

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting held: 25th June 2019

Present: Councillor Duncan Bain (Chair)

Councillors Ash Davies, Paul Marks, Mike Tebbutt, Greg Titcombe and Mick Scrimshaw

Also Present: Martin Hammond (Executive Director)
Lucky Clarke (Allocations Housing Manager)
Callum Galluzzo (Committee Administrator)

19.RD.01 APOLOGIES

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

19.RD.02 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Research and Development Committee held on 16th April 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

19.RD.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

19.RD.04 RIGHT TO SPEAK

None

19.RD.05 HOMELESSNESS & TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION (A1)

Members received a presentation that provided a background on the challenges being faced by the housing options team and the ways in which the council is responding to those challenges.

It was heard that there were 1,142 customers who required assistance from the council in 2018/19 in terms of temporary accommodation. Members heard that each individual person will have advice and a specific housing plan tailored for them.

It was reported that Wellington House which provided 21 single vulnerable households with temporary accommodation had recently closed which posed a challenge to the council and the housing option officers.

Members heard that temporary accommodation cost the council approximately £1.2m in the last financial year and that there was a lack of suitable move on solutions especially large properties and supported accommodation.

Members were then shown a graph which provided details regarding the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of each month and the trend increasing over time. The Housing Options team saw between 23 and 30 new approaches each week and an average of five households are placed into temporary accommodation each week.

It was noted that a Member Information Session would take place on the 2nd September to inform all members regarding the work being undertaken by the Housing Options team and the challenges that they face.

Members requested that figures relating to households in temporary accommodation be regularly circulated. Members also raised questions regarding the closure of Wellington House and the ongoing negotiations surrounding it.

RESOLVED that the Executive Committee's attention be drawn to the need to replace Wellington House as a matter of urgency.

19.RD.06 **KETTERING TOWN CENTRE TASK & FINISH GROUP**
PROGRESS UPDATE (A2)

The Committee received a report which sought to provide the committee with a progress update in relation to the work of the Kettering town Centre Task and Finish Group.

It was reported that since its first meeting, the Task and Finish Group had held a town centre walkabout on the 23rd March 2019 and a further four meetings had taken place to receive evidence from a variety of internal departments in relation to a wide range of sectors.

Across meetings held in May the group devised questions to gather evidence from external stakeholders who had agreed to attend

meetings with the group in June. In addition to this it was noted that a questionnaire had been created to allow stakeholders who could not attend to provide their views.

In addition to the evidence gathering process, members of the Task and Finish Group had agreed a fact-finding visit to Bedford to understand the challenges and opportunities of another comparable town centre. The Group aimed to bring a final report with its recommendations to the Research and Development Committee in October 2019. This would then allow any recommendations by the Committee to be taken to Council in December 2019.

Members stated that the stakeholder engagement meetings that had taken place had provided a lot of positive feedback and brought forward several key ideas that will benefit the town centre.

RESOLVED That the progress update of the Kettering Town Centre Task and Finish Group be noted

19.RD.07 WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19 (A3)

The work programme was noted with the addition of scrutiny of the financial efficiencies of the Council's temporary housing policy and the impact this had on the people using this service

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 8.12pm)

Signed:

(Chair)

CJG