

Minutes

Meeting name	Council
Date	Thursday, 28 July 2022
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor A. Hewson (Chair)

Councillors

S. Atherton	R. Bindloss
R. Browne	S. Carter
P. Chandler	R. Child
P. Cumbers	R. de Burle
J. Douglas	C. Evans
P. Faulkner	C. Fisher
M. Glancy	M. Graham MBE
L. Higgins	J. Illingworth
S. Lumley	J. Orson
D. Pritchett	R. Smith

Officers

- Chief Executive
- Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
- Director for Growth and Regeneration
- Monitoring Officer
- Corporate Services Manager
- Democratic Services Manager
- Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer
- Democratic Services Officer (CR)

The Reverend Pat Olivent-Hayes offered prayers.

Minute No.	Minute
CO12	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Freer, Holmes, Posnett, Steadman, Webster, Wilkinson and Wood.</p>
CO13	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2022 were confirmed.</p>
CO14	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>An other registrable interest in respect of County Councillor Orson was noted as being on record for any matters which relate to the Leicestershire County Council.</p>
CO15	<p>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>In beginning his announcements, the Mayor congratulated Iman Barlow who was born and raised in Melton Mowbray and won the 57kg Muaythai event at the World Games in Birmingham, Alabama, USA on 17 July 2022.</p> <p>The Mayor also congratulated the Scalford-based Tug of War team who won men's silver at the World Games and then won mixed gold alongside a ladies team based in Bedfordshire.</p> <p>The Mayor informed Members that he attended the following events since the last Council meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A County Service in Ashby-de-la-Zouch alongside the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Mike Kapur OBE. • Ground-breaking at Sanders Senior Living at Leicester Road, Melton Mowbray. • Unveiling of the Circle of Life, in the Memorial Garden at the Country Park. • Civic Service with the new Bishop of Loughborough. • Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the Leicestershire and Rutland Royal British Legion Centenary celebration at the King Power Stadium, Leicester. • Polish Heritage Day celebrations at the New Walk Museum, Leicester. • Mencap's Jubilee Celebrations. • Beacon Lighting at the Defence Animal Training Regiment centre. • His own Platinum Jubilee concert in the park, which raised £2200 for Loros and Dove Cottage. • St Mary's Platinum Jubilee Service. • Oadby and Wigston Lions event which was the Bardi Wind Orchestra at the De Montfort Hall. • Melton Rotary Club to discuss the Mayoral Role. • Belvoir Hunt Puppy Show. • Opening of the Melton and District Advice Centre at the Old Fox, Leicester Road. • CiCLE Cycle ladies race in Melton

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Forces Fly the Flag event at Parkside. • Long-service Taxi Awards at Parkside. • Leicestershire and Rutland Schools Games at Loughborough. • Opening of start of Melton Theatre. • Armed Services Parade and open air service at the Clock Tower, Leicester. • Stapleford Park Railway Challenge. • Melton in bloom's day. • British Model Flying Association event at Buckminster Estate.
CO16	<p>LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The Leader made the following speech:</p> <p><i>“As ever it’s been a busy couple of months since our last meeting and we’ve made good progress in some important areas of work.</i></p> <p><i>As we know the Stockyard at the Cattle Market was recently launched and whilst its great to see the recent investment on the site, our longer term plans go much further. We want to create a showcase for food and drink innovation and our extensive and ambitious development plans for the site form the basis of our round 2 Levelling Up Fund. We have done lots of work with Rutland County Council and have built a strong and credible joint bid, and If we secure the nearly £12m we are seeking it will enable us to build both high quality food production space, alongside flexible events space, creating a real feature and destination for the town. We look forward to submitting our bid before the deadline next week.</i></p> <p><i>Also due to be submitted next week is our UK Shared Prosperity Fund plan. Working within a very tight timescale we have consulted widely with all members, stakeholders and our Scrutiny Committee. Through ongoing dialogue and refinement we have developed a fantastic plan which seeks to meet the challenges Melton faces head on. We want to invest in helping people with the cost of living crisis through establishing a new community supermarket. We want to tackle rural isolation, boost investment in tourism, support our town centre, and attract and retain the workforce of tomorrow by supporting apprentices and graduates. I look forward to submitting our widely supported plan and discussing and finalising with government colleagues over the coming weeks.</i></p> <p><i>Whilst we should be extremely proud and confident of the high quality submissions we are making in these funds, we have to recognise that submitting bids is a competitive process and not everything we submit will succeed. We recently heard from government that our bid to secure investment to improve rail connectivity between Nottingham and Melton will not proceed to the next stage. We had done extremely well to get this far and had secured government funding to develop our business case. We made a strong case but ultimately government has taken the view that the investment required cannot be justified at this stage. The work we have done will not go to waste and we will continue to explore opportunities to improve this important transport link with Nottingham.</i></p>

Securing the right infrastructure to support our growth aspirations is key, as is ensuring enough new homes get built to increase housing availability and affordability within Melton. When we approved our Local Plan, we made a plan for growth and I'm delighted that more homes have been built in Melton in the last 12 months than at any time in the last 30 years. This breaks the record that was set last year and so it's great to see our strategic commitments delivering.

Whilst talking of housing, tonight we will consider, and I hope approve, our new HRA Business Plan. If we think back 3 years the progress we have made since we established our Housing Improvement Plan has been nothing short of phenomenal. Through our Corporate Strategy we remain absolutely focussed on delivering the high quality homes and landlord services our tenants deserve and tonight represents another important step on that journey. We will not rest on our laurels and there is plenty more work to be done, but we should all be extremely proud of the progress we are making.

Returning to the cost of living, we know this is a really tough time for people financially, with inflation rising sharply and energy bills set to rise significantly again in October. I'm determined that as a Council we will do all we can to help, and I'm delighted our team has got the £150 energy payments out so quickly, and also that we have recently approved our Cost of Living Plan with a genuine commitment to support people in any way we can. We have always been, and will continue to be, a caring Council, whether that is supporting our Ukrainian friends fleeing a warzone or by showing those who serve our country that we are a council that fully supports them and recognises the sacrifices they make. On that basis I am very proud that this year, for the first time, we have achieved the Gold Employer Recognition Award from the Ministry of Defence, demonstrating that commitment. Couple this with being the first council in the East Midlands to secure the Disability Confident Leader status last year and we are, once again, leading the way as an organisation that is here to provide opportunities to everyone in our society.

Gold is a theme for my update this month, as working with our fantastic partners, Melton in Bloom, the Council's environmental services team have worked tirelessly to deliver a terrific flora display within the town as we collectively strive to secure the highest award possible. I know all the many stakeholders involved in supporting the initiative this year believe there is nothing more we could have done and whatever the outcome, we can all be proud of their efforts.

We also want to celebrate the fantastic achievement of Iman Barlow a teacher at the Melton Learning Hub who recently returned from the US having become the World Number 1 in Muay Thai, a form of kick boxing. She is now an Olympic Recognised Gold Medallist at the World Games 2022 and we congratulate her on this wonderful achievement. We have dedicated and painted a gold bench in the town and we look forward to her opening the Let's Get Moving Melton Day on 21st

	<p><i>August. Further details on this event will be published shortly and I'd encourage all members to come along.</i></p> <p><i>Whilst we are celebrating Meltonians, I also read in the Melton Times today that Nij Vyas won the England National Sheepdog Trials, something made even more impressive because Kemi Lara the dog won the award having recovered from a dislocated foot sustained over a year ago. Many congratulations to Nij and Kemi Lara."</i></p> <p>In addition to his speech, the Leader requested that the Mayor writes a letter to Mr Vyas to congratulate him on winning the England National Sheepdog Trials. The Mayor agreed to the request.</p>
CO17	<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>No questions from the public had been received.</p>
CO18	<p>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the following question was received from Councillor Lumley:</p> <p><i>"For the benefit of Members and our audience of local residents, can I ask the Leader what action has the Council taken to work with the County Council in order to save the Centrebus no.19 Melton Mowbray - Nottingham Bus Service?"</i></p> <p><i>Whilst the service seems no longer commercially viable overall, it does serve as a key and often busy service for Nottingham area Higher Education students, commuters, disabled persons and sporting supporters attending venues in the Nottingham area, for example, Nottingham Forest and Notts County home matches.</i></p> <p><i>Can the response include the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) What discussions and correspondence have taken place with Leicestershire County Council Councillors and Transport Officers?</i> <i>b) Does the Council know if Leicestershire County Council have approached any other Bus Companies to take over this service with a reduced and/or more profitable key demand schedule?</i> <i>c) Does the Council know if Leicestershire County Council have contacted Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Councils and other key organisations connected to this service, such as Nottingham Higher Education establishments, for part funding of this service, or even launch their own service for its students?</i> <i>d) Over the past few years Leicestershire County Council and many other Councils nationwide have introduced Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) as an alternative public transport idea to replace reduced and cut bus</i>

services. Does the Council know if Leicestershire County Council will consider this option for this former bus service?”

The Leader provided the following response:

“Leicestershire County Council is the highways and transport authority for Leicestershire.

The County Council considered the withdrawal of this service and any alternative provision in the context of its Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy (PTPS). The Policy and Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in October 2018. The PTPS outlines the need to consider how residents can make journeys to access essential services such as food shopping and primary healthcare that are generally available at a local centre.

As part of our standard consultation process all affected local members are fully informed of bus service registrations and on the outcome of our impact assessment and intended action, if any. The County Councillors for Melton did raise concerns as part of the consultation process.

On review and assessment of the impact of this service change, it was identified that affected Leicestershire residents would continue to have access to those essential services at the local centre in Melton Mowbray, through existing alternative passenger transport provision.

- Residents on the route of the 19 in Melton Mowbray will continue to have access to the hourly town service 15.*
- Residents in Potters Hill and Ab Kettleby will continue to have access to service 25 for journeys to Melton via Stathern.*
- Residents in Ab Kettleby will also have access to the existing Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service, providing a return journey to Melton four days a week.*
- Residents of Nether Broughton will have access to service 23 for travel to Melton Mowbray.*

As part of this assessment, it was recognised from the passenger user data that some of the journeys made on the service were end to end; i.e. from Melton to Nottingham. Those journeys are however, outside the scope of the PTPS, the focus of which is on ensuring that residents continue to have access to a local centre at least once a week. Whilst it is acknowledged the removal of the service will have impacted on residents’ choice of journeys and destination, the financial challenges the council is facing means it is not cost-effective or viable to provide access to a choice of destinations, particularly when having to balance provision and access needs for residents across the whole county.”

Councillor Lumley asked the following supplementary question:

“On BBC East Midlands Today and ITV Central News in the last few weeks, there was a news article that stated that counties neighbouring Leicestershire (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) have received central government funding towards bus services but our county hasn’t. Are you able to explain why Leicestershire hasn’t received any funding?”

The Leader provided the following response:

Leicestershire County Council would ideally want to run a bus service similar to the one run in Nottinghamshire, unfortunately this is not possible due to lack of funding.

The Leader also commented that the number 19 service isn’t commercially viable because only 19 people per day use the service.

In accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the following question was received from Councillor Lumley:

“Our 1970s-style Town Centre car parking meters at our car parks are out of date.

They do not give change and do not accept contactless card payments, and increasingly are breaking down and so not in use, resulting in increased repair costs.

From my own observation and the much public feedback I have received over the years, mentioned above, this is highly frustrating, a nuisance and is poor for a Town undergoing a recent painting refurbishment, new Leicestershire County Council Bus Shelters, with a recent big emphasis on the 'Rural Capital of Food' branding, and its wider resulting increasing tourism and reputation from this.

The many Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire District Council car parks I have had to use over the past few years now have 21st century payment meters. I have been calling for this for years.

Please can the Cabinet member strongly consider replacing these for modern 21st century meters as a matter of urgency within the next budget spending opportunity?”

Councillor Bindloss, the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, provided the following response:

“The Council approved the planned maintenance programme for Corporate assets as part of the budget for the financial year 2022-23. This includes works for the car parks that require urgent attention.

	<p><i>You are right to observe that at present the machines only accept cash. But we have installed PayByPhone service in all our car parks which allows the customers to pay by card through the app on their phones or by calling the service.</i></p> <p><i>We are aware that the current car parking machines are approx. 10-12 years old. We are exploring the cost for replacing them and if affordable within the approved budget, this will be added to the maintenance works for this year.”</i></p> <p>Councillor Lumley asked the following supplementary question:</p> <p><i>“There is now central government funding for car parking meters and all Councils across the UK can apply for the funding. Can you also look at alternatives in trying to get visitors to stay in town longer, such as paying on exit? Could you also consider using ANPR to monitor vehicles as opposed to enforcement officers checking for tickets?”</i></p> <p>Councillor Bindloss, the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, provided the following response:</p> <p><i>“I think this is something we need to look at as it is such a wide ranging subject with so many different alternatives and it would be short-sighted to simply look at just one particular method. We will explore all options and I will come back to you and explain what we are doing.”</i></p>
CO19	<p>MOTIONS ON NOTICE</p> <p>No motions on notice had been received.</p>
CO20	<p>CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL - TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22</p> <p>Councillor de Burle, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources, introduced the report and moved the recommendations. The Leader seconded the motion.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approved the Treasury Management Annual Report 2021/22. 2) Noted the actual position on the Prudential Indicators for 2021/22. <p>(Unanimous)</p> <p><i>(At 7:14pm, Councillor Child left the meeting and missed the vote on this item. He returned to the meeting at 7:16pm after the vote had concluded.)</i></p>

CO21

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN 2022-52

Councillor Browne, Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services introduced the report and moved the recommendations. The Leader seconded the motion.

During the debate it was requested that Ward Councillors be invited on visits within their wards. In response the Portfolio Holder apologised for any omission and confirmed Ward Councillors would be invited in future.

It was noted that energy initiatives such as the installation of solar panel was working very well, as energy had been, and continues to be, a concern for tenants and that it is important for the Council to support tenants.

The good work of Housing Officers was highlighted to Members and the team were thanked for all their hard work.

Following a question about the building of new Council homes, Members were informed that the aim is to build 8 to 10 homes in the next five years.

In response to a query about emergency accommodation, Members were informed that the Council continue to review homelessness provision and that the aim is to reduce the use of B&B accommodation.

The Portfolio Holder and the Housing Officers were congratulated on how they had transformed the housing service from an underperforming one to a much-improved service. The Scrutiny Committee were also congratulated for reviewing and scrutinising the business plan, therefore ensuring that the plan is the best it can be.

One Member highlighted that, in their opinion, there continues to be a tenant to Council communications issue.

RESOLVED

Council:

- 1) Approved the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2022 – 2052 and associated policy recommendations.**
- 2) Delegated authority to the Director for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Director for Corporate services and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services to review and update the financial modelling within the HRA Business Plan on an annual basis to reflect the most up to date stock condition data.**

	<p>3) Delegated authority to the Director for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Director for Corporate services and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services to access the HRA Development and Regeneration Reserve to progress projects and activities in support of the HRA up to a limit of £100k per project and up to a maximum of £500k in any one year subject to the financial viability of the HRA Business plan not being undermined.</p> <p>4) Revised the target working balance of the HRA be to £1m with effect from 1 April 2023.</p> <p>5) Accepted that the affordability of new borrowing be measured using industry standard indicators, and these be tracked alongside the HRA business plan.</p> <p>6) Approved the continuation of the current policy of not providing for the repayment of debt within the HRA in respect of existing and any new borrowing.</p> <p>7) Set the rent for re-let properties at the 5% upward tolerance allowed on formula rent.</p> <p>8) Designated the Director for Housing and Communities as the nominated person with responsibility for compliance with landlord health and safety on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>9) Designated the Assistant Director for Housing Management as the nominated person with responsibility for ensuring that the consumer standards, as set out by the Social Housing Regulator, are met.</p> <p>10) Agreed the following finance principles as set out at Section 9.8 of Appendix 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) that overhead recharges remain as is with annual uplift for inflation. b) that any growth in management and maintenance costs is met by reductions elsewhere within the HRA. c) that actual rent increases are in line with Government policy to maximise income to the HRA. <p>(Unanimous)</p>
CO22	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES - SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22</p> <p>Councillor Child, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, introduced the report and moved the recommendation. Councillor Chandler seconded the motion.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p>

	<p>Council:</p> <p>Noted the Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22.</p>
CO23	<p>COUNCILLOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE</p> <p>The Leader introduced the report and moved the recommendation. The Deputy Leader seconded the motion.</p> <p>During the debate, Councillor Carter expressed his support for the report and the recommendation.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <p>Granted a dispensation to allow Councillor Mel Steadman to remain a Member of the Authority up to and including 8 May 2023 should she not be able to attend a meeting as a Member before 3 September 2022 due to continued ill health.</p> <p>(Unanimous)</p> <p><i>(At 7:42pm, upon the conclusion of this item, Councillors Cumbers, Glancy and Higgins left the meeting and did not return.)</i></p>
CO24	<p>REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer introduced the report. The Leader moved the recommendations and the Deputy Leader seconded them.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Approved the political balance calculation set out at paragraph 5.1 of the report. 2) Approved the allocation of committee seats to political groups as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report and noted the membership of each committee as set out in Appendix A. <p>(17 in Favour, 1 Abstention)</p>

The meeting closed at: 7.48 pm

Mayor