

Minutes

Meeting name	Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council
Date	Tuesday, 8 May 2018
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor T. Bains (Chair)

Councillors	P. Baguley	P. Chandler (Vice-Chair)
	M. Blase	G. Botterill
	R. de Burle	P. Cumbers
	J. Douglas	P. Faulkner
	A. Freer-Jones	M. Glancy
	T. Greenow	L. Higgins
	E. Holmes	J. Hurrell
	E. Hutchison	J. Illingworth
	J. Orson	A. Pearson
	P. Posnett	B. Rhodes
	M. Sheldon	J. Simpson
	D. Wright	J. Wyatt

Officers

- Chief Executive
- Deputy Chief Executive
- Director for Corporate Services
- Interim Director for Growth & Regeneration
- Solicitor to the Council
- Senior Democracy Officer

Minute No.	Minute
CO123	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beaken, Graham MBE and Lumley.</p>
CO124	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Councillors Orson, Pearson, Posnett MBE and Rhodes each declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Leicestershire County Council due to their roles as County Councillors.</p>
CO125	<p>REFRESHED DIRECTION AND FOCUS FOR THE COUNCIL</p> <p>To move the Council forward in its direction and governance arrangements, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Orson, explained that the Council was to consider two reports which would help with the resetting of the direction of the Council. Having undergone the Peer Challenge in December 2017, completed a considerable amount of the development work since and with the Council's Annual Meeting coming up in the next week, 15 May, this was the perfect time to ensure the Council was clear on what it hoped to achieve and the way in which it wanted to achieve it. He further advised that the reports reinforced each other and to be able to deliver the Council's ambitions the right governance processes needed to be in place so that the Council could make the best use of its available resources.</p> <p>The Leader referred to his 15 years on the Council and that the changes proposed would make improvements that would take the Council through the next 10 years.</p>
CO126	<p>RESETTING THE DIRECTION OF THE COUNCIL : REFRESHED CORPORATE VISION, PRIORITIES AND DELIVERY PLAN</p> <p>The Leader of the Council, Councillor Orson, referred to the previously circulated report and explained that</p> <p>(a) it summarised the work undertaken to refresh the Council's Corporate Mission, Vision and Priorities. These had been developed in consultation with Members and Officers to ensure they better capture the agenda in 2018 and the issues the Council was currently dealing with. They retained much of the original focus from 2015 but now incorporated greater recognition of the Council's efforts to tackle the low wage economy, increase housing availability, boost the profile of the area to encourage tourism, whilst also incorporating the Council's ambition to become more commercial and an employer of choice;</p> <p>(b) against these priorities, the Council had collectively worked through a process to identify those things it specifically wished to achieve and had built these into a new Corporate Delivery Plan. This would create a focus for the Council's efforts over the next 12-18 months and found an appropriate balance between those things the Council must do and those which were nice to do. The new plan was within the agenda papers and some key highlights included :-</p>

- Secure the Local Plan and refocus on delivery
- Develop a new Town and Place Partnership to maximise the Council's profile, increase inward investment and stimulate the visitor economy
- Undertake feasibility studies into the next phase of development at the Cattle Market and into the future of leisure facilities in Melton. These studies were crucial to ensure the Council was clear on its ambitions and that they were ultimately deliverable
- Work to establish a Council owned housing company to support both the Council's commercial and social ambitions
- Increase capacity and capability to better tackle environmental issues, anti-social behaviour and nuisance
- Review and improve the Council's approach to supporting customers. Initial reviews were planned within the People and Communities directorate and also in Planning
- Undertake a review of all Council assets to maximise their value and usage
- Implement a new Workforce Strategy to ensure the Council recruited, developed and retained the best possible team at Melton

(c) Officers had reviewed available resources and identified where resources needed to be refocussed in order to support delivery of the new Corporate Delivery Plan. The Council anticipated being able to contain the majority of required resources within existing budgets, with the exception of one supplementary estimate required to support the appointment of an environmental enforcement officer. Whilst the Council was mindful of placing additional burdens on the Council's finances, there was a belief this was proportionate and affordable. The decision to support this also needed to be taken in the context of the anticipated positive outcome from the waste procurement process and the recent adoption of the new commercial strategy. Member will also be aware that later in the year the council would be holding a further workshop to support the Council's financial stability as plan B was developed and ensure the budget management strategy was sufficiently robust and achievable;

(d) the final part of this first report confirmed the new corporate values. These had been developed through extensive discussions with colleagues across the organisation and more recently with the Committee Chairs. They were designed to be recognisable today but also to create a driver for change and a statement of the type of organisation the Council wanted to be come. If the Corporate Delivery Plan set the direction, the new values set the way in which the Council will work to achieve them. He proposed the recommendations in the report.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Higgins, seconded the motion and supported what the Leader had said. He stated that the Council was looking to change and be ambitious for the Melton's future. He referred to the focus on the vulnerable in the community and being nominated for awards for this work. He said that if you were living in Melton, sent a child to school here, set up a business, bought a home, were a part of the community then the Council was on your side. He recognised

that there were issues around fly-tipping and this was being addressed and on the positive side there was huge backing from businesses and the public for the Melton Distribution Road and was hopeful that this would be delivered.

There was a view expressed that the Borough needed to be smarter in attracting business and although the Council cared for the vulnerable, it needed to concentrate on commerce and securing the Melton Distributor Road. To make this happen and attract industry, larger houses needed to be built and there be less emphasis on smaller housing. The Councillor referred to the Borough's previous prosperity and considered that the Borough should look to industry setting up around the perimeters of the new road. The proposed new Policy Forum was mentioned and it was suggested that this should include an Opposition Member.

Councillors felt encouraged by the plan and recognised there were limitations but it would allow the Council to respond to people's needs and concerns and to make Melton a better place to live and visit. It was felt that communication with schools was also important in helping to support young people as they were the future.

There was mention that the Council had limited services within its control and it needed to steer the locality in working with its partners. The Council had to consciously work with others to bring the relief road to the Borough and it had influence with the Local Plan and determining the infrastructure for the new road and outlining where the new homes would go. One of the Borough's issues was the aging population and more homes were needed for younger people as currently there were jobs available but there were not enough affordable homes for young people to live and work here. Melton needed to expand and accept this and the Councillor was looking forward to the approval of the Local Plan and securing the money to start the new road.

The Leader thanked Councillors for their comments and added that local schools had been contacted and he recognised that the aging population was an issue but felt the plan would create more opportunities for older people in Melton.

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

RESOLVED that

- (1) the refreshed corporate mission, vision and priorities for Melton Borough Council be approved;
- (2) the new Corporate Delivery Plan including the prioritised projects and activities as specified in Appendix B be approved;
- (3) a new set of corporate values be approved;
- (4) to facilitate priority PL4 regarding environmental improvement, an additional recurring revenue budget of £40K funded by a supplementary estimate in 2018/19 from the Corporate Priorities Reserve be approved to enable the

	establishment of an Environmental Enforcement Officer post.
CO127	<p>RESETTING THE DIRECTION OF THE COUNCIL : GOVERNANCE REVIEW PROPOSALS</p> <p>The Leader of the Council, Councillor Orson, referred to the previously circulated report and explained that</p> <p>(a) the first report established the direction of the Council and this report was about how the Council was most effectively to get there. The Peer Challenge recognised the Council had some issues in how it made decisions and the Local Government Association's (LGA) Governance Review carried out in March 2018 set these out in more detail and made some recommendations for how the Council could improve. The LGA's report was received by the Governance Committee on 27 March 2018 and following that an informal Governance Development Group of Members and Officers was convened which explored these more fully. The group met twice and looked at a range of areas including the Committee structure, policy development, the role of Leader, Chairs and Vice Chairs and representatives on outside bodies;</p> <p>(b) the Governance Development Group had made an extensive range of recommendations which the Group believed would help improve the Council's governance processes; remove duplication and streamline decision-making. At a time when local government finances were under such pressure it was imperative that the Council increased not only the efficiency of its services but also the way in which the democratic function operated and key recommendations within the report included :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationalisation to three more autonomous policy committees; Corporate, People and Place, removing overlap and duplication and creating a better alignment between the corporate priorities and corporate management structures • A commitment to build a new Town and Place Partnership with a broader appeal and influence to help the council raise the profile of the Borough and encourage investment • Removal of a range of sub-structures, working groups and boards and replacement with a much clearer route to policy development through a new policy forum • These along with a range of other improvements listed within the report would not only improve how the Council carried out its business, they would also deliver a financial and productivity saving to the Council <p>(c) the group's proposals were considered by an Ad Hoc Governance Committee on 30 April 2018 and the questions and comments received from that meeting had been circulated to Councillors. He was grateful for the contributions made at that meeting and believed that these proposals represented a very positive step in the right direction for this Council. It was important to note however that this report represented the first phase of improvements and that further work was planned for the Governance Development Group. This was in line with the</p>

LGA recommendations which advised the Council should review its scheme of delegation and Constitution more fully and also look at the merits of alternative governance arrangements. He added that he looked forward to welcoming the new Director for Legal and Democratic Services who would play a key role in supporting this work and then proposed the recommendations at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.27 of the report and that the vote on the recommendations be taken 'en bloc'.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Higgins, seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

It was pointed out that there had been an oversight in the proposed amendments to the Constitution at Appendix E where there was reference to the Melton Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee and this should refer to the Place Committee. The Councillor supported the report and the simplification of the structure and was pleased that at this stage the Council had not moved to a Cabinet/Scrutiny model. The Councillor felt that in a small Council such as Melton, the Committee model gave the opportunity for all Members to contribute. However the Councillor would not oppose an alternative structure in the future.

It was requested that the vote not be taken 'en bloc' as a Member did not agree with recommendations 2.13 and 2.14 relating to the membership of the policy and regulatory forums.

The Mayor advised that the Leader had included in his motion that the vote be taken 'en bloc' therefore it was the Leader's decision as to whether he accepted this change in voting arrangements.

The Leader responded that the motion remain as put, ie. 'en bloc'.

There was a discussion on the role of the Policy Forum and there was a view that it should include the opposition. However it was felt that it was usual for the ruling group to set the policy of the Council.

It was suggested that the concerned Councillor may wish to put an amendment to give all Councillors the opportunity to consider the opposing view.

The Mayor asked if the Councillor would like to put an amendment and therefore adjourned the meeting at 6.55 p.m. for the Councillor to consider this. The meeting reconvened at 7.09 p.m.

Councillor Blase put an amendment which requested that the Council take a vote on recommendations 2.1-2.12 'en bloc', and recommendations 2.15 to 2.27 'en bloc' and amend 2.13 and 2.14 to add the following wording after the last word of each recommendation as follows :-

2.13 ...'along with a representative of other groups or parties.'

2.14 ...'along with a representative of other groups or parties.'

Councillor Holmes seconded the amendment.

Clarification was requested as to whether the amendment meant a representative of all other parties or just one representative. Councillor Blase confirmed it would be one representative. The Solicitor to the Council gave further clarification that it was one representative out of the other groups. Councillor Holmes also clarified that it was one representative from a minority group.

It was then asked how it would be determined which group would provide the representative particularly in the current circumstances. It was also questioned whether it was legal to have a Member representing independents.

The Chief Executive clarified that these were informal groups not subject to political balance and were not decision-making. It was requested that a single representative be appointed to represent the non-ruling group.

Councillor Greenow raised a point of clarification that a group was a constituted body and could not be constituted by a different group. He added that to have a non-ruling group representative would be a matter for the non-ruling groups to determine how it was allocated. The Chief Executive explained that the other Members should make that decision and this was not a decision-making body.

The Leader stated that he opposed the amendment and was grateful that the difficulties of this representation had been outlined. He felt the report was positive and would help to stop duplication and urged Members to not support the amendment.

Other Members felt the amendment brought potentially another layer of democracy and once the electorate had decided the balance of power, the ruling group should be able to have informal discussions such as in these forums. Others felt the amendment was not clear in its wording and could have been raised earlier at the briefing. It was felt that the original motion was forward thinking and would help to future proof the Council.

On the amendment being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

The Deputy Leader referred to his reserved right to speak and stated that it had been good to debate the well put paper. He added that the approving the recommendations would modernise the Council and urged Councillors not to vote against the motion and support the 'en bloc' vote.

The Leader referred to the late amendment and that it may have been helpful for advice to have been sought before the meeting. He asked the Council to accept his motion to take an 'en bloc' vote on all the recommendations.

On being put to the vote, the original motion was carried.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the comments of the Ad hoc Governance Committee held on 30 April 2018 on the proposed new Governance arrangements be noted;
- (2) the new Committee structure as set out at Appendix A be approved and this come into effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (3) it be approved that a new policy committee be created called 'Corporate Committee' and this replace the existing Policy, Finance and Administration Committee in name and the terms of reference for this committee be as set out at Appendix A and the new committee come into effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (4) it be approved that a new policy committee be created called 'People Committee' and this replace the existing Community and Social Affairs Committee in name and the terms of reference for this committee be as set out at Appendix A and the new committee come into effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (5) it be approved that a new policy committee be created called 'Place Committee' and this replace the existing Rural, Economic and Environmental Committee in name and the terms of reference for this committee be as set out at Appendix A and the new committee come into effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (6) a new delegation to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council be approved to authorise one-off supplementary expenditure, required as a consequence of decisions made from the policy committees, up to a cumulative maximum of £100,000 in any one year;
- (7) it be approved that the Town Area Committee be disestablished and removed from the Council's decision-making structure with effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (8) it be approved that special expenses be the responsibility of the Place Committee and any outstanding business for the Town Area Committee be transferred to the appropriate committee with effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (9) it be approved that the Council work with partners and support the development of a new town and place partnership involving local stakeholders and businesses, the terms of reference for which to be determined once the membership is established. An informal steering group of representatives from key stakeholders; including the Chair and Vice Chair of the Place Committee be convened to develop the approach;
- (10) the revised terms of reference of the Governance Committee be approved

with effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;

- (11) the revised terms of reference of the Planning Committee be approved with effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (12) the revised terms of reference of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee be approved with effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018;
- (13) it be approved that an informal Policy Forum be developed to replace the existing Conservative Chairs group and the membership of this group be the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chairs and Vice Chairs of the People and Place Committees and senior officers as determined by the Chief Executive;
- (14) it be approved that an informal Regulatory Forum be developed and the membership of this group be the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Regulatory Committees and senior officers as determined by the Chief Executive;
- (15) it be approved that the following working groups be disbanded with effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018 :-
 - Budget and Strategic Planning Working Group
 - Cattle Market Working Group
 - Economy Board
 - Planning Enforcement Working Group
 - Sports, Leisure and Culture Working Group
 - Tenant Consultative Working Group
- (16) it be approved that Lead Members be removed from the Constitution and no longer be part of the governance arrangements with effect from the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2018. The same applies to the term 'Champions', that these no longer form part of the Council's governance arrangements;
- (17) it be approved that representatives on Outside Organisations and Partnerships be the Leader or relevant Committee Chair as the default position except where there is a business reason for a different Member. The Leader or Committee Chair may nominate their Deputy or Vice chair as required;
- (18) it be approved that committee minutes no longer be included on the Full Council agenda under the item 'Questions from Members'. Members will still be able to submit questions to the Leader and Committee Chairs as they do currently;
- (19) it be approved that Committees will not typically receive information only items, rather Members will be kept informed of new initiatives and policy development through an improved Members' Bulletin and wider briefings as necessary; as well as more directly through the Chairs and Leader themselves;

- (20) it be approved that taking into account the views of the Chairman of the Welland Independent Remuneration Panel the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) for the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chair and Vice Chair roles of the three existing policy committees transfer to the three new policy committee roles as set out at para 3.12 of this report and the Member Allowances Scheme be updated accordingly with effect from 16 May 2018;
- (21) it be approved that the SRA for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Town Area Committee be deleted from the Member Allowance Scheme and the scheme be updated accordingly with effect from 16 May 2018;
- (22) it be approved that a short interim review of any impact on Special Responsibility Allowances as a result of these changes should take place in January 2019 once the new arrangements have had a chance to embed. This would be subject to any wider governance changes being proposed;
- (23) the principle be approved that the Calendar of Meetings for 2018 19 remain as previously drafted and considered by the Governance Committee on 27 March 2018 subject to removal of the Town Area Committee dates and the three existing policy committees be replaced by the three new policy committee names ie. Corporate (PFA), People (CSA), Place (MEEA). The Calendar of Meetings to be considered for approval at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 15 May 2018;
- (24) the deferred items for adoption in the Constitution that were previously presented to the Governance Committee held on 27 March 2018 and to the Ad hoc Governance Committee held on 30 April 2018 as set out at Appendix E be approved;
- (25) it be approved that the Constitution be updated in respect of all matters listed and subsequently approved above where appropriate;
- (26) it be approved that the Governance Development Group be retained in its current format and membership and continue to review the Council's governance arrangements including a review of the scheme of delegation to officers to offer more flexibility and consider the merits of alternative governance models and report to the Governance Committee and subsequently the Full Council in due course;
- (27) it be noted that as a result of the new Governance arrangements, transitional arrangements need to be in force until work is completed on their implementation including a review of the Council's Constitution including the Financial Procedure Rules and the Policy Framework following the prioritisation exercise and the realignment of budgets into the new committee structure and responsibilities which will commence when the budgets are set for 2019/20 with budget monitoring under the new arrangements not implemented fully under the 2019/20 financial year.

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The meeting closed at: 7.26 pm

Mayor