



EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MELTON

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

24 SEPTEMBER 2015

PRESENT

Councillor J. Douglas (Mayor)
T.S. Bains, T. Beaken, P.M. Chandler,
T. Culley, P. Cumbers, R. de Burle, P. Faulkner,
L. Higgins, E. Hutchison, J. Illingworth, S. Lumley,
J.T. Orson, A. Pearson, J.B. Rhodes,
J. Simpson, D.R. Wright, J. Wyatt

Strategic Director (KA), Strategic Director (CM)
Head of Central Services, Solicitor to the Council,
Local Plan Manager,
Democracy & Involvement Officer

The Mayor offered a prayer

CO30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Baguley, Botterill, Glancy, Graham, Greenow, Holmes, Hurrell, Manderson, Posnett, and Sheldon.

CO31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Orson declared a personal and pecuniary interest in the following item due to possible land ownership and indicated he would leave the meeting when this was considered.

[Councillor Orson here left the meeting at 6.34pm.]

CO32. MELTON LOCAL PLAN: LOCAL EVIDENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF A
TRANSPORT SOLUTION FOR MELTON MOWBRAY

(1) LOCAL PLAN EVIDENCE BASE

Councillor Chandler introduced the first report previously circulated by the Head of Regulatory Services which sought the Council's approval of additional evidence recently received which would form part of a series of policy recommendations to be incorporated into the emerging Local Plan. These areas of evidence concerned:-

- Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space – this evidence assessed three aspects of landscape in order to inform planning policy formulation, selection of preferred sites for allocation and guidance for future development proposals. Councillor Chandler acknowledged that this was an area of concern for some Members and gave assurances that this could be opened for debate;
- Open Space Study Standard – this evidence set out an approach to securing open space facilities through new housing development and provided the basis for negotiation with developers for contributions towards the provision of appropriate open space facilities and their long term maintenance;
- Melton Mowbray Transport Study: Melton Bypass Options Testing – taken in conjunction with the previous two studies, this report focused on the analysis of a long term bypass solution for the town based on two potential options.

Councillor Chandler proposed that the Council notes this information as a material consideration in determining planning applications for relevant development and approves it as technical evidence to inform the Melton Local Plan.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Simpson requested that a review of this evidence takes place after the consultation period.

Councillor Wright opened the debate by referring to the detailed flood risk assessment and asked that Bottesford was considered. He expressed concern that efforts were made to ensure that the maps were accurate as the ones he had seen were not correct.

Councillor Pearson spoke on the importance of taking the whole picture of the Borough into account, and ensuring that the character of the town and villages was not lost in this process. He expressed some concern over the methodology which he suggested was more subjective than objective and the current state of the Borough's infrastructure; this was crucial to sustaining the area for businesses and job creation as people were leaving to go outside the Borough. He stressed the importance of looking holistically at the Borough and making it an exciting place to come to. This was crucial to the commercial well being of the town, for protecting its character and attracting visitors to maintain its vibrancy. Councillor Pearson proposed an amendment that the evidence be subject to a full review after the consultation. Councillor Rhodes reassured Councillor Pearson that the process would allow for re-consideration after the consultation on the preferred options and therefore his amendment was not required. Councillor Pearson accepted the advice and accordingly agreed to withdraw his amendment.

Councillor Simpson acknowledged the points of concern raised by Councillor Pearson which she said were shared by other Members. She stated that these

issues and those raised during the consultation would be fully reviewed and requested that this be recorded in the minutes.

Councillor Rhodes stated that Councillor Pearson had raised a number of issues which required further comment. He referred to the serious problems with the shortage of business premises in Melton which was affecting the prosperity of the town. There was a perception that development was presently taking place all over the Borough, but this was not so. The total number of houses that had been built in the last four years within the Borough was 351. Of that number, two thirds were in rural areas (223) and 128 in Melton Mowbray. Last year only 39 houses had been completed in Melton Mowbray and 27 of those were on the Persimmon development. The Local Plan showed that new housing need was for an average of 245 per annum over the 20 year life of the Local Plan. However, the low building rate over the last four years had moved that figure to over 300 per annum compared to an average rate over the last 4 years of 60 or 70 houses which was a significant jump. Councillor Rhodes warned that failure to address this need and business need would mean the town would decline.

In summing up the debate, Councillor Chandler reminded Members that the Local Plan had started off with a brief to consult more, as the Core Strategy had been rejected as unsound because the Council had not consulted enough. Eight reference groups had been set up which had included a Conservation Group to look after the heritage of the Borough. Numerous meetings had been held which had been well attended and covered the issues in depth. This had all come together from the reference groups so the Council had been very inclusive and consulted widely.

A vote was then taken on the motion and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- (1) to note this information as a material consideration in determining planning applications for relevant development; and
- (2) to approve it as technical evidence to inform the Melton Local Plan.

(2) DEVELOPMENT OF A TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Councillor Rhodes presented the second report by the Head of Regulatory Services which invited consideration of the next steps to be taken towards a highway solution for Melton Mowbray. Councillor Rhodes

- stated that the paper before Members set out the present position in the Council's campaign for a bypass to relieve Melton's severe traffic congestion problems and to enable the town to develop;
- referred to the previous two reports commissioned in partnership with the County Council which confirmed the need for action and explained this report set out what needed to be done by proposing an Outer Relief Road (ORR) joining together the principal roads which converge on the town. The next stage was to define the route and work out more precise costings;

- advised Members that it was expected that the overall cost could be £65M for the whole road which could clearly not be found by the County Council and Melton Borough Council from its own resources. Much of the money would have to come from developer contribution with significant help from the Government;
- explained that the purpose of the recommendations in the report were to move the process on to the next stage which would cost £1.5M. This would require a financial contribution of £400k from the Council, financed from the New Homes Bonus reserve which is held to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure for housing. The County Council's Cabinet had also decided to back the project with a £500K contribution. To secure the remaining £600K required both Councils would submit a bid to the LLEP. Sir Alan Duncan MP was supportive of this approach and has written to the Chairman of the LLEP on our behalf;
- stated that once the route had been defined it would be necessary to design the road and junctions and build it. This would all take time but in the interim development in Melton could not be allowed to stagnate as the Borough was in competition with other towns and districts both for housing development and for business investment. If nothing was done until the road was built, Melton would fall into a steep economic decline;
- advised that development would have to be managed in such a way that the day to day life in the town could continue whilst steadily moving forward to this goal. Members' attention was drawn to the paper appended to the report which set out how developer money could be secured to support the project via section 106 contributions until the Local Plan was adopted and then through the CIL. Some developers might choose to build sections of the road in lieu of contributions to facilitate development and the Council should look favourably at such proposals;
- urged the Council to seize this great opportunity; for many years Melton's worsening traffic problems was the subject of much complaint and nothing had been done. He had started the current process of calling for a bypass two years ago and this had met with some ridicule but since then the Council had backed this approach and had risen to the challenge by supporting the early studies. Now the need had been proven and the County Council persuaded to support it. By approving these proposals, the Council would demonstrate it was determined to deliver the new road system, the ORR;
- acknowledged there was still a lot to do, not least obtaining Government backing, but he was confident that the Council had the resolve to make it happen. Accordingly, he moved the recommendations contained in the report.

Councillor Higgins seconded the motion. He stated that this Council was barely five months old but was already showing its determination to put infrastructure on the agenda. Councillor Higgins recognised that there were criticisms of this being just talk but these early stages were necessary and the Council had needed to acquire the credibility to get the project off the ground; it demonstrated the Council's resolve

by getting the project for this vital and essential infrastructure on the strategic agenda. Councillor Pearson spoke in support of this opportunity and urged all Members to support it.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: that

(1) the Council approves the approach towards the work to developing a Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy, including defining the route of an Outer Relief Road as set out in the report below and evidence reported elsewhere on this agenda;

(2) a supplementary estimate of £400,000 be approved, to be funded from the New Homes Bonus Reserve to support the Strategy's development and design work for this link;

(3) the Council notes that the work is dependent upon securing contributions to the overall cost from Leicestershire County Council and other sources (see paras. 3.10 and 5.1 of the report and below);

(4) the Council approves the Interim Highways Contributions Position Statement referred to in paragraph 3.14 and as set out on Appendix A to the report, which explains how the Council will utilise the provisions of the Planning Acts to move forward on this issue.

The meeting, which commenced at 6.30 p.m., closed at 7.00 p.m.

Mayor