



MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MELTON

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

16 OCTOBER 2013

PRESENT

Councillors M. Gordon (Mayor)  
P.M. Baguley, , G.E. Botterill, G. Bush, P.M. Chandler,  
P. Cumbers, J.M. Douglas, A. Freer-Jones, J. Illingworth,  
E. Holmes, E. Hutchison, S. Lumley, V. J. Manderson, T. Moncrieff  
J. Moulding, M. O'Callaghan, J.T. Orson, P.M. Posnett, J.B. Rhodes,  
J. Simpson, N. Slater, M.N. Twitney, D.R. Wright, J. Wyatt

Chief Executive, Strategic Director (CM)  
Head of Communications & Monitoring Officer  
Neighbourhood Support Officer & Integrated Youth Support Services Manager  
Senior Democracy Officer; Democracy & Involvement Officer

Young Mayor, Georgia Paddock  
Mr John Cade, Chair of the Independent Welland Partnership Remuneration Panel

The Reverend Kevin Ashby offered prayers

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CO28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barnes, Graham MBE, Horton, and Sheldon. Apologies for late attendance were also received from Councillors Freer-Jones and O'Callaghan.

CO29. MINUTES

Subject to an amendment to Minute CO17 on page 20, third bullet point on the Mayor's Announcements to include the sentence:

"This visit has given me a better understanding of the Polish community living here in Melton and has broadened my world-view and, indeed, my role as a Councillor and Mayor of Melton and the Borough."

the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 17 July 2013 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Mayor.

## CO30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Orson, Posnett and Rhodes each declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Leicestershire County Council due to their roles as County Councillors.

## CO31. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor

- drew Members' attention to a flyer that had been circulated before the meeting from Maria Ramshaw, Economic Development Officer about a free Business Support Event taking place at PERA on Monday 28 October 2013. Members were asked to pass on this information to any local businesses in their wards who they thought might benefit from the advice on offer;
- advised Members that since the last meeting of the Council she had attended 58 events and since being made Mayor she had attended a total of 101 engagements;
- briefly reported on some of the key events attended which included:
  - (a) her Civic Service on 1 September 2013 for which she thanked the Reverend Ashby for his help and guidance;
  - (b) an enjoyable and challenging experience with the Long Clawson Scout Group at Rutland Water where she had donned a wetsuit and taken part in water sport activities;
  - (c) the East Midlands in Bloom Award Ceremony in Skegness with members of Melton in Bloom who had received 7 awards. In particular she thanked Alan Bagshaw of Manor Taxis who had provided the transport for the group but who had not charged for his time;
  - (d) the Rotary Aurora Fun Day where she had provided the commentary for a chicken race;
  - (e) the Rainbows Hospice Open Day which had been a very touching and emotional visit. The Mayor commended this wonderful charity which deserved every support;
  - (f) the Battle of Britain service in which she was very proud to have represented the community of the Borough;
  - (g) the official opening of the new Melton Fire Station which would provide a better service and save valuable time in responding to incidents;
  - (h) visits to the John Ferneley Academy and Belvoir High School to promote the forthcoming Young Mayor 4 Melton elections;
  - (i) the Mayor's Charity Quiz evening for which she thanked the Quiz Master Richard Angrave for his help and support;
  - (j) the Three Peaks Challenge fundraiser for the New Life Foundation at the Co-operative Foodstore;
  - (k) the Performing Stars Academy Charity Sale to raise funds for Friends of Chernobyl where she had been very impressed with the children's art work.
- highlighted the following forthcoming events: a fund raising event for Dove Cottage on 23 November 2013 involving African themed music performed

by a local choir and refreshments; the Mayor's Christmas Carol Concert on 5 December 2013 at St. Mary's Parish Church.

Members then viewed a YouTube film about the role of the Young Mayor called "Young Mayor 4 Melton" to highlight Local Democracy Week (14 to 20 October)

This short film was made during the summer holidays by the "Shout Out" Youth Council to educate young people to participate in local democracy and the 2013/14 Young Mayor 4 Melton elections which would be taking place between 4 and 6 November.

The Mayor concluded the presentation by explaining that this film had been showed at the school visits she had attended and a number of students had taken candidate application forms. The closing date for submission of candidate applications was Thursday 17 October 2013. The Mayor then referred to the current Young Mayor, Georgia Paddock, who was present at the meeting and on behalf of the Council thanked her for her contribution during her year of office.

### CO32. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader, Councillor Rhodes, stated that when he had addressed the Annual Meeting in May, he had set out five objectives and programmes as priorities for the Council. He now wished to update Members on the progress and prospects six months on:

- (1) Economic development and the need to get people into well paid jobs: the Council was receiving significant numbers of enquiries from companies wishing to set up in the Borough. Sainsburys' store was nearing completion and nearly 300 people would be employed who were undergoing training now. He acknowledged that for the long term prosperity, more needed to be done to lift the skills of many of the young people and older adults if the Borough was to attract more new businesses to set up. To help this process, the Council was developing the "Me and My Learning Centre" at Phoenix House. He had attended a promotion event the previous week which had involved many of the Council's partners, businesses, trainers and others with whom the Council needed to work in order to lift the skills and employability of those seeking new and better jobs;
- (2) The Sports and Leisure Centre: consultations were now complete and at the stage of identifying a site and the scope of the new facilities. The goal remained to have this project agreed and moving by 2015;
- (3) The Cattle Market: plans were being prepared to refurbish the facilities and locate a Food Centre on the site. The livestock market will continue and be developed together with more undertakings which it was hoped would see economic activity taking place throughout the week instead of just Tuesdays;
- (4) The Local Plan: a Conference had been held for people willing to help the Council develop the new Local Plan by joining reference groups. The first meetings would take place at the end of the month and into November. The Leader stated he had been very encouraged by the constructive approach from all those taking part and that there was a real prospect for sensible and fair minded debate about the future housing and built environment of the Borough;

(5) The Transformation Programme and the Council's financial prospects: the Council was now entering the budgeting season and work was underway on the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Whilst next year and the year after looked fair, he warned that there were storm clouds on the horizon. In July the Council was told that some of the New Homes Bonus money would be diverted to the LEP, how much was not yet known but it could be 20% or 35% dependent on the options which came out of the consultation. The Council was also very dependent on funding from the County Council and partners for joint programmes and work we do on their behalf but their budgets were under significant strain. The Council could find itself having to make large savings in its spending in coming years and that was why the Transformation Programme to make the Council fully digital to lower costs was so essential. In the coming months several new systems would be coming on stream that will enable the processing of information seamlessly from customer input to delivery of the service without multiple interventions and re-keying of data which the present systems required.

In summing up, the Leader said that if the Council could contain the financial pressures it could be optimistic about the future. However, this would be dependent on working together in harmony and with confidence in order to succeed. The important thing to bear in mind was that we were here to serve the people of Melton and not some abstract concepts nor particular organisational structure.

Before closing, he wished to highlight another aspect of the Council, the Revenues and Benefits section. The Council was responsible for collecting the Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates as well as a whole list of service charges and fees which was all done efficiently and with discretion. Sometimes officers had to apply some pressure to ensure that payers met their obligations, but they were always fair. They were also responsible for administering benefit entitlements and last year they had the difficult task of introducing the new Council Tax Support scheme and the so called "Bedroom Tax" for housing benefit reduction in relation to under occupancy. There were 222 properties in Melton, a number of which were falling into arrears. A number of measures had been taken to help tenants understand the new obligation and to help them budget. He asked that Members appreciate the sensitive way officers carried out this work and wish to place on record his own appreciation for the excellent way that the Revenues and Benefits staff went about their work and served the public.

### CO33. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions received.

### CO34. PETITIONS

There were no petitions received.

### CO35. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations or reports forthcoming from the Committees.

### CO36. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

(a) In accordance with Procedure Rule 10.1, the Chairmen of Committees were to respond to any questions upon items of reports of Committees when those items were received or were under consideration by the Council as follows :-

Planning Committee	4 July 2013
Planning Committee	25 July 2013
Ad Hoc Governance Committee	19 August 2013
Rural, Economic & Environmental Affairs Committee	4 September 2013
Planning Committee	5 September 2013
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	10 September 2013
Community & Social Affairs Committee	18 September 2013
Governance Committee	24 September 2013

In relation to the minutes of the Planning Committee dated 5 September 2013, the Chairman, Councillor Chandler, drew Members' attention to the amended set of minutes which were circulated after the agenda despatch as those minutes under consideration at this meeting.

It was reported that there were no questions received under Procedure Rule 10.5.

### CO37. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

There were no motions on notice received.

### CO38. CONSTITUTION UPDATE – 2013/14

Members had before them a report prepared by the Monitoring Officer which sought approval to update a number of aspects of the Council's Constitution.

In that report, the Monitoring Officer explained that at its meeting on 24 September 2013, the Governance Committee considered four items relating to the Council's Constitution being the introduction of a new Redaction Policy, the establishment of a Tenant Consultative Working Group, updated Members' Allowances following the NJC pay award and some amendments to pages 75-81 of the Financial Procedure Rules. The Governance Committee approved the 4 recommendations presented.

Since the Governance Committee meeting, with regard to the amendments to the Financial Procedure Rules, a further change was proposed which removed the duplication in paragraphs 5.36 and 5.38 and this was reflected in the updated Appendix D to the report.

Following adoption of the politically balanced Tenant Consultative Working Group, it was recommended that 6 Members be appointed as listed at paragraph 3.5.

The Vice-Chairman of the Governance Committee, Councillor Douglas moved the recommendations contained in the report subject to an addition relating to Part 6 of the Constitution that in relation to 2(c) of the Members' Allowances Scheme (Appendix C), there be an amendment that allows Members to claim the full £30 for a Site Visit where no buffet is provided. She therefore proposed that the following sentence be added to the end of 2(c) as follows:

*However, if no buffet is provided – for whatever reason – then the £30 per site visit will be paid in full.*

In relation to part 2.2 of the recommendation for, Cllr Douglas submitted the nominations of the Conservative Group for the appointment of Members to the Tenant Consultative Working Group as: Councillors Chandler, Manderson, Posnett, and Wright.

The Council was then advised that in considering their nominations, the Independent Group had been mindful of the difficulties those Members faced in attending meetings because of their full time work commitments. The same difficulties would be faced by working tenants who wished to attend the meetings. It was requested that the Working Group meetings take place outside working hours to enable these Members and tenants to attend. The Chief Executive advised that this could be dealt with by way of an officer instruction. Whilst agreeing with this advice, a Member requested that this be first discussed with TFEC and the Chief Executive replied that officers could also carry out this consultation. Councillor Twitney was proposed as the Independent Group nominee, but should this prove inconvenient, the Chief Executive to effect the wishes of the Independent Group when confirmed. The hope was expressed that consideration of convening meetings outside working hours could be taken on board for other meetings requiring Member and service user attendance. The Labour Group nominated Councillor Moncrieff to sit on the Working Group.

A discussion then followed about the provision of hot refreshments for the Planning Committee site visit Members during the winter months including flasks of tea and coffee being available during the site visits. A question was raised about the adequacy of the payment of £50 for consumables which covered such items as printer ink cartridges. The Chief Executive advised that this was set by Members and accordingly could be reviewed. The motion before Members was duly seconded with the inclusion of the two Officer instructions and following a vote, it was

**RESOLVED: (unanimously)**

**(1) To adopt the following four constitutional items as referenced in paragraphs 3.3, 3.4, 3.6 and 3.7 of the report :-**

**(a) Redaction Policy at Appendix A;**

**(b) the establishment of a Tenant Consultative Working Group with the Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix B and for clarity this also include the provision for a show of hands to indicate the group's**

preference;

- (c) the revised Members' Allowances Scheme following the NJC 1% pay increase as set out at Appendix C subject the addition to paragraph 2(c) of the scheme to read: *However, if no buffet is provided – for whatever reason – then the £30 per site visit will be paid in full.*
- (d) the amended Financial Procedure Rules, pages 75-81 as set out at Appendix D including a further change which removes the duplicated information in the existing paragraphs 5.36 and 5.38.
- (2) That Councillors Chandler, Manderson, Posnett, Wright, Twitney and Moncrieff be appointed to the politically balanced Tenant Consultative Working Group;
- (3) That Officers be asked to: (a) consult first with TFEC on the timing of meetings for the Tenant Consultative Working Group; and (b) conduct a formal examination of how Planning Committee Site Visits are dealt with during the winter months.

[Councillors Freer-Jones and O'Callaghan entered the meeting during consideration of the preceding item.]

#### CO39. MEMBERS REMUNERATION PACKAGE – REPORT BACK

Members had before them a report by the Head of Communications which included the final report of the outcome of a study of the Members' Remuneration Package offered by Melton Borough Council.

Mr. John Cade, Chair of the Independent Welland Partnership Remuneration Panel attended the meeting to present the Panel's report. He highlighted the time sheet exercise Members had been requested to complete on a voluntary basis in order to build up some information for the Panel to take into consideration. The Panel acknowledged the limitations of such an exercise but as there was no alternative it was considered worthwhile. Mr Cade placed on record his thanks to Sarah Evans, Senior Democracy Officer, for her assistance to the Panel. He also thanked the Members who had provided information and said the Panel had met in July to examine this. The Panel considered that the information provided supported their 2012 recommendations. There were no questions forthcoming for Mr Cade at the meeting.

The Leader moved the recommendations of the Panel as contained in the report and thanked Mr Cade and his colleagues for their time and effort in undertaking the review of the remuneration scheme. The motion was seconded by the Deputy Leader.

Councillor Moncrieff referred to the Panel's recommendation concerning Special responsibility Allowances (SRA) and in particular that given for Vice-Chairmen of Committees. He expressed the opinion that SRA payments to Vice-Chairmen of Committees should be withdrawn and questioned what additional work a Vice-

Chairman undertook to warrant an extra £1,100 payment per year. He considered this rewarded certain individuals unfairly and in the interests in reducing expenditure he proposed as an amendment that this should be removed from the remuneration scheme. The amendment was seconded by the Leader of the Opposition who reserved his right to speak

Several Committee Chairmen then spoke in support of the role of their Vice-Chairmen and the additional demands this placed upon them. Concern was expressed that the mover of the amendment appeared to demonstrate very little understanding of the role of a Committee Vice-Chairman. They indicated they would vote against the amendment.

The Leader of the Opposition expressed concern that he did not see any signs of austerity in the recommendations for the Members' Remuneration package; the total cost was over £40,000 from which 15 ruling group Members would benefit. He claimed that his request to meet with the Panel had been declined and so questioned how they could appreciate fully what duties the Leader of the Opposition carried out particularly as the scrutiny committee function had been removed. As this Council did not have a Cabinet executive system, he considered the roles were not as onerous and therefore indicated he would not vote in support of the Panel's recommendations.

As mover of the motion, the Leader exercised his right of reply stating that these were arguments which had previously been put. However, the case for a SRA for Committee Vice-Chairmen stood as they played a full part in developing policies in hand with the Chairmen. He had always invited the Opposition Members to participate fully in discussions and cited by way of example, the Leader of the Opposition's contribution to the debate on the future of the Cattle Market. He therefore commended the Panel's recommendations to Members.

A vote was taken on the amendment which resulted in 4 votes in favour, 15 votes against, and 5 abstentions. The amendment was therefore lost.

A vote on the original motion resulted in 18 votes in favour, 4 against and 2 abstentions and was accordingly carried.

**RESOLVED:**

**(1) To accept the final report of the Welland Partnership Remuneration Panel and the recommendations therein which are as follows :-**

**(a) That the Basic Allowance should remain unaltered (as previously agreed at the Council Meeting on 10 October 2012);**

**(b) That all Special Responsibility Allowances, with the exception of that for the Leader of the main Opposition Group, should remain unaltered (as previously agreed at the Council Meeting on 10 October 2012);**

**(c) That the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Leader of the main Opposition Group be augmented by £657 per annum (interim award of £650+index linking) as a consequence of increased responsibilities following the abolition of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;**



- (d) That the Independent Persons appointed to advise the Governance Committee on Code of Conduct complaints each be paid an allowance of £453 per annum (interim award of £448+index linking);**
  - (e) That all allowances be index-linked to NJC Staff Pay Awards (as previously agreed at the Council Meeting on 10 October 2012);**
- (2) That the Panel be thanked for its work.**

CO40. MAYOR'S THANKS

Before closing the meeting, the Mayor stated she wished to place on record her thanks and appreciated to Jodie Webb, Administrative Assistant, who had covered the role of Mayoral support during the first half of her term of office pending the permanent appointment to the post of Democracy & Involvement Officer. The Mayor also congratulated Lena Shuttlewood who had been successfully appointed to this post and commended her sterling work to date.

The meeting, which commenced at 6.30 p.m., closed at 7.40 p.m.

Mayor