

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

KETTERING TOWN FORUM

Meeting held: 1st April 2019

Present: Kettering Borough Councillors

Councillor Lloyd Bunday (Chair)
Councillor Linda Adams
Councillor Duncan Bain
Councillor James Burton (Mayor)
Councillor Ash Davies
Councillor Maggie Don
Councillor Anne Lee
Councillor Paul Marks
Councillor Clark Mitchell
Councillor Mick Scrimshaw
Councillor Shirley Stanton
Councillor Lesley Thurland
Councillor Greg Titcombe
Councillor Keli Watts
Councillor Jonathan West

Northamptonshire County Councillor

Councillor Bill Parker (NCC)

Representatives of Member Organisations

Simon Cox (Kettering Business Network)
Andy Sipple (Kettering Interfaith Forum)
Myra Bale (Kettering Taxis)
Insp Scott Little (Police)

Also Present

Lisa Hyde (Kettering Borough Council)
Russ Howell (Kettering Borough Council)
Hazel Webb (Kettering Borough Council)
Claire Cowland (Kettering Borough Council)
Rochelle Mathieson (Kettering Borough Council)
David Pope (Forum Administrator)

18.KTF.32 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jane Calcott and Cllr Eileen Hales.

18.KTF.33 MINUTES

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Kettering Town Forum held on 28th January 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

18.KTF.34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

18.KTF.35 POLICE ISSUES AND STATISTICS

The statistics provided were taken as read and members were invited to ask questions of police representatives. It was noted that crime statistics for the William Knibb ward were missing and this would be investigated with the information circulated outside of the meeting.

It was reported that there had been a stabbing incident in the town centre the previous evening. However, as a live investigation no further information could be provided at this stage. In relation to knife crime, Operation Sceptre had been in operation with a knife arch being used as part of the Night Time Economy alongside additional police presence and a drugs dog. In addition a number of test purchases for knife sales had been undertaken in local stores with a number failing these, issues taken up with area managers of these businesses.

Ongoing work of the Neighbourhood Policing team included vulnerable victim visits and work to tackle theft from motor vehicles resulting from insecurities. It was hoped to link in with Neighbourhood Watch in this regard.

The forum heard that preventative plans were in place to try and mitigate any possible rise in ASB that may arise during the Easter holidays.

It was heard that the current set of Locally Identified Priorities were burglary, drugs offences and vehicle crime, with work to take place around knife crime and drug enforcement action.

An update was supplied in regard to a group of travellers who had been issued with Section 61 notices at both Weekly Glebe and North Park Parade. The group was now in Corby.

A member of the public, Mr Kevin Munton attended the meeting and was provided with the opportunity to ask Sgt Little policing questions, raising issues in relation to motorcycle nuisance, travellers, public cannabis usage and PCSOs.

Sgt Little confirmed he would ascertain how many motorcycle seizures and section 59 warnings had been given as a result of recent police enforcement work to tackle motorcycle nuisance.

Questions were asked by members of the forum in relation to the following topics:-

- Travellers
- Police patrols in the early hours of the morning
- Deterrents for the sale of knives to those underage
- The number of very serious offences of violence in the town in recent times
- Whether there was anything more the council could do alongside police to help reduce the prevalence of serious crime

In relation to the last point, it was requested that the concerns of the forum be raised to the Executive and senior management regarding the increase in crime locally.

18.KTF.36 HEALTH AND WELLBEING FESTIVAL

A presentation was provided to the meeting by the Community Services Manager and the Health Services Manager to promote the Health and Wellbeing Festival being organised by the Council later in the year.

A number of key public health priorities in Kettering were outlined including smoking cessation, reduced alcohol consumption, healthy eating, increased physical activity and emotional wellbeing.

It was heard the 61.3% of individuals nationally carried excess weight, however the figure for the Borough stood at 70%. Based on this and other statistics including local hospital admission figures there was a need to do something in the Borough to help residents improve their health and wellbeing.

The festival itself would provide a showcase for local sport and activity clubs, groups and organisations to the general public detailing the offer that was available locally.

It was anticipated that the event would take place across the 22nd and 23rd June at two sites, Northampton Road recreation ground and Boughton House. It was heard that Northampton Road would feature showcases of the more physical activities with Boughton House staging the more cultural elements.

The meeting heard that the event would be Borough-wide and both the A6 Towns and Rural Forums would receive the same presentations to encourage involvement from other areas. Furthermore a press release would be issued seeking involvement from local sport and activity

groups. It was also hoped that the festival could become an annual event.

Members made a number of suggestions in relation to possible partner organisations including Northamptonshire County Cricket Club and Kettering Futures Partnership.

18.KTF.37 MEADOW ROAD PARK UPDATE

The meeting received an update in relation to the planned works at Meadow Road Park, with the Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Manager providing a presentation to the forum.

It was noted that Meadow Road Park was currently an underused facility with limited equipment for a park of its size. In addition, there was little connection between the park and the town centre.

The existing park faced a number of issues including ASB and play equipment that had been so badly vandalised that it had been removed in January. There were also issues with flooding at the bottom end of the park.

The proposed scheme for the park was one of 19 projects that formed part of the Town Centre Delivery Plan with funding obtained mostly through Section 106 contributions, with two outstanding applications for funding from the Landfill Tax and European Funding in relation to the flooding issues.

Initial proposals were to create a destination park for the town centre with a much bigger play area for all ages, a fitness zone, new pathways, extensive landscaping, lighting, improved signage and CCTV and a sports pitch for informal games. It was heard that the proposals were currently out to tender and once this process had completed a more accurate site plan could be provided.

Public consultations on the proposals had launched in December, closing at the end of January with hand-delivered questionnaires provided to local residents and businesses alongside an online survey option. Information boards had been installed at the site encouraging consultation participation and a consultation event had been in the town centre. Targeting views of young adults had resulted in a workshop being held at Tresham College and a survey of fitness park users located elsewhere has been undertaken.

A total of 172 responses has been received as part of the consultation, with overwhelming support for all elements of the proposal. The majority of respondents preferred retention of the current park name.

Additional comments received from respondents raised concerns regarding ASB and access to toilet facilities, with mixed views regarding

the provision of refreshment concessions. In addition there was a view that the gateway to the park could consist of natural materials.

Next steps would see the installation of knee-rail fencing to secure the perimeter of the site. This was anticipated to take place within the next week and residents would be written to inform them of these works.

Tenders had completed for footpaths, play equipment and the large, iconic piece of play equipment that would make the park stand out. It was hoped that contracts could be awarded to successful bidders later in the week. The footpaths were aimed to have completed by May, with play equipment installed by June with a view to opening the park in July at the latest, if not sooner. The fitness zone was anticipated to open by the Autumn with landscaping concluding following the cessation of the grass cutting season. The Nature Park element would be complete by Summer 2021.

The forum asked questions in relation to the following aspects of the proposals:-

- Parking provision
- Lack of public toilets
- Total funding for the scheme
- Ensuring opportunities for ASB were reduced
- Presentations of final designs to members prior to approval

18.KTF.38 PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

A very brief update was provided for the forum to note that the decision of the Secretary of State (SoS) to the proposals put forward was still awaited.

The meeting heard that much of the detailed preparatory work had been undertaken behind the scenes in the event that the SoS took the decision to approve the creation of two unitary authorities in the county.

(The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended 8:55pm)

Signed.....

Chair

DJP