

Meeting of BLTC 07 March 2017

Reports to Council

Borough Council Matters of Interest Reports

Cllr R. Groome

Community Debrillator – I have been in conversation with Chris Stephenson at Burton Latimer Fire Station and subsequently been contacted by EMAS. If we buy defibrillators through them we get a heavy discount, free training from EMAS and help with finding a suitable place to keep them. I will bring details to the meeting, to be discussed at a time agreed by the Mayor.

27th February – Standards Advisory Committee- we agreed the Whistleblowing Policy, two new Town and Parish Council representatives have been appointed, the Independent Person has been re-appointed, and were updated on Local Government Ombudsman complaints.

1st March – Full Council – the new Budget has been agreed.

Cllr Smith

I attended full Council and indeed a number of meetings to discuss the budget and heard views on the proposal which was ratified at full council resulting in no increase to the Council tax by KBC who have delivered a balanced budget without cutting funding to essential services and whilst still awarding funding to the third sector. There has been no cuts to front line services and KBC continues to support our community with an exemplary service for around £3.18 per week dependant on your council tax band.

I have undertaken youth engagement work with colleagues around Burton and will continue to do so over the coming months.

I have attended the North Northants planning workshop on placemaking which was most thought provoking and informative.

I also attended the A6 towns forum and the Executive committee where the Budget consultation was also discussed.

I have dealt with a number of residents queries and undertaken some training.

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

1. The Cabinet did make some changes to the budget, particularly as they would have affected voluntary organisations, which was a concern of Scrutiny. The increase in the Council Tax precept was the maximum allowed by the Government but nothing like enough to make up for cuts in central government grants. What I said last month still applies – it is a tough call.

2. At the next Full Council meeting I am putting a question on the state of the roads to the Cabinet Member who is responsible for Highways:

Question from Cllr Christopher Groome to Cllr Ian Morris

There is anecdotal evidence that the number and size of potholes in our roads and pavements has risen markedly in recent months and is accompanied by a growing inability of the Council's contractor to fill them within a reasonable time scale and to the required specification. In particular the welcome move away from temporary repairs to more permanent reinstatement of the surface seems to have gone into reverse as staff wrestle with bigger workloads and a limited budget.

Could the Cabinet Member share with Council the statistics over the last 3 years for the County as a whole and by sub-area for potholes reported, potholes fixed temporarily or permanently and budget spent? What proportion of the repair cost is attributable to traffic management? Can savings be made by streamlining the 'Inspection' system? Would it be more efficient to blitz an area for a day at a time? Can more be done to counter poor reinstatement by statutory undertakers and to recoup the cost?

My view is that the Highways function is failing to perform and that the state of our roads county-wide is lamentable.

3. East Midlands Trains came up with a proposal to make the train service on Sundays as bad as on weekdays. This led to the action described in the attached sheet.



KETTERING RAIL USERS

Campaign for Better Rail Services from Kettering Launched

Rail User Group is re-established – News Release 28/02/2017

The opening of Corby station in 2009 led to Kettering losing its half hourly off peak service to Leicester. Before that travel to Derby and Nottingham was an easy cross platform connection at Leicester to the other destination. There was effectively a half hourly link to both. There is now just an hourly stopping service off peak to Nottingham Monday to Saturday.

Kettering rail users have repeatedly asked East Midlands Trains to restore the two trains an hour with no success. Their decision to go public has been sparked by three developments:

- On Sunday the old pattern has remained until now, but EMT are proposing to switch Sunday afternoons over to the weekday system from May.
- With growing demand the hourly Nottingham service is now frequently full and standing when it leaves Kettering, especially in school holidays and at weekends.
- Line speed improvements mean that the hourly Corby southbound service arrives in Kettering just after the northbound hourly Nottingham service leaves, making a connection impossible if both trains are on time. The Corby passengers then have to wait an hour to go north.

Rail User spokesman Chris Groome said: ‘We realise that there is no way back to the old arrangement because of the aspirations of the big cities for faster services to London, but a stop at Kettering on the Sheffield/Derby passing Kettering 40 minutes after the Nottingham service would provide three benefits:

- It would give Kettering and stations south of Kettering double the connectivity to Leicester and the north (by changing at Kettering off and onto the Corby train).
 - It would give Corby a proper connection to Leicester at Kettering.
 - It would provide a fast service from Kettering to and from London every hour.
4. He added: ‘Connectivity north and a fast service to London are our two priorities for Kettering. They are efficiently both met by the same action and because trains are now faster without upsetting the aspirations of the big cities.’