

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

KETTERING TOWN FORUM

Meeting held: 29th January 2018

Present: **Kettering Borough Councillors**

Councillor Lloyd Bunday (Chair)

Councillor Linda Adams

Councillor Duncan Bain

Councillor James Burton (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor Ash Davies

Councillor Maggie Don

Councillor Anne Lee

Councillor Shirley Lynch

Councillor Mick Scrimshaw

Councillor Lesley Thurland

Councillor Greg Titcombe

Councillor Jonathan West

Councillor Paul Marks

Councillor Michael Tebbutt

Councillor June Derbyshire

Councillor Russell Roberts

Councillor Mark Rowley

Northamptonshire County Councillors

Councillor Eileen Hales MBE

Representatives of Member Organisations

Jane Calcott (Churches Together)

Darren Bishop (Northamptonshire Police)

Simon Cox (Kettering Business Network)

Paul Ansell (Kettering Civic Society)

Also Present

Shirley Plenderleith (Kettering Borough Council)

Mark Dickenson (Kettering Borough Council)

Jo Haines (Kettering Borough Council)

Callum Galluzzo (Forum Administrator)

17.KTF.28 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Jenny Henson, Phillip Hollobone, Keli Watts and Victoria Perry.

17.KTF.29 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Kettering Town Forum held on 27th November 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

17.KTF.30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

17.KTF.31 APPOINTMENTS TO THE FORUM

Members received a report which sought the appointment of the Kettering Interfaith Forum as a member organisation to the Kettering Town Forum.

Following Discussions it was

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The Kettering Interfaith Forum be appointed as a member organisation to the Kettering Town Forum.

17.KTF.32 POLICE STATISTICS

Neighbourhood Police Sergeant Darren Bishop was welcomed to the forum and gave an update on the latest crime statistics and incidents for Kettering.

Members were given a brief update on a three major incidents that were being investigated. A number of individuals had been arrested following a stabbing at a property in Bonham Court. A Murder Investigation was continuing following an incident at a property in Havelock Street and a recent incident in Gordon Street was no longer being investigated as a suspicious death.

Members enquired regarding the lack of police presence in the affected wards following these incidents, stating that residents would feel reassured with a physical police presence in the area.

The Police was thanked for their cooperation in tackling the anti-social use of motorcycles in the Brambleside area. Good feedback had been received from residents.

Members made enquiries regarding the nature of the work being done by the police to tackle 'out of town' criminals. It was heard that there was an intelligence focus to deal with the influx of criminals crossing the county line to take part in illegal activities within Northamptonshire. A number of arrest warrants had been issued to these individuals and gangs/groups. Four addresses that had been occupied by these individuals had been recovered by the police.

Members then questioned the way that statistics were presented, stating that a better break down was needed to show the clear distinction between specific crimes. Domestic Abuse, Modern Slavery, Sexual Offences and ASB stats were highlighted as particular areas that needed to be broken down.

17.KTF.33 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2018/19 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Group Accountant Jo Haines attended the meeting and gave an overview on the budget proposals for the next financial year as well as the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Members of the forum heard the Executive Committee had started the formal consultation period for the Council's budget on the 17th January, and that the public budget consultation was held in the previous week. Members also heard that the views of the Geographic Forums were sought during the consultation period which ran from 17th January to the 28th February 2018 when the budget was formally considered by Full Council and Council Tax levels set.

Members of the forum were informed that that during the financial year 2017/18, the Council's Budget Delivery Framework had helped to deliver £1.38 million in savings. On top of this the forum heard that central government's core grant to the council for the financial year 2018/19 had been reduced by £300,000 although this reduction was in line with expectations and presented a continued challenge for 2018/19.

It was reported that savings of £1.473 million had been identified for 2018/19 using the Council's Budget Delivery Framework.

Members then heard that the majority of these savings would be achieved through income from commercial investments, additional income from New Homes Bonus, increase in planning fees and additional income from investing surplus cash as part of the Treasury Management Strategy.

It was reported to the forum that over the previous seven years council tax had been frozen. However, there was no longer any incentive provided by the government for local councils for freezing council tax rates.

It was heard by members of the forum that the Council had seen a reduction in the Government Grant of £5.2m since 2010.

Members of the forum asked the following questions in relation to the draft budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Item / Issue	Summary of Response Given
<p>It would have been useful for members of this forum to receive the detailed budget report especially also for members of the public present as well.</p> <p>(Councillor Mick Scrimshaw, KBC)</p>	<p>As stated in the report attached to the agenda, a copy of the Executive budget report, appendices and record of decisions can be found on the Councils website.</p> <p>(Councillor Lesley Thurland, KBC)</p>
<p>Are the fees and charged due to be increased? Section 2.9 stated that members need to seriously consider when it comes to the Council Tax for 2018/19. Any increase in fees and charges such as car parking will be seen as a form of tax for residents.</p> <p>(Councillor Eileen Hales, NCC)</p>	<p>Car parking rates have been reduced in the borough. When it comes to the setting of the Council Tax, careful consideration is given to the officer's recommendations and advice. Savings have already been identified for the next financial year so there is no need to increase the level of tax.</p> <p>(Councillor Lesley Thurland, KBC)</p>
<p>Additional income will come from the increase in planning fees; does this mean that the level of consultation that the Council provides for planning applications will also increase? Also will there be an increase in service for street cleansing based on the increase in fees & Charges</p> <p>(Councillor Mick Scrimshaw, KBC)</p>	<p>The Budget only reflects the fees and charges and not the service delivery itself. This can be referred to the Planning Department and Environmental Care respectively.</p> <p>(Officer Response)</p>

<p>I find it disappointing that the tax level for the most vulnerable in society has increased.</p> <p>(Councillor Anne Lee, KBC)</p>	<p>The level of Council Tax support was agreed two years ago and since then has been held as is the same with this forthcoming year.</p> <p>(Councillor Lesley Thurland, KBC)</p>
<p>How much of the Capital budget will be allocated to businesses and the regeneration of the Town Centre?</p> <p>(Simon Cox, Kettering Business Network))</p>	<p>There are legislative requirements relating to budgetary obligations. This will be looked into and passed on when available.</p> <p>(Officer Response)</p>

Councillor Mike Tebbutt, A6 Towns Forum Representative and Planning Policy Chair attended the meeting and gave an update following the publication of the Annual Town Centre Monitoring Report.

Members heard that Kettering had recently been accredited once more with Purple Flag Status due to growth in Town’s Night Time Economy. There had been an increase in footfall in the Town Centre.

17.KTF.34 SUGGESTED FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Items suggested for future meetings of the forum were:-

- Bus Shelter Ownership
- Parking
- Kettering Business Network
- Health & Social care Provisions – East Kettering
- Town Centre
- Warden Services

(The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.02 pm)

Signed.....
Chair

CG