

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

RURAL FORUM

Meeting held: 4th October 2018

Present: Borough Councillors

Councillor Jim Hakewill (*Chair*)
Councillor David Howes
Councillor Mark Rowley
Councillor Anne Lee (Kettering Town Forum Representative)

Parish Councillors

Councillor John Lillie (Brampton Ash)
Councillor Vicky Cleland (Braybrooke)
Councillor Hilary Bull (Broughton)
Councillor Pam Wade (Broughton)
Councillor David Watson (Geddington, Newton & Lt. Oakley)
Councillor Richard Barnwell (Gt Cransley/Mawsley)
Councillor Kevin Burton (Gt Cransley)
Councillor Paul Gooding (Harrington)
Councillor Tom Sanders (Mawsley)
Councillor Andy Macredie (Pytchley)
Councillor Patricia Hobson (Pytchley)
Councillor Bruce Squires (Stoke Albany)
Bernard Rengger (Sutton Bassett Parish Meeting)
Councillor Paul Wharin (Warkton)
Councillor James Woolsey (Warkton)
Councillor Mark Hales (Weekley)
Councillor Nick Richards (Wilbarston)

Also Present: Martin Hammond (Kettering Borough Council)
 Brendan Coleman (Kettering Borough Council)
 John Ellerby (Northamptonshire Highways)
 David Pope (Forum Administrator-KBC)

Actions

18.RF.12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Fay Foster, Peter Hooton, Frances Pope, Robin Shrive, Brent Woodford and Allan Matthews (NCC). Apologies were also received from Lisa Hyde and Helen Edwards (KBC).

18.RF.13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

18.RF.14 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Rural Forum held on 28th June 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair following the addition of reference to the election of Chair and Deputy Chair.

18.RF.15 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

19.RF.08 – Future Agenda Items – Grit Bins

It was heard that the Chair, Cllr Hakewill had committed to speak to Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and the contractor with reference to a variation on the current proposal regarding grit bins, which was to give a cost to the parishes for supplying and filling bins which they would then reimburse back to the contractor. If this proposal was not acceptable to NCC or the contractor, KBC could choose to assist the parishes and supply grit and charge accordingly. The grit bins under this model would then be transferred from NCC to the relevant parish with KBC merely supplying the grit.

Chair

It was confirmed that the contents of grit bins were solely to grit highways and not pavements or resident driveways.

It was reported that Mawsley currently had no grit bins due to the road network of the village being un-adopted. A quote had been obtained from NCC for 14 grit bins that would cost approximately £2500 to purchase plus an additional £50 each time they required filling.

18.RF.16 **PUBLIC SPEAKERS**

Rosemarie O'Reilly requested to speak in relation to Item 10 – Loss of Bus Services in Rural Areas

18.RF.17 **LOSS OF BUS SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS**

The meeting welcomed John Ellerby, Principal Bus and Rail Development Officer for Northamptonshire Highways to the meeting.

The meeting noted that NCC subsidies for bus services across the county had ceased with effect from 21st July 2018 and the bus strategy that formed part of the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan been rewritten to state that NCC would no longer provide such subsidies, although it retained a statutory duty to subsidise school transport.

Mr Ellerby advised the forum that although there were no longer finances available to subsidise bus services, assistance could still be provided in relation to the development of any new bus service. An example was provided with regard to the partial reinstatement of the number 67 bus service that covered Wilbarston, Market Harborough, Corby and Gretton. Work was also underway with Mawsley and a number of other local villages with a view to creating a new service, although this undertaking would be complicated due to the diverse destination requirements across the villages involved.

It was further noted that NCC had no influence over bus companies involved in providing services, amendments to either the route or frequency of existing services would therefore not be possible.

Rosemarie O'Reilly addressed the committee as a resident of Mawsley noting that since she had been forced to give up employment and driving three months previously, the lack of a bus service for the village had led to social isolation. The needs of the community in the surrounding area were particularly diverse and therefore a fixed route bus service would not be suitable to meet these needs, however a demand-led responsive service would meet the needs of many rather than a few.

Councillor Nick Richards from Wilbarston provided details of the work undertaken by the parish to reinstate an element of the previous bus service that had ceased operation in the summer. He reported that a total of nine affected parishes from two different boroughs had collaborated to arrange and fund a twice weekly, 23-seater bus service, with Market Harborough the destination on a Tuesday and Corby on a Friday.

It was heard that the current scheme could be operational with the current level of finances until the end of March 2019, although figures suggested that should the buses approach capacity the scheme could well be financially viable. The forum noted that creation of such a scheme was not an easy undertaking and there was significant financial outlay involved.

It was

RESOLVED

That NCC would facilitate a meeting for all parties interested in discussing the possibility of the creation further rural community bus services with the Chair drafting a letter of invitation.

**JE /
Chair**

BRIEFING ON UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS

A report was submitted that detailed police and Council powers regarding enforcement against unauthorised traveller encampments as well as recent target hardening activities undertaken in the Borough.

The meeting heard details of the powers which police could act against unauthorised encampments, this being Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. It was noted that in recent years the police locally had become somewhat reluctant to utilise these powers, although discussions with the new Chief Constable during the summer had effected a more recent change, with a more robust attitude towards enforcement now taken by police against unauthorised encampments.

Kettering Borough Council's powers to act should an unauthorised encampment move onto Council owned land fell under Section 77 of the aforementioned act. It was noted however, that County Court Orders needed to be obtained and this procedure took a greater length of time than police enforcement outlined above. In addition, the Council had a statutory duty to take into account the circumstances of the families on unauthorised camps prior to taking action. In consequence, KBC had traditionally looked to the police to form a view of the need to utilise S61 powers.

A number of temporary unauthorised encampments in Kettering town during the summer had resulted in a significant number of target hardening works being undertaken to prevent further illegal access at locations including Northampton Road, Ise Lodge and Weekley Glebe, with ongoing considerations as to further preventative works at Meadow Road and North Park.

Cllr Woolsey posed a number of questions in relation to travellers. It was confirmed that these questions would be submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Rural Affairs who would provide answers prior to the next meeting of the forum.

**Cllr
Howes**

It was considered that a letter be drafted by the Chair on behalf of the Rural Forum to Philip Hollobone MP regarding the implications and financial cost of enforcement and site cleaning following the removal of an unauthorised encampment.

Chair

After further discussion on the provision of permanent sites, it was requested that two items be added to the next meeting of the forum, namely details of the costs of clean up after encampments on Borough owned land, and secondly the outcome of the current assessment work and the likely impact this would have on the provision of permanent traveller site provision in the Borough.

DJP/LH

RESOLVED

That the forum noted the update in relation to unauthorised encampments and would send a letter to Philip Hollobone MP as outlined above

18.RF.19**PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM**

A brief overview was provided of the background, process and current position in regard to the reform of local government in the county.

The forum heard that the eight local authorities across the county had, at the request of the Secretary of State (SoS), worked on a submission for the future structure of local government in Northamptonshire which would see two unitary authorities (North and West) replacing the existing arrangements. The original deadline for submission of a proposal had been extended to the end of August, with each authority taking an identical report to its respective Full Council in the preceding week, requesting consideration of four recommendations as follows:-

- Whether to respond to the invitation to submit made by the SoS
- Whether the 'Northamptonshire Local Government Reform Proposal' appended to the report should form the submission to the SoS
- Whether to approve resources up to a maximum of £500,000 to progress work on "next steps"
- Whether to approve interim governance arrangements for the preparatory phase leading up to the creation of shadow authorities

It was reported that all eight authorities had approved the first two recommendations with the exception of Corby Borough Council, with all authorities approving recommendations three and four.

Details of the make-up of the proposed North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire unitary authorities were outlined and the forum noted that the SoS had received the final submission on 31st August.

It was heard that the SoS would now need to consider whether to take no action as a result of the submission or to consult on the proposal. Should a formal statutory consultation be undertaken, it would last for a period of either 6 or 8 weeks. It was anticipated that this would extend the timeline of the process to December at which point a formal decision would be made on the proposal and a Parliamentary order drafted.

There was a requirement to create a shadow authority by 1st April 2019 with the new unitary authorities becoming effective from 1st April 2020, with existing local authorities dissolved.

It was noted that further updates would be brought to all future meetings of the forum.

RESOLVED That the forum noted the update in relation to public sector reform in the county.

18.RF.20 **THE OXFORD –MILTON KEYNES- CAMBRIDGE CORRIDOR**

A report was submitted which made members aware of the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Corridor and the relevance of the initiative to Kettering Borough. The report was taken as read.

RESOLVED That the forum noted the update in relation to the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Corridor.

18.RF.21 **POLICE STATISTICS**

RESOLVED That the Police Statistics be taken as read.

18.RF.22 **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The following items were noted for future meetings of the Forum:-

- Police Statistics (standing item)
- Public Sector Reform (standing item)
- Traveller and Gypsy costs
- Traveller Site Provision – Update
- Cransley Park - Update

18.RF.23 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Rural Forum would take place on 31st January 2019.

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 9:08pm)

Signed

Chair

DJP