

Minutes

Meeting name	Council
Date	Thursday, 16 December 2021
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor P. Faulkner (Chair)

Councillors	A. Hewson (Vice-Chair)	R. Bindloss
	R. de Burle	J. Douglas
	C. Fisher	M. Graham MBE
	J. Illingworth	S. Lumley
	J. Orson	P. Posnett MBE
	D. Pritchett	R. Smith
	T. Webster	J. Wilkinson

Officers	Chief Executive
	Director for Corporate Services
	Assistant Director for Governance & Democracy (by remote connection)
	Assistant Director for Planning and Delivery (by remote connection)
	Democratic Services Manager
	Democratic Services Officer (HA)
	Democratic Services Officer (SE)

The Reverend Kevin Ashby offered prayers

Minute No.	Minute
CO35	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Browne, Carter, Chandler, Child, Cumbers, Evans, Freer, Glancy, Higgins, Holmes, Steadman and Wood. Councillor Bains was also not present.</p>
CO36	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the following meetings were confirmed as a true record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraordinary meeting held on 23 September 2021 • Ordinary meeting held on 23 September 2021 • Extraordinary meeting held on 2 November 2021
CO37	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>A personal interest in respect of County Councillors Orson and Posnett MBE, was noted as being on record for any matters which related to the Leicestershire County Council.</p>
CO38	<p>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The Mayor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • congratulated Councillor Tim Webster on his election and welcomed him to his first Council meeting • updated the Council on events attended by himself and the Mayoress • reported that he had represented the Borough at the Remembrance Parade • referred to the video of the switching on of the Christmas lights and that it had been well received • said that the Melton Agricultural Society Show and Sale had been a great success and proceeds from the Dinner event would be donated to his charity • advised that his Carol Concert had been well supported and the Christmas trees in the church had formed a magical display • reported that his appeal total was building up and a charity walk was planned
CO39	<p>LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The Leader said</p> <p>'We have a very busy agenda tonight, which is testament to the amount of work the Council is currently doing. I will though, therefore keep my comments relatively brief this evening.'</p> <p>I must start with the increasing risk and concern regarding the Omicron variant. Since our last meeting, we have moved from what was a relatively stable position to one where our public health experts are urging far greater caution, and where yesterday the UK recorded the highest number of daily infections since the pandemic began. As we know, by triggering Plan B, the Government has introduced a number of additional measures regarding face masks and so called covid passports. Whatever our views may be on the approach taken, it is right that</p>

as a council we do our best to set the right tone and lead by example in both protecting our colleagues and communities, whilst also safeguarding the future of our economy. I'm grateful for the continuing support of members for the steps we are taking to manage the ongoing situation.

I couldn't go much further with my remarks without commenting on the fantastic news that the HIF grant has now been secured by the County Council. When you think back to June, we were 7 days from the grant being handed back and the southern section of the road, and potentially our Local Plan, being in significant jeopardy. Following a huge effort by both the community and council, working closely with our MP, we were able to persuade the County Council to rethink. And following a significant amount of work over the last few months, MBC demonstrated it could deliver once again, achieving everything asked of us. Having now secured the HIF I look forward to spades going in the ground next year and the road we have talked about for generations, starting in earnest.

Another significant piece of work we have worked closely with all districts and the County Council on is the development of a new joint Waste Strategy. Waste collection is a key universal service, which touches every household in our Borough and it is important we provide a service fit for the environmental challenges of the future. The strategy includes bold ambitious to achieve a recycling rate of 65%, and whilst it quite properly assess all potential options, the focus for Leicestershire will be delivering in line with government policy, particularly around things like weekly food waste collections. Crucially, to be affordable, the government will also have to follow through on its commitment to fully fund any changes required. It is also important for me to confirm that, despite what has been implied in some media outlets, the strategy does not include any commitment to introduce 3 weekly collections, rather this was simply one of the options assessed. We are now ready to commence the public consultation in January and I look forward to residents positively engaging in the 12 week process.

It was disappointing to hear that the Council had been unsuccessful in its Levelling Up Fund bid, but I was very heartened to hear that we had received such positive feedback on our submission. It was an incredibly competitive process with only 105 of the 305 bids submitted being successful. Our bid, which sought funding for 3 town centre projects linked to the cattle market, theatre and King Street development, scored very well and particularly so on deliverability. We are now working with Rutland and our MP to take on board the feedback, strengthen our bid and will be ready to submit again in the second round which we understand is due to be announced in the Spring next year.

Finally, as our housing improvement journey continues at pace, and we welcome our new Assistant Director for Housing Management, Alison Bennett, who joined us recently, I wanted to pay tribute to John Skerrit who has confirmed his intention to retire from TFEC in January. John has dedicated 58 years of his life to public service, initially as a borough and county councillor and then more recently representing the interests of tenants as the Chair of TFEC. His legacy and contribution are in no doubt and John has been a key member of the Housing Improvement Board as we've taken significant steps forward over the last few years. I have been very grateful for his advocacy of tenant issues, support and challenge John has given me throughout my time as Leader and I wish him and his wife all the very best for the future.'

	The Leader congratulated Tim Webster on his election and wished everyone a Happy Christmas.
CO40	<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>No questions from the public had been received.</p>
CO41	<p>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS</p> <p>No questions from Members had been received.</p>
CO42	<p>MOTIONS ON NOTICE</p> <p>The Leader reported that the equalities motion had been withdrawn and would be presented to the next Council meeting.</p>
CO43	<p>CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL - TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2021/22</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>(a) submitted the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report which was a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures and provided a summary of the Treasury activities to the end of September 2021. The report also covered the actual position to date on the Prudential Indicators in accordance with the Prudential Code. The report met the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council was required to comply with both codes through Regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003;</p> <p>(b) gave a brief introduction to the report and made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key messages in this report were set out in the tables at paragraph 5.1 of the report and these showed that the capital expenditure forecast had been revised and was now expected to be £6.305m, an increase of £1.4m compared to the original forecast • In the table at paragraph 4.0, no additional borrowing had been needed nor was expected in this financial year • The capital financing at 30 September remained at £31.550m which was unchanged from the figure at 1 April which was well within the Council's operating boundary of £36.479m and authorised limit of £46m • Whilst it continued to be a very challenging time for Treasury Management activities, with Brexit and then COVID impacting on investment returns worldwide and the UK bank rate, which remained unchanged at 0.10%, the team had been successful in achieving returns of 0.30% which was considerably above our benchmark level (0.17%). He was pleased to report that because of that, the Council was now forecasting a return of £196k which was around 10% more than originally forecast or budgeted for and was a great achievement by the team <p>(c) presented the Cabinet's recommendations to the Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p>

	<p>Council:</p> <p>(1) NOTED the mid-year position on treasury activity for 2021/22, as shown at Appendix 1 of the report;</p> <p>(2) APPROVED the mid-year position on the prudential indicators for 2021/22, as shown at Appendix 1 of the report.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO44	<p>CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL - BUILDING CONTROL: PROPOSALS FOR A DELEGATED SERVICE</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>(a) submitted a report to consider a proposal for the Council's Building Control service to be delivered by means of delegation under the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012 ('a delegated service') to Blaby District Council. The report considered the benefits of such an approach and addressed the alternatives should the proposals not be taken up. There were financial implications which were addressed in detail in Section 8 of Appendix 1 and Appendix A of the report;</p> <p>(b) gave a brief introduction on the report and presented the Cabinet's recommendations to the Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p>(1) ENDORSED and authorised the delegation of the statutory Building Control function to Blaby District Council with effect from 1 April 2022 for an initial period of 3 years;</p> <p>(2) APPROVED a contribution of £25,114 to the initial implementation costs of the delegated service;</p> <p>(3) DELEGATED authority to the Director for Growth & Regeneration and the Assistant Director for Planning Delivery to:</p> <p>(a) NEGOTIATE and finalise the terms of the Delegation and Service Level Agreements to facilitate the delegation of the service; and</p> <p>(b) MAKE any in-year variations to the delegation agreement as deemed appropriate.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO45	CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL - HOUSING STRATEGY (2021-2026)

	<p>The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>(a) submitted a report on the Housing Strategy (2021-2026) which was approved by Cabinet on 8 December 2021;</p> <p>(b) gave a brief introduction to the report and presented the Cabinet's recommendation to the Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p>APPROVED the adoption of the final version of the Housing Strategy (2021-2026), as set out at Appendix A of the report.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO46	<p>CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL - WAYS OF WORKING PROJECT UPDATE: WAY WE WORK STRATEGY 2021-2024</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>(a) submitted the Ways of Working Project Update - Way We Work Strategy 2021-2024, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report;</p> <p>(b) gave a brief introduction to the report and made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid had made the world a very different place for us all and practices that we had had to adopt just to keep going during the pandemic had challenged our way of life and demonstrated that almost everything could be done differently, often more efficiently, certainly as effectively and nowhere was that more apparent than in some parts of the workplace • Council staff had embraced the challenges presented by the pandemic and had developed a new hybrid operating model and ways of working based on lessons learned and of necessity from changes in working practices that were necessary and vital as a consequence of maintaining services during the pandemic • The new working model outlined in this document, which maximised on the use of remote technology, was expected to improve productivity and work-life balance whilst ensuring and maintaining the delivery of the high quality public services that we expect • The proposals contained in this paper had evolved and been developed over the last 18 months through extensive engagement and consultation with workforce groups, the Joint Staff Working Group, the leadership teams and the trade unions and were in the process of being formalised with this paper <p>(c) presented the Cabinet's recommendations to the Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p>

	<p>(1) ADOPTED ‘The Way We Work – Our Strategy’ and accompanying documents, as set out at Appendices A, B and C of the report;</p> <p>(2) DELEGATED authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make amendments to the Strategy to account for economic, organisational or environmental changes.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO47	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES - REVISED MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer</p> <p>(a) submitted a report which presented a revised Members' Code of Conduct;</p> <p>(b) explained the revised Code was based on the new model code recently produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) following the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life;</p> <p>(c) advised that the purpose of having a Code of Conduct for Members was to promote high standards of conduct and trust and set out what the public could expect from their representatives;</p> <p>(d) stated that the revised code had been locally amended to suit the needs of the Leicestershire authorities.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p>APPROVED the locally amended Code of Conduct as set out at Appendix B in the report and be implemented from 1 April 2022.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO48	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES - PROVISION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES</p> <p>The Director for Corporate Services</p> <p>(a) submitted a report which set out proposals for appointing the external auditor to the Council for the accounts for the five-year period from 2023/24. During Autumn 2021 all local government bodies needed to make important decisions about their external audit arrangements from 2023/24. There was the option for the Council to arrange its own procurement and make the appointment or in conjunction with other bodies, or there was the option to join and take advantage of the national collective scheme administered by PSAA;</p> <p>(b) explained it was considered that the sector-wide procurement conducted by PSAA would produce better outcomes and would be less burdensome for the</p>

	<p>Council than a procurement undertaken locally and therefore this was the recommended option from the Audit and Standards Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(1) ACCEPTED the Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1 April 2023;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(2) DELEGATED authority to the Director for Corporate Services to give effect to the appointment.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO49	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES - PROVISION OF INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES</p> <p>The Director for Corporate Services</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(a) submitted a report that explained the Council's current internal audit delegation would come to an end on 31 March 2022. The service was currently high performing and represented good value for money with a high level of resilience and access to specialist services should they be required;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(b) advised as a result, the report, at appendix 1, proposed a new service level agreement was entered into to continue the delegation with the same internal audit team as recommended by the Audit and Standards Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(1) DELEGATED its internal audit service to North Northamptonshire Council from 1st April 2022;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(2) DELEGATED authority to the Director for Corporate Services in consultation with the Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy to finalise the delegation agreement with North Northamptonshire Council for the provision of internal audit services;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(3) DELEGATED authority to the Director for Corporate Services to:</p> <p class="list-item-l2">(a) REVIEW the agreement every 5 years to ensure best value;</p> <p class="list-item-l2">(b) MAKE any in-year changes to the delegation agreement as required to reflect any legislative and/or organisational changes;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(4) NOTED that the service level agreement was provided to the Audit &</p>

	<p>Standards Committee for approval before being finalised.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO50	<p>POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer</p> <p>(a) submitted a report which sought approval of the revised political balance calculations and allocation of seats on committees in accordance with statutory requirements (as set out in the report) following recent changes including a by-election which altered the political balance between the Groups;</p> <p>(b) explained that there had been changes to Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of some Committees and these were set out at Appendix B of the report.</p> <p>In response to a Member query, the Monitoring Officer explained that political balance was sought not only within committees but also across all seats on committees and therefore some decimal point percentage calculations were required to meet these requirements.</p> <p>There were no other nominations other than those presented at Appendix B for the positions of Chairmen and Vice Chairmen.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(1) APPROVED the political balance calculations at paragraph 5.1 of the report;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(2) APPROVED the allocation of seats to Political Groups shown at paragraph 5.3 of the report and noted the membership of each Committee as set out in Appendix A of the report;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(3) ELECTED Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees from those nominated in Appendix B of the report;</p> <p class="list-item-l1">(4) APPROVED payments of Special Responsibility Allowances for those Members that had informally acted into Chairman and Vice Chairman roles in the interim period as described in paragraph 4.5 of the report.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO51	<p>APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND WORKING GROUPS</p> <p>The Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy (Monitoring Officer) submitted a report which presented the proposed nominations for representatives on outside bodies and working groups for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year.</p> <p>There was a tribute and thanks paid to Councillor Cumbers for her role as the Council's representative on the Furniture Project.</p>

	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p>(1) NOTED the appointments in Column A of Appendix A of the report (designated according to the role/portfolio holder/ward member);</p> <p>(2) APPOINTED representatives to serve on the outside bodies and working groups listed at Appendix A of the report (other than those in Column A).</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO52	<p>ANNUAL EQUALITIES REPORT</p> <p>On behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement, Councillor Posnett submitted a report which presented an update to Council on the progress against Equality objectives and the work undertaken to meet our public sector equality duty as required by equality legislation, including compliance with the Equality Act 2020, Human Rights Act 1998, the Public Sector Equality Duty. This was demonstrated through progress measured against the Council's Equalities Action Plan.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p>NOTED the progress made in meeting the Council's equalities duties and commitments as outlined in this report.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO53	<p>REVISED MEMBER OFFICER PROTOCOL</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources submitted a report which explained that the current Protocol that was published on the website as part of the Melton Borough Council Constitution was not updated as part of the review undertaken in 2018/19. As such the protocol has been in place for many years and had become outdated and in need of review and revision to bring it up to date with the revised form of Governance and current working practices.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p>APPROVED the revised Member Officer Protocol as set out at Appendix A of the report.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO54	LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND - ELECTORAL REVIEW NOTIFICATION

	<p>The Chief Executive submitted a report which notified Members that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) proposed to undertake an electoral review of Melton Borough Council to be implemented in 2027.</p> <p>With regard to the process and Member involvement in the next steps, it was considered that a working group may be established to consider proposals which would report its findings to Council.</p> <p>It was noted that there was an error in the report at paragraph 6.1 of the report where the date should read 21 January 2022 and not 21 January 2021.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) NOTED the Local Government Boundary Commission for England proposed to undertake an Electoral Review of Melton Borough Council; (2) NOTED AND ENDORSED that the Council would advise the Commission of our preferred timescale for the Review process as drafted at appendix 1 of the report; (3) NOTED the Chief Executive, through his delegation, would be the point of contact with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. <p>(Unanimous)</p>
	<p>The Leader thanked officers for arranging the socially distanced meeting with good air flow which made those present feel safe.</p> <p>The Mayor wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.</p>

The meeting closed at: 7.42 pm

Mayor