

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting held: 4th April 2017

Present: Councillor Duncan Bain (Chair)

Councillors Cedwien Brown, Mike Brown, Mike Tebbutt and Greg Titcombe

Also Present: Martin Hammond (Executive Director)
Beth Gordon (Head of Environmental Care Services)
Shirley Plenderleith (Head of Public Services)
David Pope (Committee Administrator)

16.RD.34 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jim Hakewill and Jenny Henson. It was noted that Cllr Tebbutt was acting as substitute for Cllr Hakewill.

16.RD.35 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Research and Development Committee held on 7th February 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

16.RD.36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cedwien Brown declared a personal interest in Item 8 – A2.

16.RD.37 FLY-TIPPING STRATEGY UPDATE (A1)

The Head of Environmental Care Services attended the meeting and provided a presentation which detailed the work of Environmental Care, Environmental Health and Housing departments in tackling the issue of fly-tipping in the Borough.

Members were provided with a legal definition of fly-tipping and

heard that nationally a decrease in incidents had been witnessed between 2007/08 and 2011/12, with approximately half a million fewer offences recorded by the end of that period. Since that time however, a steady rise in offences had been recorded. Local statistics showed a similar decline and increase in recorded offences across the same timeframe. The estimated annual spend for the clearance of fly-tipping was £50million nationally.

The meeting heard that KBC had in the past captured all fly-tipping offences in a single category, regardless of the type of waste tipped. Approximately 12 months previously a Fly Map database had been procured which now allowed for every incident to be mapped as to the location and type of waste dumped. This could be recorded in the field reducing the requirement for further data input in the office and allowed for the production of reports and graphs for analysis to identify links to local trends or social issues such as crime or littering.

Details of fly-tipping offences in individual wards across the borough were detailed, with the meeting noting All Saints, St Michael's and Wicksteed and William Knibb wards as having the greatest levels of fly-tipping. The data could be further broken down into waste type, with the dumped furniture, mattresses and other household waste providing the majority of fly-tipped items. Knowing the type of material dumped allow the council to tailor more effective education campaigns in these areas. Details of rural fly-tipping offences were also outlined, with green waste, construction and demolition waste and white goods providing the major issues.

Education was key to tackling the problem, with the meeting noting that certain residents in high density urban areas were responsible for fly-tipping items in their own streets. It was necessary to ensure people were made aware of recycling schemes and the council's Bulk Item Collections which could ease the quantity of tipped items. Gating orders on alleyway hotspots could also be obtained to help tackle the issue. A new scheme to sticker dumped items as "under investigation" instead of instantly removing them had seen very encouraging results with a number of tipped items being removed without further council involvement.

The meeting heard that when an incident of fly-tipping was identified, investigations took place and attempts were made to identify the perpetrator. Environmental wardens had investigated 105 incidents during the year, with ten fixed penalty notices issued and one prosecution resulting in a large fine for the individual concerned.

As a result of 12 months of Fly Map operation, a significant data bank had now been created identifying trends and timings of incidents. Targeted education campaigns, increased warden presence and signage combined with door-knocking in affected areas were all being utilised to combat fly-tipping. Applications could

be made to the county council for use of its surveillance cameras, although KBC was considering purchasing its own equipment to allow for more flexibility in targeting the worst hotspots across the borough.

Members asked questions in relation to the fluctuating levels of incidents, whether fly-tipping had increased on days that household waste centres were closed, the cost of surveillance equipment and the possibility of involving private landlords in education campaigns. Members noted that KBC could not clear fly-tipping on private land but could offer alternative methods of support and advice.

Members stated the need for a strong campaign to deter littering as this was a challenging issue.

Members were requested to report incidents of fly-tipping through customer services, rather than to the Head of Environmental Care directly and a memo detailing this was requested to be sent to all members.

16.RD.38 **FEASIBILITY REPORT INTO A REPLACEMENT SWIMMING POOL (A2)**

A report was submitted to the committee to fulfil a request following a motion agreed at Council in December 2016 that the Research and Development Committee consider the viability of building a new swimming pool for Kettering.

Members noted that there would be significant costs involved in the provision of any new swimming pool, with Sport England estimating build costs for a 25 metre, 6-lane pool at approximately £5million. This figure would not take into account a number of ancillary costs such as land acquisition and preparation or provision of parking.

The report also detailed a number of improvements that could be undertaken to improve the existing facilities on London Road, with an estimated cost of approximately £500,000.

Members were asked to consider what steps they wished to recommend to the Executive Committee.

Mr Mike Annable, representing Kettering Amateur Swimming Club (KASC) attended the meeting and spoke in favour of a new swimming pool whilst acknowledging that the financial implications of such an endeavour would not be insignificant. He noted that swimming was a vital life skill and that the existing facilities were not conducive to learning, given the lack of a learner pool. It was noted that almost 5% of income generated from the pool was contributed by KASC, a figure that could increase in future given that the club

was currently unable to hold competitions at the pool. In addition to the pool itself, changing rooms posed a safeguarding risk, the air circulation system was not fit for purpose and poolside showers were inoperable. He concluded by stating that should Kettering wish to provide facilities that were fit for purpose, especially in the light of its continued population growth, then it must keep pace with neighbouring towns or risk losing valuable revenue generating opportunities.

Mrs Mary Randall also addressed the committee as a regular user of the facility, noting that the pool was inadequate for the size of the town, especially with the forecast increase in population. She considered that the existing facilities left a lot to be desired, with no working poolside showers, cold toilets and inadequate hairdryers. She also noted the lack of a learner pool for children and that the water temperature of the current pool was too cold for small children. It was an indictment that KASC could not host its competitions at the pool, thereby denying the club home advantage. Mrs Randall requested that members vote in favour of a feasibility study for a new pool.

Members discussed the matter at length, with members acknowledging the extensive issues with the current facilities. Discussions were held as to whether to commission a feasibility study into a new swimming pool with consideration also given to the refurbishment of the existing pool. It was also suggested that there was a need to assess all sporting facilities in the borough as part of the North Northamptonshire Strategic Sports Facilities Framework rather than simply examine the requirements for swimming; however it was concluded that this item would be better served being added to the committee's work programme for further examination.

There was strong support from the committee for the idea of a Task and Finish Group to gather evidence from relevant parties and to visit similar projects. Once a body of evidence had been gathered and assessed by the group it would be in a better position to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee as to the requirement for a feasibility study.

It was

RESOLVED

- i) That a Task and Finish Group be convened to obtain evidence from relevant parties in relation to the viability of a new swimming pool for Kettering; and
- ii) Upon completion of the Task and Finish Group to assess, based on the evidence gathered, whether to recommend to the Executive

Committee that a feasibility study into the construction of a new swimming pool be commissioned

16.RD.39 OUTSIDE BODIES (A3)

A report was submitted following a request from Cllr Keli Watts at full council on 1st March that the Research and Development Committee assure itself that KBC was getting best value for money possible for appointments to Outside Bodies.

It was reported that there was a wide variety of bodies appointed to including local authority organisations, local service providers and other consultative and cultural organisations. Member noted that there was no formal structure for representatives to report back on the activities of these bodies and the committee considered whether any action was needed in respect of this.

It was suggested that political groups should be responsible to monitor attendance of their members who sat on Outside Bodies. A facility for members to report on the work of the bodies to which they were appointed could be provided via Monitoring and Audit Committee on an ad hoc basis as and when required.

Officers would in future advise members appointed to each outside bodies who the main contact points were.

16.RD.40 WORK PROGRAMME (A4)

The work programme was submitted to the Committee for consideration. The following reports would be brought to future Committees:-

- Swimming Pool Viability Task and Finish Group
- North Northamptonshire Strategic Sports Facilities Framework
- The policy constraints and opportunities around building new Council Housing

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 8.55pm)

Signed:

(Chair)

DJP