

Minutes

Meeting name	Town Area Committee
Date	Monday, 12 March 2018
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor M. Glancy (Chair)

Councillors S. Lumley (Vice-Chair) T. Beaken
M. Blase P. Cumbers
P. Faulkner T. Greenow
J. Illingworth A. Pearson

Observers J. Orson

Officers Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Corporate Services Manager
Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager
Waste & Environmental Maintenance Manager
Administrative Assistant Elections & Member Support

Minute No.	Minute
T26	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bains, Douglas, Freer-Jones, Hurrell, Posnett and Wyatt.</p>
T27	<p>Minutes The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2017 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The Minutes of the Consultation meeting held on 12 February 2018 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair subject to the following amendments:</p> <p><u>Minute T17 – Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Councillor Cumbers submitted her apologies for the meeting.</p> <p><u>Minute T18 – Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>‘Councillor Bains declared a personal interest and here left the meeting’ would be removed.</p>
T28	<p>Declarations of interest Councillor Orson who was present as an observer and Councillor Pearson declared personal interests in any matters relating to the County Council, due to their roles as County Councillors.</p>
T29	<p>Recommendations From Other Committees There were no recommendations from other Committees.</p>
T30	<p>Update on Decisions There were no outstanding decisions to consider at this meeting.</p>
T31	<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring April to December 2017 On behalf of the Director for Corporate Services, the Corporate Services Manager</p> <p>(a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which provided information on actual expenditure and income incurred on this Committee’s services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 December 2017;</p> <p>(b) gave a brief overview of the report, highlighting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring up to 31 December • the summary of income and expenditure for this Committee’s services, as detailed at Appendix A of the report

- the summary of the income and expenditure for this Committee's services compared to the approved budget at December 2017, as detailed at 3.3 of the report, showing a predicted underspend of £430

Upon proposal and seconding of the recommendation at 2.1 of the report, Members voted and it was

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of this Committee's services to 31 December 2017 and year end forecast be noted.

Members agreed to consider the recommendation at 2.2 of the report in private session and it was

RESOLVED that the Public be excluded during the consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (Access to Information: Exempt Information) under Paragraphs 3.

Members discussed the Skate Park Lease at Schedule 1 of the report and it was

RESOLVED that the skate park lease arrangements proposed at exempt Schedule 1 of the report be agreed in principle, with final terms of the lease to be brought to a future meeting of this Committee for Member consideration.

[The meeting resumed in public session]

T32

Capital Programme Monitoring April 2017 to Jan 2018

On behalf of the Director for Corporate Services, the Corporate Services Manager

- (a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) updating the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to January 2018;
- (b) gave a brief overview of the report, highlighting
 - spending against budget for schemes within this Committee up to 31 January, as detailed at Appendix A of the report
 - the overall position for all capital schemes falling within this Committee, as detailed at 5.2 of the report
 - the Kirby Fields and Honeysuckle Way scheme completed in line with the budget
 - the Project Mandate as detailed at Appendix B of the report, seeking the release of capital funds (£20k) for new play equipment at Melton Country Park Climbing Forest and Kirby Fields
 - the Project Mandate as detailed at Appendix C of the report seeking Members' support making a purpose built 'Equalities Act' compliant Path for All at Melton Country Park. Members were encouraged to provide comments, which would be fed back to Community and

Social Affairs Committee.

A Member stated that a number of residents had contacted them because the old play equipment at Honeysuckle Way had been taken away a considerable time before the new equipment had been installed. The Member queried if the equipment had been removed because it was unsafe and the Waste and Environmental Maintenance Manager confirmed that this was correct.

A Member highlighted the £20k cost for new play equipment at Melton Country Park Climbing Forest and Kirby Fields, querying if sponsorship or grant funding had been considered to fund all or part of this cost. The Waste and Environmental Maintenance Manager confirmed that sponsorship and grant funding possibilities were always explored and although grant funding was limited, it was hoped that such funding would be secured for the proposed Path for All project.

There being no further comments or questions, it was

RESOLVED that

- (1) the progress made on each capital scheme, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, together with the year end forecast position be noted;
- (2) the Project Mandate, as detailed in Appendix B of the report be approved for inclusion in the 2018/19 Capital Programme;
- (3) Member comments concerning the inclusion of the Path for All Mandate into the Capital Programme be referred to Community and Social Affairs Committee;

T33

Community Action Groups - Alignment with Council Services

On behalf of the Deputy Chief Executive, the Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager

- (a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) enabling Members to acknowledge the impact of community action groups and explore future ways of closer partnership working and potential future formal partnership/alignment;
- (b) highlighted
 - this Council liaised in different ways (on a daily basis) with community groups. The aim was to standardise an inconsistent approach to liaison to improve reporting processes and equality of response from services;
 - this Council was not currently aligned or affiliated with any community group but acknowledged that collaboration with these groups would be valuable. The Council recognised them as a resource to the Borough, both as a focal point for voluntary action and as an

important issue identification and notification tool, with an active online presence and dedicated social media following;

- the proposal that he as Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager assesses how each group reports issues to this Council

(c) Requested that Members provide guidance on setting out the terms of liaison with community groups

A Member commented that partnership working was key to this Council's successful delivery of services. They added that it was important that Council Partners were constituted organisations/groups.

The Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager advised that this Council received significant call of demand from a number of groups, some of whom were not constituted and he reiterated that the Council recognised the value of its liaison with them. He confirmed he would raise the issue of constitutionalising themselves with the groups.

Another Member commented that Councillors' direct liaison with the local community was invaluable and information received from the public was heavily relied upon. Members should readily avail themselves for discussion with the public and make every effort to provide them with information. As a resource, these groups should be 'tapped into' but it was important to demonstrate caution in engagement and formal alignment with non-constituted groups. Highlighting 5.2 of the report and further commenting that MBC logos on garments of those not employed by this Council may be confusing for the public, the Member queried what the insurance implications of such alignment would be.

The Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager confirmed that these comments were noted. The intention was to improve and manage the reporting of issues procedures for community groups in the most effective way to result in the highest number of positive outcomes possible. Communication via digital apps, Customer Services, direct to each service, online forms and single liaison point should be explored.

A Member commented that the management structure and style of this Council was changing. In the past, there had been a lack of engagement with many community groups. Our community groups had much to offer. This Council should be proactive in working with the groups and could even consider offering them community projects to undertake. The Member disagreed with previous comments stating the importance of these groups being constituted. Issues such as dog fouling and 'who is our Councillor' had been raised and these groups had every right to utilise social media to highlight their areas of concern. These groups should be embraced and used. Overlooking these groups would be done at the peril of this Council.

Other Members reaffirmed the view that such groups should be constituted. Any group could report issues to this Council but if a group purported to act on behalf of others it should be a constituted group, ensuring there was guidance on its remit.

They expressed concern that Members had not been made aware of complaints within their wards and requested that they be informed in future.

Another Member added that rather than being critical of community groups it was important to reflect on why Members were not aware of the complaints which community groups were reporting on behalf of local residents.

The Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager advised that upon receipt of a complaint/notification of an issue, this Council's focus was on resolving the matter but consideration would be given to informing Members in future.

A Member commented that they had set aside any scepticism they once held concerning a particular community group and had decided to embrace the ethics of the group. The Council and this group desired to work for the community and the Member was happy to collaborate to maximise positive outcomes. They highlighted that collaboration between this Council and community groups required commitment from both and the Terms of Reference and framework of alignment needed to be regularised.

Another Member commented that community groups who were eager to help improve Melton should not be discouraged from doing so. The Member advised that they had previously raised the possibility of employing a Social Media Officer, responsible for monitoring Facebook and Twitter feeds, enabling early identification of local concerns. It was also essential to ensure there were staff resources in place to deal promptly with issues reported to this Council.

A Member further commented that issues reported to the Council generated a massive demand on resources. Currently the Human Resources and Communications Manager and Community Safety Officer monitored social media. A Constitution, Annual General Meeting and Terms of Reference were fundamental to proper management of these groups and provided some form of accountability for these self-appointed groups.

The Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager agreed that an active Council presence on social media was vital to its relationship with the community and standardising the procedure for reporting issues would increase efficiency. He reiterated that he would raise the importance of being constituted with the groups.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the principle of increased partnership/collaborative working with community action groups be supported by Members;
- (2) responsibility for engaging with community action groups, including standardising reporting processes and regular liaison be delegated to the Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager;
- (3) the guidance to officers regarding points 5.1 and 5.2 of the report be noted

as, 'there should be clear rules of engagement with community action groups. The groups are not employed by Melton Borough Council but are friends of the Council and will be supported by the Council as far as reasonably possible';

- (4) the Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager would provide this Committee with a progress report and proposed operating framework towards the end of 2018/19.

T34

Neighbourhood Management Update

On behalf of the Deputy Chief Executive, the Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager

- (a) submitted a report providing Members with an updated position statement regarding the ongoing neighbourhood management project within the Melton Borough and providing Members with updated information regarding recruitment of a dedicated neighbourhood resource, the planned operations of the recruited officers and the greater alignment with communities within the Borough.
- (b) advised that the report set out the work which the proposed two full time Neighbourhood Officers would do once in post
- (c) highlighted
- Full Council had recently approved an increase in funding to accelerate the recruitment of two full time Neighbourhood Support Officers
 - Funds would be released in the 2018/19 financial year and would be focussed on the four 'priority areas' within Melton, identified as Egerton Ward, Fairmead Estate, Town Centre Flats and Queensway Estate (and would also cover the wider town area)
 - A recruitment phase would begin in April 2018. The scope of remit for officers would evolve over the year and the resource would remain flexible, with a review of responsibilities and roles within the first six months of implementation. Progress would be reported to this Committee on a quarterly basis
 - Policy for enforcement was on 'our agenda'. However, officers would not from the outset have any specific enforcement responsibilities or delegated powers. It was anticipated they would have the responsibility to
 - I. identify a particular need for action and recommend a specific response to service areas
 - II. identify and deal with issues such as littering, dog fouling, fly tipping etc
 - III. engage with our residents more effectively and have better presence in the community. Quarterly reports on progress instead of six monthly.

A Member queried what were the proposed working hours for the officers and the Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager confirmed the hours of work would be flexible to include week days, evenings and weekend.

Another Member commented that this action was very positive for residents and asked if it included the borough as well as the town. The Housing, Welfare and Safer Communities Manager advised that the issues identified within the report were predominantly town issues and so this action was principally for the town area. The Deputy Chief Executive added that the funding originated mainly from the Special Expenses for the town (as well as the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account). However, if there was a particular need outside the town, action through this resource could be considered.

There being no further comments or questions, it was

RESOLVED that

(1) the outline roles for the Neighbourhood Support Officers be approved.

T35

Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at: 8.05 pm

Chair