

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

at a meeting of the Council of the Borough of
Kettering held at the Municipal Offices, Bowling
Green Road, Kettering on 25th September 2019

Present:

Councillor	Keli Watts (Mayor)	Councillor	Ian Jelley
"	Linda Adams	"	Anne Lee
"	Mike Brown	"	Paul Marks
"	Lloyd Bunday	"	Clark Mitchell
"	James Burton	"	Cliff Moreton
"	John Currall	"	Russell Roberts
"	Ash Davies	"	Mark Rowley
"	Mark Dearing	"	Mick Scrimshaw
"	Maggie Don	"	Jan Smith
"	Andrew Dutton	"	Margaret Talbot
"	Ruth Groome	"	Mike Tebbutt
"	Jim Hakewill	"	Lesley Thurland
"	Philip Hollobone	"	Greg Titcombe
"	David Howes	"	Jonathan West

*Prior to the commencement of the meeting it was announced
that the proceedings would be video recorded*

19.C.38 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Duncan Bain, Cedwien Brown, Scott Edwards, Jenny Henson, David Soans and Shirley Stanton.

19.C.39 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 24th July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

19.C.40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Jim Hakewill declared a personal interest in Items 9 and 10 as a landowner in the Borough.

Cllr Ruth Groome declared a personal interest as an employee of NCC.

It was noted that Graham Soulsby, Martin Hammond and Mark Dickenson had an interest in Item 7.

19.C.41 **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor made announcements as follows:

- The Beat the Street initiative had been launched that day and was a positive scheme aimed at getting people active by walking, cycling and scooting around Kettering with over 1000 people already registered to take part
- A "Save the Date" letter had been sent out detailing future events. The Chocolate Tutorial and Tasting Evening would take place in the Chamber the following day and the Civic Ball to be held on 15th November

The Deputy Mayor reported that following a concert held at Desborough Baptist Church, praise and thanks for KBC had been received from a member of the public for the provision of grant funding to assist in light replacement.

19.C.42 **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader echoed the positive comments regarding the Beat the Street initiative.

It was reported that Kettering had been successful in achieving grant funding of up to £1.95m from Historic England to formulate a Heritage Action Zone within the town centre. A business case and workplan would be created and would be brought to future meetings of Executive and Council. The success of the bid was very positive news for Kettering and the leadership looked forward to working alongside Heritage England and local partners to deliver improvements on the ground in the town centre.

The meeting noted that Council had approved a climate emergency motion in July 2019 and was committed to this cause with a report being prepared for submission to the Executive Committee detailing existing and future works in this regard as a service provider, employer and a catalyst for change in the Borough. The Leader reported that he was keen to commence a number of exciting initiatives and thanked the Mayor for her work and commitment to the subject of climate change.

19.C.43 **REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

None.

19.C.44 **RIGHT TO SPEAK**

Eight members of the public registered their intention to speak in relation to Item 12.

19.C.45 **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Council received a report that sought approval for changes to the Council's constitution to reflect changes in regulations and best practice recommendations from the Committee for Standards in Public Life.

The first alteration requiring approval related to changes in regulations that described a new procedure in the event that disciplinary action needed to be taken against a statutory officer, with the second relating to recommendations from the Committee for Standards in Public Life around the Member Code of Conduct.

Cllr Hakewill addressed the meeting and welcomed the building-up of the constitution, especially in reference to behaviour between elected members.

RESOLVED That Council approved the changes to the constitution as set out in the appendices to the report.

(Voting: Unanimous)

19.C.46 **CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE**

A report was submitted which asked members to approve an amended Terms of Reference (ToR) for the North Northamptonshire Joint Committee as a result of an extension to the timetable for the creation of unitary authorities in the county. The amended ToR would accommodate this change.

RESOLVED That Council approved the changes to the Terms of Reference as set out in the appendix to the report.

(Voting: 25 For; 0 Against; 1 Abstention)

19.C.47 **NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Council received a report that sought agreement to adopt the North Northamptonshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The meeting heard that local planning authorities were required to prepare an SCI to set out how they would consult and engage in the preparation of Local Plan Documents as well as in determining planning applications.

It was noted that the draft SCI had been recommended for approval at the meeting of Planning Policy on 10th September.

RESOLVED That Council approved the revised Statement of Community Involvement as recommend by the Planning Policy Committee.

(Voting: Unanimous)

19.C.48 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Members received a report which sought approval to adopt a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) with effect from 25th September 2019.

The meeting heard that the document itself was a project plan providing a timetable for the preparation of documents for KBC's contribution towards the North Northamptonshire Development Plan. The current LDS had been adopted in April 2018 and the revised document had been updated to reflect the progress and slippage to the previous programme.

The draft LDS had been recommended for approval at the meeting of Planning Policy on 10th September.

In response to a question, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Council had a statutory duty to retain a five-year supply of pitches for gypsy and travellers and that at a future point this would require a further search for suitable sites with public engagement on the matter being necessary.

RESOLVED That Council adopted the draft Local Development Scheme as recommend by the Planning Policy Committee.

(Voting: 25 For; 1 Against; 0 Abstention)

19.C.49 POLLING PLACE AND POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW

A report was submitted that detailed responses received during the consultation phase of the above review and sought approval for a number of Returning Officer recommendations as detailed in Appendix C of the report.

In addition, approval was sought for the (Interim) Head of Democratic and Legal Services to be authorised to make a Polling Places Order that incorporated the recommendations detailed in the aforementioned appendix by 30th November 2019 at the latest.

It was noted that should any other unexpected changes in circumstances to polling places and polling districts occur between 2019 and 2024, these would be dealt with by way of interim reviews as appropriate.

Members spoke positively regarding the reduction in school sites being utilised as polling places, although concerns were raised regarding appropriate polling station signage and climate change concerns.

RESOLVED

That:-

- i) Council approved the recommendations detailed in Appendix C of the report;
- ii) Authorised the (Interim) Head of Democratic and legal Services to make a Polling Places Order incorporating the recommendations detailed in the aforementioned report appendix by 30th November 2019 at the latest; and
- iii) That any other unexpected changes in circumstances to polling places and polling districts occur between 2019 and 2024 be dealt with by way of interim reviews as appropriate.

(Voting: Unanimous)

19.C.50

MOTION – ENCOURAGING CYCLING AND WALKING

It was proposed by Cllr Anne Lee and seconded by Cllr Maggie Don that:-

“This Council aims to protect residents and visitors from road danger, air and noise pollution and improve the health, economy and wellbeing of local communities. This Council recognises that creating a public environment that encourages cycling and walking is a low cost and highly effective way of achieving these aims. Therefore, investment should be made in changing patterns of travel in favour of walking and cycling.”

Eight members of public addressed Council under the Right to Speak Policy and spoke strongly in support of the motion, referencing the declaration of a climate emergency motion passed at the July meeting of Council and noting the dangerous nature of cycling on the road and the lack of secure bike storage and cycle lanes in the Borough.

Councillor Ian Jelley proposed and Councillor Thurland seconded an amendment to the original motion so that it would read as follows:-

“That this Council will continue to aim to protect residents and visitors from road danger, air and noise pollution and improve the health, economy and wellbeing of local communities. This Council also recognises that creating a public environment that encourages cycling and walking is a highly effective way of achieving these aims. Therefore, investment should continue to be made in changing patterns of travel in favour of walking and cycling in conjunction with our public and private sector partners.”

Following debate, a vote was taken on the amendment as follows:-

(Voting: 18 For; 5 Against; 3 Abstention)

Consequently the amendment proposed by Cllr Jelley became the substantive motion.

Councillor Brown proposed an amendment that would remove reference to “favouring” cycling and walking, however no seconder could be found.

Following further debate a vote was taken on the substantive motion and it was

RESOLVED

That this Council will continue to aim to protect residents and visitors from road danger, air and noise pollution and improve the health, economy and wellbeing of local communities. This Council also recognises that creating a public environment that encourages cycling and walking is a highly effective way of achieving these aims. Therefore, investment should continue to be made in changing patterns of travel in favour of walking and cycling in conjunction with our public and private sector partners.

(Voting: 25 For; 0 Against; 1 Abstention)

19.C.51 RESOLUTION TO CONTINUE

During the debate on the previous item (19.C.50), with the meeting closing on the two-hour guillotine, it was

RESOLVED

that the meeting be extended to 9.30pm in order to conclude the remaining business on the agenda.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

19.C.52 WARD INITIATIVE FUND DETAILS ON THE COUNCIL WEBSITE

Councillor Anne Lee asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following question:-

“When will information be publicly available on Kettering Borough Council's website regarding what councillors have spent their ward initiative fund on, as promised last year?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance responded as follows:

“This information has been made publicly available on the Council's website this week.”

Councillor Lee asked the following supplementary question:

“Why did it take a question to Full Council for this to happen?”

The Portfolio Holder replied as follows:

“It did not.”

19.C.53 PUBLIC LITTER BINS

Councillor Anne Lee asked the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Delivery and the Environment the following question:-

“Approximately how many public litter bins have been removed without being replaced from the Borough in the last year and has this not aggravated littering in the areas concerned?”

The Portfolio Holder responded as follows:-

“In Kettering over the past year we have:-

*Removed 9 litter bins across the whole of the Borough
Replaced 16 litter bins
Installed 24 new bins.*

Any bins removed have been monitored regularly for usage, as well as changes in the local area. Where the bin is no longer required in its historic location, it is re-used in a more suitable place. The areas will continue to be monitored by our staff to ensure this is the correct decision.”

19.C.54 HOUSEHOLDS IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Councillor Andrew Dutton asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing the following question:-

“At Executive last week it was reported that 206 households are currently in temporary accommodation. How many of these are single people, how many couples and how many are families with children?”

The Portfolio Holder for Housing responded as follows:-

“There are currently 206 households in temporary accommodation. 72 households comprise single people or couples without dependents. 134 households are single parents or couples with dependents”

19.C.55 **CLIMATE EMERGENCY CHAMPION**

Councillor Andrew Dutton asked the Leader of the Council the following question:-

“Which member of the Executive and which senior officer are responsible for response to the Climate Emergency which was declared recently by unanimous vote of the Council?”

The Leader responded as follows:-

“The appointed officer champions, as per the motion, are James Wilson and Rochelle Mathieson. However, all senior officers will be expected to contribute to the council’s policy. The motion did not ask for a member champion and we take the view that all members of the Cabinet – indeed all members – are equally responsible for delivering this agenda as best we can. “

19.C.56 **CORPORATE PEER REVIEW**

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Leader of the Council the following question:-

“The LGA recommend that a formal corporate peer review takes place at a minimum of every five years. When did the Council last have a peer review?”

The Leader responded as follows:-

“We had a peer review in 2010 which looked at the planning service.

Members will be aware that this was the subject of a motion at February 2019 Council meeting which was not approved.”

Councillor Hakewill made the following supplementary statement:-

“A Planning Review is not a corporate peer review, so I have not got an answer.”

19.C.57 **TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Chair of the Research and Development Committee the following question:-

“What is the maximum number of Task and Finish Groups that can be operating at any one time under the Council’s constitution?”

The Chair of the Research and Development Committee had responded in writing as follows:-

“Five. There is a convention that only two task and finish groups are operating at any one time because of the time and resource implications of supporting each group.”

Councillor Hakewill asked the following supplementary question:-

“How many are there currently?”

Due to the absence of the Chair of the Research and Development it was noted that this answer would be provided outside the meeting.

19.C.57 ROTHWELL NORTH STRATEGIC LINK ROAD

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following question:-

“What are the current individual financial values of the Lawrences Site, Sheerness House and agricultural land at junction 3 on the A14 on the Council’s asset register?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance had responded in writing with the figures below:-

Asset	Value
Lawrences	£1,597,000
Sheerness House	£890,000
Land at J3	£133,000

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following supplementary question:-

“What return has the Council received for that investment of £2.6m?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance replied as follows:-

“There will be returns on all those investments, things are happening with all of those sites.”

19.C.58 ISHAM BYPASS FUNDING

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Leader of the Council the following question:-

“What meetings were attended by the Leader and other leaders and senior politicians in order to find ways to retain the £23m SEMLEP funding for the Isham bypass, prior to the announcement of its withdrawal?”

The Leader responded as follows:-

“There were informal conversations between councils which concluded that the funding could not be secured in the time available, given the amount of work which had yet to be carried out by NCC on the design and delivery of the road, and their lack of capacity at the time to complete the work.”

19.C.59 **ISHAM BYPASS FUNDING SHORTFALL**

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Leader of the Council the following question:-

“What was the shortfall that was needed to retain the Isham bypass funding and build schedule?”

The Leader responded as follows:-

“This will need to be asked of the County Council as the responsible highway authority.”

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Leader the following supplementary question:-

“Was the value discussed in the informal meetings suggested in the answer to Question 8?”

The Leader replied as follows:-

“No value could be provided”

19.C.60 **PLANNING COMMITTEE – SPEAKING TIMES**

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Chair of the Planning Committee the following question:-

“Will the Council implement the recommendations of the task and finish group in respect of two planning applications for older persons accommodation in Mawsley and in respect of Rothwell North, by publishing the agenda two weeks before the committee dates and by allowing 15 minutes of public representation on each item at the meeting?”

The Chair of the Planning Committee provided the following answer in writing:-

“The recommendations referred to were proposed in 2009 but never embedded in the constitution at the time.”

Cllr Hakewill asked the following supplementary question:-

“Will, after ten years, the recommendation now be embedded into constitution?”

In the absence of the Chair of the Planning Committee, the Deputy Leader responded as follows:-

“No-one has thought to embed this in the constitution. From Councillor Stanton’s point of view, no there will not be a 15 minute allowance”

19.C.61 ASSET MANAGEMENT BOARD TRAINING

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Leader of the Council the following question:-

“What formal training in making decisions on the acquisition of commercial properties have members of the Asset Management Board had, and who provided them?”

The Leader responded as follows:-

“I refer Councillor Hakewill to the written answer he had to these questions on 18th June 2019.”

19.C.62 LAWRENCES SITE

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration the following question:-

“Does the portfolio holder believe that housing on the Lawrences site is better than retail and community infrastructure for the regeneration of the town centre?”

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration replied as follows:-

“Yes, as does the rest of the cabinet”

Councillor Hakewill asked the following supplementary question:-

“What will the position of Executive councillors on the Planning Committee be given that they seem to have predetermined this?”

The Deputy Leader replied as follows:-

“We do not have a predetermined situation on anything”

19.C.62 **LAWRENCES SITE - SUPERMARKETS**

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration the following question:-

“Which supermarkets were interested in investing in the Lawrences site but dismissed as an option in favour of additional housing?”

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration replied as follows:-

“Although there has been informal retail interest in the site over a long period of time, the restrictive covenants on the site meant that it was not a realistic prospect for supermarket development and no formal offer was live at the time the decision was made to develop the site for housing.”

Councillor Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration the following supplementary question:-

“In the paper that came to the Executive Committee it was mentioned that two supermarkets had showed an interest, which two?”

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration replied as follows:-

“This was commercially sensitive at the time so I cannot provide an answer.”

19.C.63 **ECONOMIC AND REGENERATION RESERVE**

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following question:-

“What was the source of funds that have created the Economic and Regeneration Reserve which currently stands at £3.863m?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance replied as follows:-

“I refer Cllr Hakewill to the written answer he received on the 8th August. The main source of the funding was the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive.”

19.C.64 **ECONOMIC AND REGENERATION RESERVE – GALA BINGO**

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following question:-

“Can the Economic and Regeneration Reserve be used to invest in regeneration in the Borough, including for example acquiring the former Gala Bingo site?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance responded as follows:-

“The purpose of the fund is to generate economic benefit, so it can be used for a variety of purposes. It is worth noting that the Gala Bingo site is not for sale.”

Councillor Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following supplementary question:-

“If Gala Bingo was for sale, could this fund be used to buy if there was a mind to do so?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance answered as follows:-

“We spend money from the capital programme to generate money for the revenue account for this council. If we saw project to generate revenue, then we would do it.”

19.C.65 WELLINGTON HOUSE

Councillor Jim Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following question:-

“Does the portfolio holder agree with the following statement in the September Executive Committee report in relation to Wellington House:-

“CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

6.1. None specifically. An unused boarded up building cannot however be described as a good use of resources”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance responded as follows:-

“Yes, in relation to the recommendations in the report”

Councillor Hakewill asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance the following supplementary question:-

“In relation to answer given to Question 7; would it therefore be right to say that those three properties are not good use of resources?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance replied as follows:-

“One is open grassland, one we will be doing a lot of work on over the next few months and the other isn't boarded up”

19.C.66 ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING POINTS

Councillor Andrew Dutton asked the Portfolio Holder for Environment the following question:-

"It's very good news about electric charging points in car parks but are there any plans for charging points along local streets which can be used by residents who do not have private drives or garages where they can charge electric vehicles?"

The Portfolio Holder for the Environment responded as follows:-

"The Council are working with the County Council who through a project called VPACH, which is a collaboration of a number of partners, are seeking to secure "on-street" charging points. The project is for the whole of Northamptonshire and officers are seeking to influence the location of any points to Kettering's benefit.

Opportunities for additional funding and infrastructure will always be taken up where possible, as the Council is keen to help support the development of a charging network in the Borough."

Councillor Dutton asked the Portfolio Holder for the Environment the following supplementary question:

"Could I have more information in regard to "on street" charging points, will these be in the centre of town or in residential areas?"

The Portfolio Holder for the Environment replied as follows:-

"The aim is to be working on all areas of the town"

(The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 9.08pm)

Signed

The Mayor

DJP