**BOROUGH OF KETTERING**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Meeting held: 17th October 2012**

**Present:** Councillor Roberts (Chair)

 Councillors Bellamy, Dearing, Freer, Jelley, Lamb, Malin, Wiley and Zanger

**Also Present:** Councillors Adams, Bunday, Smith, Tebbutt and West

**12.EX.41 APOLOGIES**

 Apologies for absence were received from David Cook, Chief Executive and Graham Soulsby, Deputy Chief Executive.

**12.EX.42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

 Councillor Dearing declared an interest in item 13 as a private landlord.

**12.EX.43 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 12th September 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**12.EX.44 DELIVERING TOWN CENTRES**

A report was submitted the purpose of which was to: -

1. appraise members of the Executive of the latest town centre occupancy rates as seen in the Area Action Plan (AAP) monitoring report of August 2012;
2. discuss how the current public realm project along High Street and Gold Street was already starting to have a positive impact on new and prospective retailers;
3. preview the programme of Christmas events for Kettering.

A presentation was given to support the update.

Councillor West attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on the subjects of parking, the restaurants and the mosquito device operating in the Market Place area.

It was noted that an update on these issues would be brought back to a future meeting of the Executive Committee.

In discussion, members commended the work carried out on the street scene for Costa and Bewitched.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee: -

1. recognised the latest occupancy rates as a good news story for Kettering Town Centre;
2. appreciated the positive impact that the current redesign of High Street and Gold Street was already starting to have on new and prospective retailers;
3. note the proposals for the Christmas programme for Kettering

**12.EX.45 MAINTAINING A DURABLE BUDGET – BUDGET POLICY & MONITORING**

A report was submitted, the purpose of which was to: -

1. provide members with a reminder of the council’s medium term financial strategy and associated guiding principles;
2. illustrate the latest budget model, the delivery of efficiency savings for 2012/12 and the estimated level of budget savings that may be required over the next few years;
3. provide members with a mid year update on Treasury Management;
4. provide an update in relation to the national Local Government Resource Review

It was reported that the second Modelling for Recovery Principle had been refreshed to reflect that the Council had long term debt, resulting from the HRA self financing transaction and reflected the Council’s strong Treasury position.

General Fund 2013/14 – Budget Prospects Next Financial Year

The Council remained on track to deliver savings and as well as monitoring framework savings identified for 2012/12 work continued on identifying savings for the following year – 2013/14.

In the previous durable budget report it was reported that an early start had been made on identifying the savings required for 2013/14 and a figure of £285,000 was reported, this figure now stood at £485,000 which was very encouraging and significantly ahead of schedule.

Medium Term Financial Forecast

It was noted that there was growing concern that the reduction in grant in 2013/14 and 2014/15 could be greater than the 6% the Council was currently modelling. To put this into context a reduction of 1% would reduce the Council’s grant by around £45,000. It was expected that the provisional grant settlement would be announced in mid December.

Treasury Management – Mid Year Update

It was noted that the Treasury Management Policy Statement was technical in nature and was complying with what was approved at the February meeting of the Executive Committee.

Local Government Resource Review (LGRR)

The Council responded to the consultation papers which were issued by CLG on 17th July 2012. Although the consultation documents provided greater detail on the proposed operation of the scheme, they did not provide specific numbers from which the financial impact on an individual local authority can be calculated.

Further details regarding pooling would be brought back to the November Executive meeting, whereby the Executive could consider the issue further.

The date required to provide full governance arrangements to the CLG had now been extended to 9th November 2012. The CLG would then evaluate all submission across the county but does not guarantee they will be accepted as part of the pool.

The consultation period on the Council Tax Support Scheme was due to end on 31st October 2012 following the closure of the consultation all responses received would be considered and would help inform a report to the Executive Committee in December. A final decision for a Local Council Tax Support Scheme would be made by Full Council in January 2013.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee: -

1. endorsed the changes to the modelling for recovery principal as outlined in the report;
2. noted the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy and associated guiding principles;
3. noted the current Medium Term Financial Forecast and the progress being made for the delivery of efficiency savings 2012/13 and future years;
4. noted the Treasury Management performance for the period 1 April – 30 September;
5. continued to recognise the significance of changes facing the authority beyond April 2013;
6. noted the Council’s position on Pooling Business Rates

**12.EX.46 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY AND S106 CONTRIBUTIONS**

A report was submitted, the purpose of which was to: -

1. inform members of the current issues faced by the Council in the delivery of Affordable Homes;
2. highlight specific concerns relating to S106 Contributions;
3. examine potential path forward;
4. recommend an option considered most appropriate by officers from Development Services and Housing Services.

It was reported that Kettering Borough Council had historically been very successful in the delivery of Affordable Housing, particularly over the last 5 years. However the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) had introduced a new Affordable Rent Framework which changed the way affordable housing would be funded and delivered.

Developers of affordable housing, as with most developers in the current climate are looking to local authorities to assist in any way they can with new delivery and are looking for some certainty over costs they will encounter with sites and likelihood of approval before entering any kind of offer on land purchases.

It was noted that Option 3, ‘Remove S106 Contributions temporarily for 100% Affordable Housing schemes on a case by case basis’ was considered to be the most likely to achieve the singular goal of delivering affordable housing.

Councillors Tebbutt, West and Smith attended the meeting and raised a number of points about unlocking small sites, transport and accommodation pressures, and the need for a periodic review of the proposed holiday from S106 obligations. It was clarified that the removal of the S106 contributions would only apply to developments carried out by housing associations..

It was requsted that Town and Parish Councils be invited to the Community Infrastructure Levy Members Information Evening.

It was noted that occupiers of the properties would not be new residents in the community therefore they would not represent an extra demand on resources.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee endorsed the Option 3 approach to 100% affordable housing schemes.

**12.EX.47 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY**

A report was submitted which sought endorsement of the Homelessness Review and Homelessness Strategy, prepared in accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002.

It was reported that since the last strategy the council had made significant achievements with the strategic approach to the prevention of homelessness and the rehousing of homeless households. The council’s achievements had been recognised nationally and had been accredited for many things.

Councillors West and Tebbutt addressed the meeting and aired some concerns about the pressures on the Council. Both commended the Head of Housing and his team for their work on homelessness.

. The Executive Committee felt it was important to highlight the preventative work being carried out to prevent homelessness and congratulated the Head of Housing and his team on their work.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee endorsed the draft Homelessness Review and Homelessness Strategy prior to their consideration by Full Council on 12th December 2012.

*(The meeting started at 7.00pm and ended at 8.30pm)*

Signed………………………………………………

Chair