathering mechanism:
 - Twice weekly sweeps to identify new rough sleepers
 - Monthly Rough Sleeper case conferences to review case level data and agree next steps
- New Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator
- A continuing commitment

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ROUGH SLEEPING: CURRENT DATA

- Weekly returns on rough sleeping data are now submitted to government
- 13 individuals are currently in temporary discretionary rough sleeper accommodation
- 0 ineligible NRPF cases – there were 3 individuals but these have all been supported into employment / to get EU settled status
- 20 rough sleepers have been brought in under discretionary powers so far. There have been additional rough sleepers accommodated under statutory HRA duties during this time.
- 34 rough sleepers (or at risk of rough sleeping) have had their homelessness prevented or relieved by being assisted into settled accommodation
- 5 rough sleepers were found on the most recent sweep (early hours of 3/9/20) of which three individuals very new – found bedded down 1-2 times only
- 1 rough sleeper has been evicted from discretionary accommodation

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ROUGH SLEEPING: NEXT STEPS

- Annual rough sleeper count arranged for November 2020
- Continue our robust approach to monitoring and responding to rough sleeping
- Enhance our expertise in the field of rough sleeping through the Rough Sleeper Coordinator post: causes, solutions, complex cases
- Increased capacity to provide Housing First intensive support in complex cases
- Finalise our winter plan in light of shared sleeping spaces no longer being appropriate
- Reviewing the countywide approach to Rough Sleeping
- Publish KBC's approach Rough Sleeping on our website before winter 2020



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PRS ACCESS SCHEME – KETTERING LETTINGS PLUS

- New PRS Access Scheme approved by Executive Committee
- Provides financial and practical incentives to private landlords to accept homeless customers enabling KBC to discharge statutory rehousing duties
- Dedicated Landlord Liaison Officer and Tenancy Support Worker (PRS)
- As well as providing housing solutions to homeless households, the scheme also meets strategic objectives of improving standards in the PRS and reducing the number of empty homes
- Have already received many enquiries and prevented / relieved homelessness for 13 households



Kettering Lettings Plus

Working together to prevent homelessness

Gloria Jinadu | PrivateSectorHousing@kettering.gov.uk
01536 410 333 | 07716 731026



Any questions?

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MONITORING & AUDIT COMMITTEE

There are no task and finish groups reporting to the Monitoring and Audit Committee at the present time.

Work Programme

Ref. No.	Issue for Decision	Date Decision to Be made	Source Reference	Consultation Period	Organisations consulted	Methods of Consultation	Contact for Representations	Documents to be Considered
N/A	Welfare Reform	Ongoing	-	-	-	-	Julie Trahern (01536) 532428	Report
N/A	Homelessness/Voids Update	Ongoing	18.MA.35	-	-	-	John Conway (01536) 534288	Report
N/A	Key Performance Information Booklet	Ongoing	-	-	-	-	Guy Holloway (01536) 534243	Report
N/A	Kettering Borough Training	Ongoing	13.MA.09	-	-	-	Julie Trahern (01536) 532428	Report
N/A	Rent Review	Ongoing	-	-	-	-	John Conway (01536) 534288	Report
N/A	Voluntary Sector SLA Monitoring	Ongoing	13.MA.43	-	-	-	Guy Holloway (01536) 534243	Report
N/A	Accounts 2019/20	25 th November 2020	12.MA.08	-	-	-	Mark Dickenson (01536) 534303	Report
N/A	ISA 260	25 th November 2020	-	-	-	-	Mark Dickenson (01536) 534303	Report

N/A	Certification of Grants (KPMG)	25 th November 2020	-	-	-	-	Mark Dickenson (01536) 534303	Report
N/A	Leisure Update	25 th November 2020	-	-	-	-	Shirley Plenderleith (01536)	Report
N/A	Covid-19 Review	25 th November 2020	-	-	-	-	Shirley Plenderleith (01536)	Report