

| Minute No. | Minute |
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| 1 | <p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors de Burle, Graham and Orson.</p> |
| | <p>Nomination of Chair</p> <p>Edd de Coverly, Chief Executive requested nominations for a Chairman, in the absence of the Leader.</p> <p>Councillor Browne proposed that Councillor Freer chair the meeting and Councillor Bindloss seconded.</p> <p>Councillor Freer in the Chair.</p> |
| 2 | <p>MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2022 were confirmed.</p> |
| 3 | <p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p> |
| 4 | <p>MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES</p> <p>Scrutiny Feedback on the Approval of Melton Town Centre Vision</p> <p>The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee introduced the report advising that Scrutiny Committee had considered a presentation on the draft Town Centre Vision on 14 June 2022. The following was highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially, the Committee had not been aware that the Vision was a background document. However, later in the meeting, it was noted that it was so and would be used to steer the development of the town centre over the next 10 years. • The Vision document was accompanied by an action plan of key projects and activities to be delivered and supported by partner organisations. • The Vision will help direct investment and funding for the delivery of these projects. • It was explained to Members that the Vision evidenced the elements identified by the stakeholder consultation events, which would support the Council when bids are made for external funding. • Members had expressed concerns over the proposed use of consultants on projects within the Vision which had no chance of progressing, although it was explained to Members that consultants would be procured using the correct procedure and would only be used where there was not the appropriate skill set within the Council. The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity confirmed that consultants would not be used on such projects. |

- Members questioned the funding source of the projects and were informed that external funding would have to be sourced for them. It was explained if there was no funding, then the projects would not proceed.
- The Committee expressed disappointment that the Council had not successfully engaged with the landlords of the Bell Centre before inserting the project into the Vision. It was explained that the project was included within the Vision because it had been identified as a priority through the stakeholder consultations. 2 Councillors had since made contact with the landlords and there should not be any future problems in contacting them.
- A Member commented that there should be more focus on youth services within the Vision, as there were references to the lack of provision for young people.
- The comment was made that the Vision was a good document, which needed to be a bit more focused. However, it was explained that the Vision evidenced the elements that the stakeholders believed to be important for the regeneration of the town centre.
- Members stated they were pleased that Pera Business Park had been included within the Vision as it had huge potential.
- Car parking was referenced within the Vision. However, Members commented there was not a clear strategy or agenda. In response to a Member question, the Regeneration Manager had advised that he would confirm what was likely to be spent on the strategy for car parking and what had already been spent.
- Concern was raised that the Vision could lead to more investment for the Cattle Market, thereby directing resources away from the regeneration of the town centre.
- The comment was made that Melton was regarded as a rural capital of food. However, the food offer was limited and that it was correct that the Vision focus on enhancing the food offer.
- Councillors commented they were concerned with some of the language of the document, specifically the reference to the economy being low wage. It was felt that this had the potential to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- The Committee questioned the short timeframe for considering the Vision and the associated Levelling Up Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund bids. However, it was explained by officers that the timeframe for the bids, as announced by central government was short and that there was a huge amount of work to do.
- To date, there had been no answer to any of the questions raised at the meeting.

The Scrutiny Committee Chairman raised the following additional questions:

- Should the stock yard be successful it would generate more income. Would the Council receive a reasonable share of this or only a small portion with the majority going to Gilstream?
- Was there a procurement on the King Street building and if so, had due diligence been carried out?

In relation to 2 of the points highlighted above, the Chairman commented that reference within the Vision to Melton's economy being low wage was factual information and clarified that the Council had included the Bell Centre project within the Vision without prior engaged with the landlords because it formed part of the strategy.

The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Rob Bindloss thanked the Chairman and Members of the Scrutiny Committee for the report and apologised for the confusion on the purpose of the draft Town Centre Vision. The feedback from Scrutiny Committee raised a number of points, which would add value to the final document. Councillor Bindloss clarified that consultants would be used should there be a need for specific expertise and advised that answers to the questions raised by Scrutiny Committee referred to above would be followed up after this meeting and responses provided to Members.

Lee Byrne, Regeneration Manager, responded to the Scrutiny Committee Chairman's 2 additional questions that were raised at the meeting. He advised that any agreements in place at when the stockyard buildings become operational would be adhered to and the Council would receive its share of income generated, as per those agreements. There was no procurement on the King Street building, which was owned by the Town Estate. They are looking at potentially selling or come to a coming to an arrangement with Brockleby's Pies for the building, to enable the Council to proceed with the bid. This was not within the Council's remit but was being monitoring closely to ensure that an accurate bid was submitted.

Cabinet **AGREED** to have regard to the Scrutiny Committee's feedback.

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APPROVAL OF MELTON TOWN CENTRE VISION

Lee Byrne, Regeneration Manager, introduced the report, highlighting that Approval of the Town Centre Vision and Approval to Submit a Levelling Up Funding Bid (next agenda item) were linked. The Town Centre Vision was a strategic framework, containing a number of projects and opportunities, which the Council, its partners and consultees had identified would help achieve ambitions. The Vision created a consensus and focus over the next 10 years to identify which projects needed to be delivered and to seek relevant funding.

Feedback from a comprehensive public consultation, Scrutiny Committee and workshops with Members, stakeholders and other organisations would be used to inform the Vision. The public consultation had ended on 13 June with the following results:

- Concerns over the impact of the Bell Centre within the town, with a clear desire to see the site being utilised, as an attraction to the town.
- Acknowledgment that appropriate car parking arrangements would be essential to the future success of the town.
- The markets and their offer to the town needed to be developed further, with a view to becoming a central focus of the town and an attraction.
- Work was needed to secure additional private sector investment for the town.

Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Rob Bindloss commented that the high level of engagement had added considerable value to the Vision. The Vision would act as a foundation for what the Council, its partners, stakeholders and residents believed was required to equip the town centre for the future,

addressing its ever-changing needs and success as a prosperous, forward thinking market town. The Vision would be used as a framework, to support and inform future funding bids when they arise and the majority of the projects and activities detailed within the Vision would be led by partners with Council support, whilst others may entirely be delivered by the private sector.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Members thanked the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity and officers for their work.
- The Vision detailed a number of projects and it was important to ensure that the Council clearly communicated to the public which of these projects were deliverable.
- Members commented that it was important that Council partners recognised their role in improving the town centre and they reiterated that Council partners would lead on projects and activities, with Council support when needed.
- The Council should be realistic about what it would be able to achieve and should not over commit financially or in relation to public expectation.
- The Council was committed to continued engagement with businesses, residents and other stakeholders as Melton's high street evolved.
- The document was key to helping create Melton as a visitor destination and this was an important portion of the economy to be secured.

Cabinet

- 1) **NOTED** and **ENDORSED** the consultation version of the Town Centre Vision and considers any amendments required following feedback received from the Council's Scrutiny Committee and through the public Consultation;
- 2) **DELEGATED** authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity to make any necessary amendments to the Town Centre Vision following the consultation and to finalise the document;
- 3) **ACKNOWLEDGED** that formal adoption of the Town Centre Vision will underpin the submission of the Council's round 2 Levelling Up Fund bid.

Reason for Recommendations

Priority 3 of the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-24 'Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton' identifies the following focus areas:

- *Work with our partners to promote Melton and deliver the promise of the 'Rural Capital of Food'.*
- *Regenerate our town centre, encourage inward investment and create jobs.*
- *Deliver inclusive growth by improving access to higher paid jobs, improving skills and tackling low wage economy.*

Melton Mowbray town centre is the engine of the borough's economy and is a key visitor destination. A long-term vision is required to steer the development of the town centre over the next ten years.

The Town Centre Vision document is accompanied by an action plan which includes projects and activities identified by the Council and its partners that would support delivery of the vision. The Vision will help direct investment and funding towards delivery of projects in the future.

The Government has recently published the Levelling Up White Paper and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2 and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) have also recently been announced. This Vision and action Plan will support the Council's efforts in seeking funding to deliver projects, through these funding programmes.

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APPROVAL TO SUBMIT A LEVELLING UP FUNDING BID

Lee Byrne, Regeneration Manager, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to summarise the key projects for which funding was sought, seek approval to submit a bid prior to the deadline and outline the Council's approach to work jointly with partners to prepare the information, which maximised the chances of a successful bid.

Mr Byrne advised that the Levelling Up Funding Bid provided a clear mechanism and an opportunity to deliver event elements as identified within the Melton Town Centre Vision. The deadline for submission of bids for the second round of funding was 6 July 2022. The Council was required to submit a joint bid with Rutland County Council and this provided the Council with a partnership of shared ideas and aspirations, giving both councils the best opportunity for success. The bid focussed on developing a blueprint for transformation within the town centre, through enabling and promoting innovation in key sectors, which had been adversely impacted by changes over the last 2 years. It was based on developing spaces and support mechanisms, where innovation in the food sector could take place through supporting enhanced growth in food production, food experiences and the wider economy, generating additional value to that particular sector and impacting businesses, education, employment, transport and increasing town centre footfall.

Mr Byrne highlighted that the Council had developed this bid with consideration to feedback received from its unsuccessful first round bid. The feedback had enabled the Council to strengthen the perceived weaknesses from the initial bid, providing greater assurance to government around areas of deliverability, monitoring and proposed outcomes.

The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Rob Bindloss thanked officers and Members for their work and commented that the Levelling Up Fund provided an opportunity for the Council to deliver on its aspirations and Corporate Priorities, developing areas and attracting increased tourism to support the town and its economy. The Council was working in partnership with Rutland County Council and feedback received from the first bid would enhance this joint bid.

The Chief Executive added his thanks to officers for their work, highlighting that the delegations set out in the report (particularly at paragraph 2.5) provided flexibility,

giving himself and the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity the opportunity to review the bid in the weeks prior to the deadline and ensure that all components were to standard. There would be a further decision taken under delegated power following this meeting and continued monitoring and partnership working.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Members thanked officers for their work.
- The work undertaken was vital to ensure that the bid was as robust as possible.
- This was an opportunity for the town and borough to attract investment into Melton and initiate regeneration.
- There was much work to be done before the deadline for bid submission. Cabinet Members were encouraged to engage with this work and provide feedback and comments.
- The town centre was a key aspect of Melton's economy but it was important to consider the economy of the in the surrounding areas. Prosperity within the town centre should emanate outwards.
- This bid was crucial to leveraging funding to strengthen Melton's economy.
- Melton needed economic recovery, growth, improved connectivity and regeneration.

Cabinet

- 1) **NOTED** the criteria and requirements for submitting a Levelling Up Fund bid;
- 2) **APPROVED** the submission of a joint bid with Rutland County Council to maximise the chances of success, noting the shared emphasis on innovation and regenerating rural market towns;
- 3) **NOTED** that Melton's intended bid submission contains 3 town centre projects, 1 overseen by the Council to develop the Stockyard at the Cattle Market and 2 other town centre projects due to be delivered by partner agencies;
- 4) **APPROVED** incorporation of all 3 projects within the bid submission, subject to them demonstrating they meet all requirements and maintain comparable confidence of delivery;
- 5) **DELEGATED** authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity to finalise the configuration of the bid, ensuring the strongest possible submission. Where individual projects do not meet the requirements set out in 2.4, to remove them from the submission;
- 6) **NOTED** that should the Levelling Up Fund bid be successful, the Council will be required to include match funding of up to £1m which will need to either be met through capital receipts or borrowing. Confirmation of this funding will be through a subsequent decision and consideration of more detailed business case(s) setting out the financial and other implications;
- 7) **DELEGATED** authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity to agree with Rutland Council,

who the accountable body on behalf of both councils will be. Notes that appropriate joint governance, resource requirements and legal agreements will be developed to support this arrangement.

Reasons for Recommendations

Priority 3 of the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-24 'Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton' identifies the following priority focus areas:

- *Work with our partners to promote Melton and deliver the promise of the 'Rural Capital of Food'.*
- *Regenerate our town centre, encourage inward investment and create jobs.*
- *Deliver inclusive growth by improving access to higher paid jobs, improving skills and tackling low wage economy.*

Melton Mowbray town centre is the engine of the borough's economy and a key visitor destination. The Council has recently worked with the partners to create a long-term vision to steer the development of the town centre over the next ten years. The Levelling Up Fund bid supports the aspirations set out in the town centre vision, being considered within a separate report on this Cabinet agenda.

The Government has recently published the Levelling Up White Paper and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The announcement of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2 presents a good opportunity to seek funding to deliver some of the key priority projects that would contribute towards achieving the vision.

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BIANNUAL OMBUDSMAN REPORT

Natasha Taylor, Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide Members with an update on the outcomes of complaints submitted to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO) up to 31 March 2022.

Mrs Taylor advised that this information was reported to Cabinet in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 of the Constitution, which provided that the monitoring and oversight of complaints was a function of the Cabinet. The report provided a breakdown of the 5 complaints received by the LGSCO since July 2021 and a summary of each complaint was provided. Further details on the 2 complaints upheld by the ombudsman were provided at paragraph 5.2 of the report and evidenced implementation of the LGSCO recommendations and the Council's commitment to responding to complaints appropriately. The report also confirms that there were currently 3 complaints lodged with the HO. These complaints were in progress and further details would be reported to Cabinet in due course.

Cabinet **NOTED** the contents of the report.

Reasons for the recommendation

It is a constitutional requirement for Cabinet to have strategic oversight of complaints data to support Priority 1 – excellent services positively impacting on our communities and Priority 5 – ensuring the right conditions to support delivery.

Receipt of regular complaints data also demonstrates good governance in line with the Governance Framework.

The meeting closed at: 5.20 pm

Chair