

Minutes

Meeting name	Place Committee
Date	Wednesday, 31 October 2018
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor M. Sheldon (Chair)

Councillors A. Freer-Jones (Vice-Chair) T. Beaken
M. Blase G. Botterill
R. de Burle L. Higgins
E. Hutchison M. Glancy
J. Simpson

Observers

Officers Chief Executive
Director for Growth and Regeneration
Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services
Corporate Services Manager
Principal Solicitor
Senior Democracy Officer

Minute No.	Minute
29	<p>Apologies for Absence There were no apologies for absence and all the committee members were present.</p>
30	<p>Minutes On the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2018 being presented to the committee, Councillor Higgins expressed concern regarding the recording of interests and specifically whether the councillor in each case had left the meeting as this was not shown. He felt that in future this should be minuted. Councillor Simpson subsequently confirmed that although she did declare a pecuniary interest she did not vote on the minute in question but remained in the meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Higgins also raised that with regard to Minutes 22 and 23 the minutes did not capture the debate and the desire to delegate low level price changes to action. He felt it was important that where officers had been given specific direction that this was recorded in the minutes so as to ensure when officers acted there was a clear mandate to do so. The Corporate Services Manager advised that addressing the changes to the officer delegations was due to be included within the wider governance review process.</p> <p>Councillor Higgins felt that the standard of these minutes was not what members or the public expected and more debate detail should be included. He advised that he had an amendment to an exempt item and would raise this at the end of the meeting in closed session.</p> <p>The committee was in agreement to accept and note the comments.</p>
31	<p>Declarations of interest <u>Minute 37 – Approval of application for land purchase</u></p> <p>Councillor Blase declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item due to being the prospective purchaser of the land in question. However he understood the item had been withdrawn.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that the item had been withdrawn from the agenda for this meeting.</p>
32	<p>New Mandatory Licensing For Houses In Multiple Occupation The Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services submitted a report which provided the committee with information on the new legislation, the implications for the Council and a proposed revised fee structure which whilst set on a cost recovery basis noted that Melton's fee had been set at a middle level when compared to the fees charged by all the Leicestershire authorities.</p>

Members welcomed the regularisation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and raised some questions as to the how property landlords could be monitored to ensure they followed the legislation, the impact on existing officer resources and whether the cost of the increased officer workload would be eventually covered by the income the scheme generated.

The Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services responded that the licensing regime involved rigorous checking of the credentials and suitability of landlords similar to taxi drivers to protect those who lived in the premises as well as undertaking random inspections where landlords would not be forewarned. Also the Council would react to reports of impropriety and Council services were already working together to recognise potential breaches such as multiple benefits claims coming from one address, planning applications etc. With regard to the fees eventually covering the Council's costs, he considered that this would be the case in the longer term but to deal with the workload in the short term a growth bid had been put forward in the budget process to increase the establishment to support this additional service. The Assistant Director also explained that the properties involved were not just 3 storey buildings but any house of any shape or size could become an HMO and they were set up in a similar way to previous bedsits ie. a bed/room only is provided with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities.

The Chief Executive advised that unlicensed HMOs were often associated with other hidden crimes like modern day slavery and the regulations would help raise the profile of these issues and increase vigilance. He stated that it was incumbent on all officers and members to be vigilant to these kinds of issues and if there was concern to escalate it so that it could be looked into.

Councillor Higgins explained that although he was a member of the Landlord Association he did not have a personal interest in this item as he was not involved in HMOs.

It was noted that issues around car parking was a planning matter and not part of this legislation.

Councillor Higgins moved the recommendations in the report and Councillor Glancy seconded.

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

RESOLVED that the committee

- (1) note the new mandatory provisions highlighted in paragraphs 3.5-3.8 of the report;
- (2) approve the revision to the fee structure of £635 for a 5 year licence under the revised HMO licensing provisions as set out at paragraph 3.10 of the report.

Future Of The 'Melton Local Plan Working Group'

The Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services submitted a report which requested the committee determine the role of, or replacement of, the Melton Local Plan Working Group in the context that the Local Plan was now adopted.

The Assistant Director referred to the positive impact the work of the Melton Local Plan Working Group had had on developing the Local Plan and a new format for the next stage of planning policy work was now needed.

A member spoke in favour of the previous working group and how well it had worked. The member felt it would be helpful to continue with a member/officer group for informal discussion on planning policy matters.

Councillor de Burle agreed with this view and moved the recommendations in the report and Councillor Botterill seconded.

It was noted that the third recommendation referred to the new Task Group being made up of 9 Members of the Place Committee. The Assistant Director advised that this was not his intention and the report should refer to the membership being the same as the existing Melton Local Plan Working Group for the remainder of the Civic Year and that the membership should then be drawn from the Place Committee following the elections in 2019.

Councillors de Burle and Botterill agreed to accept the change to the recommendation and to their motion.

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

RESOLVED that the committee

- (1) disestablishes the Melton Local Plan Working Group;
- (2) agrees to establish a Planning Policy Task Group based on the Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix A of the report;
- (3) nominates composition of the new Task Group from the existing membership of the Melton Local Plan Working Group (up to May 2019 after which it should revert to drawing membership from the Place Committee).

Capital Programme Monitoring To 30 September 2018 And Capital Programme 2018-2023

The Corporate Services Manager

- (a) submitted a report on behalf of the Director for Corporate Services which updated the committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 30 September 2018 and requested the committee approve its

Capital Programme for 2018-23 based on a review of spending in the current year's programme and schemes included in the programme for later years;

(b) tabled Appendix H at the meeting which was a business case for enhancement projects following the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan and action plan for management, enhancement and development of the country park.

There was a discussion around housing priorities and it was noted that as a result of the recent corporate prioritisation exercise, the Fairmead refurbishment had been deferred. It was noted that this scheme was still included in longer term plans whilst looking at a range of other options for maximising availability of housing stock both in the affordable and private sector.

With regard to play equipment at the country park, it was asked whether this was to be replaced like for like or whether there was scope for increasing the offer whilst doing the work.

The Director for Growth and Regeneration responded that a previous committee decision had agreed on like for like however the country park business case at appendix H provided more scope for now and in the future and if improvements could be made they would be added.

It was queried how the project scoring matrix worked on the business cases and it was responded that it was a mechanism of scoring a project against set criteria and the resulting score level helped officers to ensure appropriate monitoring for the complexity/priority of a project.

The Corporate Services Manager advised that there was a replacement and renewal fund which annually reviewed asset maintenance and there was enough in the fund to ensure existing play areas were well maintained.

A member queried whether the ecological study had been commissioned for the country park as this had been mentioned previously and it needed to be available for when planning applications started to come in. The Assistant Director responded that this was in progress and had been delayed due to the work on the Local Plan.

It was also queried that contributions be requested from developers for repairs and maintenance of play equipment etc. The Assistant Director advised that he intended to revisit the question of s106 on revenue budget maintenance arrangements for developers and needed to research how this could work and whether it was possible.

There was a question as to whether the play equipment at Kirby Fields would be the only play area for the southern SUE and if so would it be expanded and should budget be allocated for repairs etc. The Assistant Director advised that due to the expected size of the southern SUE, it would have its own facilities.

Councillor Higgins moved the recommendations in the report. He referred to a scheme which helped young people attain homes in their own communities and how this had worked at Somerby. He considered that there could be a future committee report to make this more widely known and available in other wards. He felt that this was a helpful route for social housing in villages.

The Chief Executive explained that the Council was developing a scheme to improve housing delivery by means of a collaborative development company. He added that this involved a complex business case and a report was scheduled for the next Corporate Committee to provide an update to members on the outline business case with consideration about whether to move to a full business case.

It was commented that planning applications do not usually make provision for play areas and green spaces and facilities such as these, including maintenance arrangements, should be included at the application stage.

Councillor Glancy seconded the motion.

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

RESOLVED that the committee

(1) notes the progress made on the capital schemes for 2018/19 as attached to the report as follows :

- Appendix A – HRA
- Appendix B – General Expenses
- Appendix C – Special Expenses

(2) approves the revised Capital Programme for 2018-23 as attached to the report as follows :

- Appendix D – HRA
- Appendix E – General Expenses
- Appendix F – Special Expenses

(3) approves the business case as outlined at Appendix G attached to the report in relation to installation of new play equipment at a Kirby Fields & Melton Country Park Climbing forest Play Areas and recommends to the Corporate Committee that this scheme is funded from Repairs & Renewals Fund;

(4) approves the business case as attached to the report at Appendix H relating to the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan and action plan for management, enhancement and development of the country park.

35

Leisure Facilities Project Update

The Director for Growth and Regeneration submitted a report which updated the committee on the recommended approach to the development of leisure facilities and next steps. She referred to the previous decision to align service contracts for both Council owned leisure facilities. With contracts aligned until 2022, the Council undertook a full options appraisal and commissioned FMG, specialist leisure

consultants to assist. Their report provided the committee with an update on the work carried out to review leisure facilities within Melton and sets out a recommended way forward and associated investment options. She further referred to the options appraisal in the exempt appendices and stated the clear conclusion that unilateral investment in leisure facilities, even if the two sites were consolidated into one, was unaffordable. The only viable option therefore was a wider piece of work to undertake a full commercial development appraisal to explore how the Council extracted the most value from the site and identified ways to cross-subsidise and fund the Council's plans for future leisure provision.

One member commented that they would be keen to incorporate a café into any future provision as a way to generate additional income. Also it was noted that the Melton Times had reported on the report and included comments from some of the sports clubs.

The Chief Executive advised that a statement had already been issued which would be in the local press. He explained that the groups and clubs had recently been briefed on the current position and advised that a new facility was unaffordable through unilateral only investment. He felt the groups and clubs were appreciative of the clarity and openness provided by the Council and were open minded in how any aspirations could be delivered using funding and commercial options from other partners.

There was a member view that a new and improved leisure facility was urgently needed to fit the bigger picture of how Melton would develop with the relief road which it was hoped would bring bigger businesses, improved shopping and investment to the town.

Another member endorsed a full review of the leisure facilities including the market analysis on the current and future potential of leisure for the Borough. The councillor had already received some positive and constructive comments of what people would like to see in Melton and suggested that officers check these comments on social media.

A member made reference to the history of the site and the loss of the school on the site. The member referred to the usage by the sports clubs (excluding the Rugby Club) and the support the Council had offered them so far including subsidised rent in some cases. There was mention of increasing public participation to help local sports clubs keep going and this was a community matter not just for the Council to address. The site was in a far better condition than when it was purchased due to the Council's commitment but it needed other investment to move forward.

Councillor de Burle moved the recommendations in the report and Councillor Freer-Jones seconded the motion.

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

	<p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the committee</p> <p>(1) note the FMG report as attached as exempt Appendix 1 to the report;</p> <p>(2) approve the approach to the development of leisure facilities and next steps as identified in paragraph 3.4 of the report;</p> <p>(3) approve the use of identified savings from the 2018/19 budget to undertake the next steps identified in paragraph 3.4 of the report.</p>
36	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>There was no urgent business.</p>
	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the public be excluded during the consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (Access to Information : Exempt Information) under paragraphs 1 & 3 (Minutes 37 and 39) and paragraph 3 (Minute 38).</p>
37	<p>Approval of Application for Land Purchase</p> <p>This item was withdrawn and not considered.</p>
38	<p>Formalising Arrangements With Melton Mowbray Town Estate</p> <p>The Chief Executive submitted a report on behalf of the Director for Legal and Democratic Services which requested formalising arrangements with the Melton Mowbray Town Estate.</p> <p>Councillor Glancy moved the recommendations in the report and Councillor Higgins seconded the motion.</p> <p>On being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the 3 recommendations in the report be approved.</p>
39	<p>Minutes of 5 September 2018</p> <p><u>Minute 27 – Sale of Land : West Avenue, Melton Mowbray</u></p> <p>Councillor Blase declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item due to being the prospective purchaser of the land in question and left the room.</p> <p>On being put to the vote, the committee was in favour of the following amendment to the previous minutes.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that</p> <p>(1) minute 27 of the Place Committee minutes of 5 September 2018 be amended to include the following :-</p>

'The committee owed it not only to the members on the committee but also to the member involved to make the right decision to help avoid criticism and to ensure that any decision was beyond reproach.'

(2) subject to the foregoing the minutes be confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair.

The meeting closed at: 8.05 pm

Chair