

# Minutes

<b>Meeting name</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Thursday, 18 April 2024</b>
<b>Start time</b>	<b>6.30 pm</b>
<b>Venue</b>	<b>Mary's Place, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1AE</b>

## Present:

**Chair** Councillor A. Hewson (Chair)

**Councillors**

J. Adcock	P. Allnatt
I. Atherton	S. Atherton
M. Brown	R. Browne
S. Butcher	S. Carter
R. Child	M. Clay
H. Cliff	S. Cox
P. Cumbers	A. Freer
M. Glancy	M. Gordon
L. Higgins	S. Lumley
J. Mason	J. Orson
S. Orson	D. Pritchett
R. Sharp	A. Thwaites
T. Webster	

**Officers**

- Chief Executive
- Monitoring Officer
- Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
- Director for Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer)
- Director for Growth and Regeneration
- Assistant Director for Customers and Communities
- Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer
- Democratic Services Officer (CB)

Minute No.	Minute
CO76	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>An apology for absence was received from Councillor Evans.</p>
CO77	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2024 were confirmed.</p> <p>(For 23, Against 0, Abstentions 3)</p> <p>Councillor Browne questioned why there was no report from the Melton Safer Community Partnership, which was agreed at the Council meeting on 14 December 2023. In response it was confirmed that there was no report due to change in Chair of the Partnership and the report will be presented on 25 July 2024.</p>
CO78	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>An other registerable interest in respect of Councillor J. Orson was noted as being on record for any matters which relate to the Leicestershire County Council.</p> <p>Cllr Browne declared a personal and pecuniary interest in item 10, protected characteristics for care leavers, due to his employer working with Leicestershire County Council to provide housing solutions for care leavers in Leicestershire. He is leading this work for his employer and therefore stated that he would not participate in the item.</p>
CO79	<p><b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b></p> <p>In making his announcements, the Mayor informed Council that, as Mayor, he had attended the following events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 6 March 2024, British Pie Awards</li> <li>• Friday 8 March 2024, British Pie Awards</li> <li>• Thursday 14 March 2024, The High Sheriff thank you evening</li> <li>• Saturday 16 March 2024, Grantham Mayor's Charity Dinner Dance</li> <li>• Monday 18 March 2024, Unveiling of the millennium quilt at Parkside</li> <li>• Thursday 21 March 2024, Air Cadets, Presentation evening</li> <li>• Saturday 23 March 2024, Melton Lions Senior Concert</li> <li>• Monday 25 March 2024, Presentation of the Kings Award for Voluntary Services to 103 The Eye</li> <li>• Thursday 4 April 2024, Prince's Trust Final Presentation</li> </ul> <p>The Deputy Mayor informed Council that he had attended the following events on behalf of the Mayor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saturday 9 March 2024, Charnwood Charity Dinner</li> <li>• Sunday 17 March 2024, Women's Cicle Classic race award presentation</li> </ul> <p>The Mayor informed Members that a presentation from Melton and District Money</p>

Advice Centre was scheduled to take place at the meeting, however it now wouldn't take place and will be rescheduled.

The Mayor recognised that Malise Graham has resigned as Melton Borough Councillor after 37 years on the Council and paid tribute to him. The Mayor invited Members to comment.

- Councillor J. Orson paid tribute to Malise Graham and recalled his time as Leader during the period of the fire at the old Council headquarters.
- Councillor Gordon stated that she thought Malise is a wonderful man.
- Councillor Cumbers stated that Malise was a great person and always willing to help.

CO80

### **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader began his announcements by noting that Malise Graham has resigned as a Melton Borough Councillor after 37 years on the Council. The Leader paid tribute to Mr Graham and thanked him for his long service.

The Leader thanked the Mayor and noted that it was his final full Council meeting that he would be presiding over. The Leader noted that the Mayor has served for two terms as Mayor, as well another term as Deputy Mayor. The Leader recognised the sacrifices the Mayor and his Mayoress have done and thanked them for serving both terms.

The Leader recognised that the current Deputy Mayor, Councillor Tim Webster would become Mayor at Annual Council and that he would get his full support. He also confirmed his undertaking given to Mr Graham to support Councillor Siggy Atherton becoming Deputy Mayor. The Leader recognised Councillor Atherton's long-established voluntary community work and fully participative role as a councillor.

The Leader congratulated Councillor Browne on becoming the Leader of the Conservative Group and Councillor Child on becoming the Group's Deputy Leader.

The Leader raised a number of points that the Constitution Review Working Group could review.

- Purpose of Opposition  
The Leader noted that there is a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader of the Opposition, however the Constitution did not state what the purpose of the opposition is.
- Ward Member notification for speaking at Planning Committee  
Recently, the Leader and Councillor Browne moved to suspend a procedure rule within the Constitution to enable Councillor Chris Evans to speak on an application affecting his and Councillor Simon Orson's ward. The Leader believes in altering the notice period for Ward Members from days to before the commencement of the meeting.
- Questions at Leader's Announcements  
The Leader noted that some Conservative Group Members believe there should be an opportunity to question and discuss the Leader's

Announcements at Council. The Leader stated that he could propose a motion in order to facilitate this, however he had been advised that this might not be permitted by the Constitution.

- Committee Membership Recalculations

The Leader stated that Committee memberships are recalculated by the arrival of a new Member or a change of party allegiance by existing Members and not by a resignation.

In addressing the issue of the Doctor's Surgery at Parkside, the Leader stated that good progress is being made.

- New layout of reception

The reception is to be reconfigured in order to make the area more welcoming and efficient.

- Better lift arrangements

It is planned for new and more accessible lift arrangements.

- Members' Areas

The Leader stated that Members would have to make sacrifices too. The Leader's Office, Members' Room and Mayor's Parlour could be replaced by multi-purpose private working areas

- Reduced office space

The reduced office space would require Members and Officers to maintain hybrid working and hot desking.

In addressing the progress of the UKSPF, the Leader stated that a Local Area Board and grant awards procedure had been established. Although some refining is needed to be done, the Leader stated that the Council and partners are well positioned to complete the programme within the prescribed time frames.

The Leader updated Members on the LUF programme and stated that when he became Leader, the Council and partners were a little behind with progress. Since then, considerable progress had been made. The Leader informed Council that the Cabinet approved the final framework for the planning application to be submitted in May. They had reached the point after much preparation, which has included pre-application consultation with Leicestershire County Council Highways Department.

The Leader has set up a Construction Phase Liaison Group to ensure that there is a smooth transition, enabling a degree of business as usual, and existing tenants and users are kept informed.

CO81	<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> No questions from the public were received.
CO82	<b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS</b> No questions from Members were received.
CO83	<b>MOTIONS ON NOTICE</b> The following motion was received from Councillor Allnatt (Seconded by Councillor

Glancy).

**In October 2023, due to escalating costs, Leicestershire County Council confirmed that while they remained committed to our Local Plan, they were no longer in a position to fund the southern section of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR South) at this time. Since then, we have been working with the County Council and development partners to explore alternative approaches to funding delivery.**

**In March 2024, the government announced that Leicestershire County Council had been awarded £238m from the Local Transport Fund, which will be made available over a seven year period from 2025/26. Following this announcement, the Leader of Melton Borough Council wrote to the Leader of the County Council seeking his support for allocating some of this funding to enable the MMDR South to progress. The request has been acknowledged, but further guidance on the amount and profile of the funding allocations is still awaited, and on this basis the County Council have confirmed it is not yet possible to prioritise any schemes.**

**Accordingly, the following motion is proposed:**

**Melton Borough Council thanks Leicestershire County Council for their continued support to our Local Plan and reaffirms our commitment to support them in securing the necessary funding to deliver the required infrastructure in Melton. Furthermore, given the critical importance of the MMDR South to our Local Plan, and the amount of work already undertaken, Melton Borough Council reiterates its request that when the allocations are confirmed, the County Council prioritises funding to enable this critical infrastructure to be delivered.**

During the debate Councillor Browne stated that the motion had the full support of the Conservative Group.

#### **RESOLVED**

**Melton Borough Council thanked Leicestershire County Council for their continued support to our Local Plan and reaffirmed the Council's commitment to support them in securing the necessary funding to deliver the required infrastructure in Melton. Furthermore, given the critical importance of the MMDR South to the Council's Local Plan, and the amount of work already undertaken, Melton Borough Council reiterated its request that when the allocations are confirmed, the County Council prioritises funding to enable this critical infrastructure to be delivered.**

(Unanimous)

CO84

#### **EQUALITY SCHEME & ANNUAL REPORT**

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Health and Well-being, Councillor Cumbers,

introduced the report and moved the recommendation. Councillor Cox seconded the motion.

During the debate, the following points were made:

- The hard work of Officers in this area was commended.
- A concern was raised that planning guidance had not been adhered to, therefore leading to issues for people with disabilities and that appropriate compliance enforcement needs to take place. The Portfolio Holder agreed that there had been issues in the past and that the planning service needed to pay more attention to compliance issues.

## **RESOLVED**

### **That Council**

- (1) Noted the progress made in meeting the Council's equalities duties and commitments as outlined in this report.**
- (2) Approved the revised objectives and action plan (2024-2028) to demonstrate the Council's continued commitment to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I).**
- (3) Noted that a planned review of the Equality Policy will take place in 2024/25 and that this will incorporate both inward and outward facing commitments to ED&I, alongside the revised equality objectives and action plan.**

(Unanimous)

At 7:26pm, upon the conclusion of this item, Councillor Browne left the meeting and did not return.

CO85

### **PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC FOR CARE LEAVERS**

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Health and Well-being, Councillor Cumbers, introduced the report and moved the recommendation. Councillor Cliff seconded the motion.

During the opening remarks, it was noted that 39% of care leavers between the ages of 19 and 21 are not in either employment, education or training and that 30% are homeless, therefore proving that this is an issue that needs addressing.

During the debate, the following points were made:

- The Officers were thanked for their support of care leavers within the Borough.
- The Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group confirmed that the recommendation had the support of the group.
- The Portfolio Holder was thanked for her efforts in this area.

**RESOLVED**

**That Council**

**Approved that Melton Borough Council treat Care Leavers / Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic.**

(For 24, Against 0, Abstentions 1)

The meeting closed at: 7.41 pm

Chair