

Meeting of BLTC 07 February 2017

Reports to Council

Borough Council Matters of Interest Reports

Cllr R. Groome

On 6th January I attended a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner Stephen Mold at the Municipal Offices. He gave a presentation with statistics. He acknowledges that the 101 service is slow for a lot of callers and not good enough. The new Police Headquarters is moving to Kettering. Stephen Mold commented that increased house security had reduced burglary, but that protecting children and vulnerable people from being groomed on computer websites caused the Police a lot of work. He called upon parents not to allow children unsupervised access to the internet. Police workload is also increased by schools excluding young people.

The Commissioner answered questions from councillors present. He was asked for more Police presence in the Town Centre because of shop lifting, including from charity shops.

I asked about the stand off between the Police and the Councils over parking enforcement, especially near schools. Guy Holloway (KBC) has prepared a business plan and it will shortly be available for viewing. Cllr Mick Scrimshaw suggested contacting the Safer Routes to School team. I asked about proposals to address speeding in urban areas. There will be more mobile speed cameras in the County in the future. I asked his attitude towards Community Payback teams. He is very supportive of these.

On 9th January I attended a planning Policy training session on the Local Development Scheme/Local Plan. This affects the whole Borough – Central Government requires KBC to prepare a Local Development Scheme. The workshop covered Neighbourhood and Parish Plans, the importance of good planning in advice, housing allocations, areas of open space and Local Green Space, Town centre policies, Employment, accessing more funding and investment.

On 23rd January, I attended a Members' Information about mental health problems, which covered how common and varied they are, and how vulnerable people with mental health problems are to discrimination, abuse, employment problems, debt and homelessness.

On 25th January, the Borough Council's Local Development Scheme was considered. This includes Neighbourhood Plans, Community Levy, Supplementary Planning Documents including Open Space, Sustainable Design and Biodiversity, and Kettering Town Centre Action Plan.

1st February – I attended A6 Towns Form – most of the time was a discussion about material for Planning meetings being sent electronically rather than by post in paper format, to save both time and money. It was generally agreed that the larger plans could not be seen easily online, and a compromise solution of the routine planning applications being sent electronically but larger plans being sent out in paper format was favoured. A full consultation with Town and Parish Councils will take place.

Scott Little attended and provided an update. Distraction burglars, shop lifters and car thieves have been arrested recently and are on remand. The Police continue to look out for house and vehicle insecurities and provide advice to owners. The issue was raised about home owners putting signs outside their houses asking for parcels to be left in specific places, thus advertising that they are out. I suggested work could be done through Neighbourhood Watch Schemes encouraging people to come to discreet arrangements with neighbours about taking parcels in.

The Budget was discussed.

Cllr Christopher Groome provided an update on Electrification and Line Speed Improvements.

I gave a talk about our Farmers' Market (with reference to Cllr Zanger's work).

On 26th January I chaired the meeting of the Ancient Parish Charity where we gave out fuel grants.

We had slightly more applications than last year, and so gave out more grants. We are trying to make as many people as possible aware of the help available.

We have started giving out cheques rather than paying into fuel accounts because our Clerk was finding this increasingly difficult to do.

County Council Matters of Interest Report (Cllr C. Groome)

Scrutiny of the NCC budget for 2017-8 has occupied me greatly over the last six weeks with 9 half-day meetings, but it is the one occasion in a year when a member can get an understanding of what the council is about. I am one of the few councillors who made an effort to attend all the sessions – I only missed one. I am pleased to report that it has been done as I and a few others proposed last year, as a zero based budget with a starting point of zero for all services. Given the amount to be saved (£64 million) and the lack of reserves there was really no alternative, although I'm not sure all officers (or members) understand what a zero based budget is. The usual way of budgeting in the public sector is to take the previous year's budget and try to slice bits off. Hence they are called 'cuts'. As a result there are several budget headings where scrutiny is not confident that the savings (old speak) can be realised. This is particularly true of Adult Social Care.

I have mentioned before that the new Director of Children's Services comes from Leicestershire County Council which spends less than NCC per head on Children's Services and is rated good. She has only been in post 5 months, but knew from experience what needs to be done with NCC to get to grips with an "out of control" budget. She didn't quote the usual cop out of "statutory requirement". She is sufficiently au fait with the required provision to know that (1) there are a variety of ways to deliver "statutory" services and (2) people's needs change so a regular check is required on their condition. She has included non-statutory early years provision because that is a way of avoiding expensive provision down the road. Her staff are organised in project teams to deliver all these outcomes by the beginning of the financial year and substantially in this financial year so the ask from this year is lowered. An impressive start!

The Pytchley/Orlingbury/Broughton Crossroads has taken some of my time and I know it is used by some people from Burton as a short cut. In view of recent accidents I asked Northamptonshire Highways information over 10 years. I also asked for their proposals for further work to make the crossroads safer. Given the tightness of the budget for this kind of work countywide, I am pleased that they are concerned about the safety record at this location and are willing to give it priority.

I have also put effort into getting some return for Kettering out of the likely postponement of electrification of the railway north of Kettering. We are still likely to get the upgrading of the line, including past Burton, and the electrification to Corby. The Station Road bridge will have to be raised. Ideally it would be widened at the same time, but Network Rail only replaces like with like. I would like authority from the Town Council to write to the Highways Authority and Network Rail and whoever else who might help to promote this issue.

I attended the A6 Towns Forum and the Rural Forum. The biggest issue was the continued crime wave in the area. The Rural Forum is inviting the PCC and the Chief Constable to come and answer their concerns about the low priority being given to burglaries and robberies compared with cyber crime.

In conclusion Fergus and I got the police, the developer and County Highways to address the problems demonstrated in the traffic jams on the first weekend of highway closures at junction 10 so that it was much improved for the second weekend.

Highways Report (Cllr Macdonald)

- 1) I have raised the question of pot-hole reporting and more significantly the methods of carrying out road and pavement inspections
- 2) The question re the level of light in the High St has now been agreed that it is inadequate and is due to an error by the contractor.
- 3) Am awaiting a program of works for those actions previously agreed
- 4) The store room in the Civic Centre has been cleared and painted and passed to Doggies Day Out
- 5) The faulty radiator the damaged basin and the store room light have all been rectified
- 6) The pocket park equipment has all been repaired and returned save for the tractor and mower which were only taken last week
- 7) The garden in front of the Civic Centre has been cut back and will be dug over in the near future
- 8) The planter and associated signs have been replaced on the new access road from junction 10

Report of the Civic Centre Management Board Meeting held on Monday 16th January 2017

Present: John Currall (Chair), Ruth Groome, Maureen Jerram (note taker), Nigel Padget, Derek Zanger

Apologies: Mick Roch

Jan Smith didn't attend.

Report of the last meeting: Monday 8th November 2016: Were agreed as a true record pp NP 2nd
JC

Action Points update:

No	Action:	Action Owner	Latest Comments	Due Date
1.	Woodwork on outside windows needs painting with sadoline coating.	MR	Will do this as soon as the weather is favourable	ASAP
2.	Laminate and put on display a plan of the building outlining fire exits and extinguishers	DZ	DZ has virtually completed this and will display appropriately.	ASAP
3.	Produce a report on the condition of the roof.	MR	FM to get a professionally written report and 3 written quotes. MJ to e-mail FM for an update.	Next meeting
4.	Produce a BLTC Safeguarding Policy	MJ	Ongoing	
5.	Dispose of the red chairs and replace with new	MJ	MJ to get quote for ones similar to those in cupboard. DZ will pay out of his ward initiative money	Urgent
6.	Light in left hand corner of Council Chamber.	MR	MR to replace tube. MJ to check if this has been done.	ASAP
7.	Fire Procedures	DZ	Still being completed by DZ and NP	ASAP
8.	Carpet in Conference Room	JC	Needs cleaning as the result of a leak.	
9.	Replace clock in Council Chamber	JC		ASAP
10.	Hole in back cladding	FM	Community Payback to mend	
11.	Clear out back cupboards	MJ	Rubbish has accumulated again.	

- Once quotes are received for new roof invite Rachael McGarth to meeting to discuss grants, plus solar panels
- MJ reported the kitchen floor is looking tired and worn. Budgeted for in next year's budget. **MJ** to get quotes

Matters arising (not on the Agenda):

- The outside sensor light has now been adjusted
- **DZ** to send a copy of the Fire Plan for the building to **MJ** to distribute to people hiring the rooms
- **MJ** to send a copy of the Civic Centre Risk Assessment to all
- The timing on the heating control needs changing (1hr incorrect). **MJ** to ask **FM** to change it. Also to ask **FM** for a spare key to the panel
- There was a discussion around the fire extinguishers. It was thought that they can only be used by people trained to use (**MJ** to check). **NP** to seek advice from Sid the H and S person for the Baptist Church. **DZ** to compile a simple list for using them

Soundproofing: Still awaiting comment from Chris Bentley (**KBC**). **MJ** to ask **GS** to chase this up. Aiming to do the soundproofing in the half term week to cause the minimum of problems for room hirers. **MJ** to get the quote photocopied and return the original to **NP** and also send copy to **KBC** Community Grants.

Keys:

- Two councillors have requested keys to the back door. Discussion around this. **JC** said that as the door can be opened from the inside he considered there was no need for anyone to have a key. It was agreed that **MJ** should have a key as she does all the Room Bookings. **MJ** to borrow (the key from Olympus, obtain a copy and return it
- **MJ** to find out what keys the Community Pay Back Team have. Also when they use the Civic Centre. Some of the chairs in the Conference Room had a lot of mud on them which may (or may not) have come from the Pay Back Team.
- **JC** said he hadn't given the **NCHA** keys to replace the lost ones as he disagreed with doing this. He also said they didn't want a key. **MJ** to check with the training co-ordinator as it had been arranged that a named person should hold them and be responsible
- **JC** to let Artisan Crafts have on outdoor and Youth Room key before they start using the room (1st Sat of Feb)

Room Bookings update:

- Artisan Crafts: They are going to give any money surplus from the booking fee to various B/L Charities. The committee agreed to not charge them for set up costs. They have sent some posters for display in the Notice Boards electronically. **JC** expressed concern at having to print them off. **MJ** and **RG** offered to print them out. **MJ** to check with Town Clerk to ensure there is a small sum of money in the budget to reimburse Cllrs should they so wish
- Doggies Day Out: **MJ** to e-mail **FM** for a timescale to ensure the room is ready for letting
- Youth Group: It was agreed not to charge them for the occasional extra meeting, of staff. It was noticed that the group hadn't used the room for quite a time. **MJ** to e-mail Jan Smith and Peter Hill to see if they still require the space
- British Legion: They use the Civic Centre once a month for a meeting. Traditionally they have never paid for this. It was agreed that we should not start to charge them but should a fee paying event wish to use the room on that evening to inform the British Legion. **MJ** to compile a letter for **GS** to send

- Directions: DZ agreed with them to pay the rental for the room for the first year only. They have assumed over the last two years that DZ will continue to pay. However this is not the case and Ward Initiative funds can no longer be used for such things. **MJ** to compile a letter for GS to send advising them that they will have to start paying for the room
- Tots Play: wish to extend their project to include an extra 3 hours on a Wednesday morning. They would be willing to use the Council Chamber which would involve the tables being moved after the Tuesday French Class. No one was willing to do this. **MJ** to speak to the Yoga class to see if they would be willing to use another room

Cleaning update: Everything is fine. JC has purchased some cleaning items after a request from the cleaners

Any other business: There are two vacuum cleaners in the Civic Centre cupboards, both of which are not working properly. **Approval needed by BLTC for expenditure of up to £65 for repairs.** They are needed to ensure people renting rooms clean them afterwards

Date of next Meeting: Monday 13th March 2017, 7pm at the Civic Centre