

# Minutes

<b>Meeting name</b>	<b>Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Wednesday, 27 September 2017</b>
<b>Start time</b>	<b>6.30 pm</b>
<b>Venue</b>	<b>Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray LE13 1GH</b>

## Present:

**Chair** Councillor T. Bains (Chair)

<b>Councillors</b>	P. Baguley	P. Chandler (Vice-Chair)
	M. Blase	G. Botterill
	R. de Burle	P. Cumbers
	J. Douglas	P. Faulkner
	A. Freer-Jones	M. Graham
	T. Greenow	L. Higgins
	J. Hurrell	J. Illingworth
	J. Orson	A. Pearson
	P. Posnett	B. Rhodes
	J. Simpson	D. Wright
	J. Wyatt	

**Officers**

- Chief Executive
- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services
- Local Plans Manager
- Democracy & Involvement Officer

Minute No.	Minute
CO46	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beaken, Glancy, Holmes, Hutchison, Lumley, and Sheldon.</p>
CO47	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>Councillor Graham declared a pecuniary interest by virtue of being a representative on the Sir John Sedley Educational Trust which was a land owner within the Borough and indicated he would leave the meeting before the discussion on the Melton Local Plan commenced.</p> <p>Councillors Pearson, Orson, Posnett, and Rhodes each declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Leicestershire County Council due to their roles as County Councillors.</p> <p>Councillor Orson declared a pecuniary interest in the three items relating to the Melton Local Plan as a land owner and indicated he would leave the meeting before the discussion on the Melton Local Plan commenced.</p> <p>Having sought advice from the Chief Executive, Councillor Freer-Jones declared a personal interest arising from being a trustee of the Melton Mowbray Town Estate.</p> <p>[Councillors Graham and Orson here left the meeting.]</p>
CO48	<p><b>MELTON LOCAL PLAN:</b></p> <p>The Deputy Leader referred to the importance and complexity of the matter before the Council and requested that Standing Order 13.5 be suspended for this meeting only to enable Members to make supplementary comments and ask further questions if they so wished. Councillor Chandler seconded the motion.</p> <p>The Mayor called for a vote on the suspension of Standing Order 13.5 which was subsequently carried.</p> <p>Before taking the first item, the Mayor drew Members' attention to the two representations which had been circulated at the meeting.</p>
CO49	<p><b>MELTON LOCAL PLAN: ADDENDUM OF FOCUSED CHANGES CONSULTATION</b></p> <p>Members had before them a report prepared by the Head of Strategic Planning &amp; Regulatory Services which sought to appraise the Council about the Addendum of Focused Changes Consultation. The Council was asked to agree a further addendum to the Melton Local Plan Community Consultation and Engagement Statement which brought the record of consultation activity up to date.</p> <p>Councillor Chandler, as Chair of the Melton Local Plan Working Group,</p>

commended the report to the Council, commenting in particular on the following:

- the ‘Focused Changes’ were made in response to a series of representations and new information comprising 13 significant amendments to the Local Plan. The report explained how they were presented to the public and provided an overview of the consultation process;
- the breadth of the consultation which had taken place and the level of responses received which had been incorporated into the Consultation Statement appended to the report;
- her concern at the behaviour of some members of the public who had subjected staff to verbal hostility and aggression. She had personally witnessed this level of unacceptable behaviour at the Bottesford event. Such incidents prevented genuinely interested residents from getting the information they were seeking about the Local Plan and its procedures from staff. If further events were to be held, the Council would seriously consider the employment of security measures in the future.

Councillor Chandler then moved the recommendations as contained within the report and this was seconded by Councillor Illingworth who reserved his right to speak later in the debate if he so wished.

The Deputy Leader referred to the abusive incidents at the consultation events and condemned the people who had behaved in such an unacceptable way towards the staff and impinged on the ability of others to participate.

Councillor Illingworth made reference to the two representations that had been circulated at the meeting and expressed concern that such late submission precluded Members having the time to take in and absorb the contents.

The Mayor moved to the vote on the recommendations contained in the motion as proposed and seconded. This was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** that

- (1) the contents of this report are noted; and
- (2) the further Addendum to the Community Consultation and Engagement Statement forming Appendix 1 to this report be agreed.

CO50

**MELTON LOCAL PLAN: ADDENDUM OF FOCUSED CHANGES CONSULTATION - REPRESENTATIONS AND RESPONSES**

In a report, previously circulated, the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services provided a summary of the representations received in response to the consultation on the Melton Local Plan Addendum of Focussed Changes. The report highlighted the main issues they raised, and sought agreement to the proposed responses to all of the representations. It also addressed previously unreported representations from the Pre Submission stage that were not

considered at the meeting on 4 July 2017.

Councillor Chandler presented the report to Members and drew their attention to an Erratum/Update paper which had subsequently been prepared in which a small number had been addressed previously. Councillor Chandler

- mentioned that a wide range of views had been expressed on almost every subject, quite often diametrically opposed to one another. However, none had been so persuasive to lead the Working Group to conclude that further changes to the Plan at this stage should be made, whether in relation to the fundamental issues such as development quantity or the balance between Melton and the villages, or more details policy or site specific issues;
- stressed that it was important to understand the stage that had been reached. If the Council submitted the Plan for Examination, as recommended by the Working Group, every single contribution to both Pre Submission and Focussed Changes would be forwarded for the Inspector's consideration and every contributor could appear at the Examination and explain why they believe their approaches are a better way forward than the drafted Plan. If the Inspector was persuaded, he/she could make modifications to the Plan that would be the subject of further consultation and Examination;
- emphasised that the Plan was a plan for growth and prosperity, it was not just about housing. To enable businesses in the Borough to grow and prosper, increased labour supply must be provided in the locality. More jobs required an increase in the working age population, would arise from planned new households. The Local Plan allocating around 6,000 houses and 30 ha of employment land in Melton Mowbray would allow the opportunity for businesses to expand. These developments brought with them infrastructure provision to unleash the potential that existed in the area, and policies to tackle some of the issues faced with – an aging population, expensive housing and lack of affordable housing, as well as the pressing need to solve the congestion problems in Melton Mowbray through the Distributor Road which was now out for consultation.

Councillor Chandler moved the recommendations contained in the report and these were seconded by Councillor Illingworth who reserved his right to speak later in the debate.

The Deputy Leader spoke on the ethos of the Plan coming from the Government's National Planning Policy Framework but it would also secure the optimum funding for the Distributor road and provide the best opportunity for the next generation to own their own homes. Equally as important, it would give the Council a greater degree of control over development. Officers and Members had worked hard to obtain the widest representations for the much needed distributor road and the Local Plan made the best case for it. There had been debate around 170 versus 245 new houses per annum being built in the Borough but the lower figure would make the funding for the road unlikely and the rural areas would then risk taking on more housing. The Deputy Leader urged Members to support the

recommendations proposed at the meeting, warning that any delay in submitting the Local Plan could technically make all land within the Borough available for development.

A Member then referred to the representations tabled at the meeting from the Clerk to the Bottesford Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and stated that if the Council submitted the MLP following debate, it would be the final version and therefore bring the stability sought in the letter. Reiterating the comments made by Councillor Chandler, he stated that those who had made representations would have the opportunity to attend the Examination and endeavour to persuade the Inspector that their alternative approach is better. The Member suggested the points raised by the Clerk to the Bottesford Parish NPSG were dealt with in that manner and he be advised accordingly. The Chief Executive confirmed this would be dealt with accordingly.

Discussion continued with another Member commenting on the perception that the consultation process had just been a 'tick box' exercise. However, the Working Group had looked at each and every comment made and commended officers for the way they had ensured that all the representations had been brought before Members. The Plan itself and the proposed route of the distributor road would not please everyone, and concerns that it would not be built until after further development had taken place were acknowledged. Yet the Council was now closer than it had ever been to securing this important road for the town and these additional houses would help secure the funding. Several other Members spoke on the necessity of further development to secure the funding to build the road without which the future for the economic viability of the town would be bleak. Without the Local Plan, the Council as a planning authority had little defence against applications and it would provide a degree of control which far exceeds what existed at the moment. It was stressed that the growth and prosperity of the town was not in isolation of the villages – the Plan was for the whole Borough.

A further view was expressed that it was regrettable that the Plan had not attracted widespread support from the community and that if a different direction had been taken, the development of a garden village in particular, then widespread development in existing villages could have been restricted. There was the fear that where there were applications queuing up for the larger villages, this could change the way of life in these communities forever. The new distributor road would go ahead unless the Government for some reason could no longer allocate the funds. It was important to build additional homes to make the economic case for the road. There was interesting debate on the route of the road but it would transform not just the town but the whole Borough and secure a brighter future. Councillor Rhodes advised the Council that this would be the last time he would speak on the Local Plan as he had been asked by the Leader of the County Council to take over the responsibility as a Cabinet Member for all the County property in Melton which would therefore mean he would need to declare an interest in future.

A further view was then expressed on the route of the distributor road; a Member stated her opposition to the change in area of separation between the south side of

the town and Burton Lazars which would adversely impact on that area of historic environment. A question was raised on the two additional representations that had been circulated at the meeting and asked what response Officers would give.

The Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services said that the letters had suggested postponing the progression of the Local Plan because of the Bottesford Parish Neighbourhood Plan. He warned of the danger that if the Council waited, the Plan would not be submitted. Officers considered that there was now an adequate body of evidence and were sufficiently confident in the findings that the Plan should be submitted. These and any other representations could be brought to the attention of the Inspector so there was a means by which they could be accommodated.

A Member referred to the email received from Beth Johnson in which three questions had been directed at the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services. The Officer then responded to each of these questions accordingly:

(1) Is he confident that, following consultation, GREA1 will be *effective*, i.e. deliverable?

*Response: this site had been assessed by exactly the same methodology as the other sites in the Local Plan and it had passed those tests in the same manner as all the others that had been allocated, so yes there was a high degree of confidence.*

(2) Have any other, better sites since come forward in Great Dalby?

*Response: Other sites have come forward in Great Dalby, very latterly in the process, at the end of this recent set of consultation periods. Whether they were better or not, officers did not know as they had not been through the same consistent, rigorous assessment process. It was proposed to apply the same methodology to them and present the results to the Examination. Should this then reveal to the Inspector that site A is superior to site B, the Inspector would be quite at liberty to propose the switchover as a modification following the methodology that Councillors Chandler and Wright had spoken about earlier.*

(3) Given that there are significant issues with GREA1 and that the Council is aware that other, yet to be assessed, sites have come forward, shouldn't this particular allocation be re-considered?

*Response: We would suggest not; the Examination can fulfil that purpose.*

The Deputy Leader commented that similar concerns had been expressed about Somerby2 and Somerby3 and stated that the communities had to try and resolve these issues as well as the Council. Referring to Great Dalby, at this stage the Council could not lose a particular site in terms of allocation or else it would start to unpick the whole plan. He asked the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services to refer to the advice obtained from the QC.

The Officer explained that the QC had advised the Council in theoretical terms as had been applied to the Great Dalby example. He reiterated that everyone who had made presentations could have an opportunity to present these to the Inspector and he/she would judge if their proposal was better than that put forward by the Council. This would be at both the macro level for the whole plan but also at a micro level right down to individual sites and the wording of individual policies. The door was still open for this debate to continue but with an independent adjudicator.

Councillor Chandler then moved the recommendations as contained in the report and this was seconded by Councillor Illingworth. The recommendations, which were taken en bloc, were carried following a vote.

**RESOLVED:** that

- (1) the contents of this report are noted;
- (2) the responses to representations set out in Appendix 1 (a to o) of this report be agreed, and;
- (3) delegated powers be given to the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services to make minor amendments to the responses to representations set out in Appendix 1 where considered necessary;
- (4) the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services be authorised to sign the Joint Statement by the Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities on Collaborative Planning on behalf of the Council as set out in Appendix 2, including any amendments made by partner Authorities that do not affect its substantive meaning or content.

CO51

**MELTON LOCAL PLAN: NEXT STEPS, SUBMISSION AND DELEGATIONS**

Members had before them a report prepared by the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services which outlined the remaining steps of the Local Plan preparation process, informed the Council about what the Council needs to do when it submitted the Local Plan for examination, and explained why delegated powers would be needed by officers to ensure that the Council can participate efficiently and effectively during the Examination.

The report was presented by Councillor Chandler who explained :

- that the report covered the detailed practical arrangements for submission. The period after submission and through the Examination was dynamic and Members needed to allow the Officers the freedom to be able to respond to issues as and when they arose. In Examination, this could be as short as a couple of hours or overnight;
- Members would need to be kept informed about progress and the issues raised, and the report also suggested how this could be done – through the Working Group, briefings and close liaison with Lead Members;

- this was a seminal moment for the Plan. The recommendation was that it now be submitted along with a series of suggested amendments that were set out in Appendix 1. These were issues where it was believed that the Plan could be improved without affecting its fundamental objectives and design and the Inspector would be invited to consider these amendments as potential modifications.

Councillor Chandler then moved the recommendations contained in the report and this was seconded by Councillor Illingworth.

Before moving to the vote, the Deputy Leader stated it had been a long journey to reach this point and wished to place on record his thanks to Councillor Chandler for her considerable work on the Local Plan and the collaborative approach which had been taken by the Working Group. He also expressed his thanks to the members of the public for submitting representations and taking part in the focus groups. Thanks were given to the officers, in particular the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services (Jim Worley) and the Local Plan Manager (Valerie Adams) who had gone above and beyond the call of duty. On behalf of all members he expressed the Council's gratitude.

The vote on the recommendations was taken en bloc and unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED:** that

- (1) the contents of this report are noted; and
- (2) the Melton Local Plan Pre Submission, as amended by the changes outlined in the Addendum of Focused Changes, be agreed and submitted to the Government for Examination as soon as possible; and
- (3) authority be delegated to the Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services to :
  - a) complete all the documents required to fulfil the regulatory requirements at Local Plan submission, as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 and to meet the best practice advice of the Planning Inspectorate and Planning Advisory Service; and
  - b) agree actions and make decisions that are necessary during the Local Plan Examination to ensure that the Local Plan can be found sound and that any legal compliance issues are resolved; and
  - c) if needed, provide an updated list of suggested minor modifications to the Inspector conducting the local plan examination; and.
  - d) correct any typographical, numbering and formatting errors in the



local plan.

(4) that Members be kept informed of any significant issues that the Council has to respond to and the response that has been made during the Examination on the Council's behalf , with details to be agreed by the Melton Local Plan Working Group.

The meeting closed at: 7.29 pm

Mayor