

# Minutes

<b>Meeting name</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Wednesday, 13 February 2019</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 P. Chandler (Chair)

**Councillors**

P. Baguley	T. Beaken
G. Botterill	R. de Burle
P. Cumbers	J. Douglas
P. Faulkner	A. Freer-Jones
T. Greenow (Vice-Chair)	E. Holmes
E. Hutchison	J. Illingworth
S. Lumley	J. Orson
A. Pearson	P. Posnett
B. Rhodes	M. Sheldon
J. Simpson	D. Wright
J. Wyatt	

**Officers**

- Chief Executive
- Deputy Chief Executive
- Director for Corporate Services
- Director for Legal and Democratic Services
- Director for Growth and Regeneration
- Corporate Services Manager
- Senior Democracy Officer

The Reverend Kevin Ashby offered prayers.

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Minute</b>
CO57	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bains, Glancy, Graham MBE, Higgins and Hurrell.</p>
CO58	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>Councillors Orson, Pearson, 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><u>Minute CO72 - Council Tax Discretions</u></p> <p>The Mayor, Councillor Chandler, declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item due to receiving a rental income from a second property and would leave the meeting when this item was considered.</p> <p>Councillors Holmes, Orson, Rhodes and Simpson declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item due to having landlord responsibilities and advised that they would leave the meeting when this item was considered.</p> <p><u>Minute CO73 - Pay Policy and Pension Discretions</u></p> <p>The Chief Executive declared a personal interest for all officers present in this item due to the report directly referencing the salary and pension arrangements for officers of the Council.</p>
CO59	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p>Acceptance of the minutes as a true record was proposed by the Leader and seconded by Councillor Freer-Jones. Following a vote the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Mayor.</p>
CO60	<p><b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b></p> <p>The Mayor led the tributes for both Councillor Michael Blase and Honorary Alderman Colin Chapman. The Mayor said that she had attended the funeral of Colin that day along with the Leader and Councillors Botterill, Holmes and Rhodes. She referred to Colin's early army service and his police career which spanned 26 years and earned him 5 commendations. He was elected to the Council in 1987 and served until 2011 when he was made Alderman. He had old fashioned values and was known to stand up for what he believed was right and always spoke his mind but had a good sense humour too that made him approachable by all across generations.</p> <p>The Mayor stated Councillor Blase had served on the Council since 2016 and had quickly made his mark as a proactive ward Councillor on the Egerton Ward. He was never afraid to ask questions and due to his contributions it was clear he was always well prepared for meetings. He was a keen allotment gardener and had been a football referee for a local club. He left behind a partner and loving family and was a decent, quiet, loyal, hardworking and compassionate man who would be</p>

greatly missed by all who knew him.

Other Councillors paid tribute to Honorary Alderman Chapman referring to his long Council service, his sense of humour and approach to canvassing as being so well known on the ward and in the town that he didn't feel the need to hand out leaflets. He was a larger than life character who gave good counsel and would be sadly missed.

Other Councillors paid tribute to Michael Blase's very sad and sudden passing and that he had been a thoroughly decent and positive person who wanted to be helpful and was a great loss to his partner, family, ward residents and the Council. He was not strongly political in his Council work and was a well respected colleague who showed great support for his ward and its residents and that was why he had stood for election.

#### Mayoral activities

The Mayor gave a brief summary of the engagements she had attended since the December Council meeting as follows :-

#### December

Carol services both locally and countywide with the highlight being the Melton Choral Society Concert at St. Mary's Church as well as a farewell lunch for the public convenience attendants

#### January

Rotary Club's lunch meeting, Grantham's Civic Service, the rededication of St. James' Church at Burton Lazars, the 1279 Melton Mowbray Squadron Air Training Corps dining in night and the Holocaust Memorial event at Kettering. She had also met with the new Principal at Brooksby Melton College and attended the Melton Stroke Club which highlighted the commitment of volunteers who give so much to such organisations.

#### February

Melton Guides World Thinking Day Celebrations in St. Mary's Church which again she felt highlighted the work of volunteer leaders and helpers.

The Mayor referred to her Mayoral awards which would be presented on 8 April and thanked the publicity of the Melton Times in bringing forth some worthy candidates. She promoted a quiz to be held in aid of her appeal on 22 February at Parkside as well as reminded Members of the Civic Dinner on 8 March at Brooksby Hall.

#### Order of business

The Mayor announced there would be a change to the order of business of the meeting to enable the Chair of the Welland Remuneration Panel, who would be presenting the Member Allowances Scheme report (agenda item 12), to leave as early as possible and therefore the New Governance Arrangements report (agenda item 9) would be taken as the last item of the meeting.

Minute CO70 – Revenue Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy

Within the Mayor's announcements, Councillor Cumbers apologised for her late declaration of a pecuniary interest in Minute 70 due to her role as a trustee of shopmobility. She advised she would leave the meeting for this item.

CO61

**LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader stated that

- (a) it had been a couple of months since the Council took a huge step to move to a cabinet and scrutiny model from May this year. He believed this would make a big difference as the Council looked to become a more commercial and agile organisation and address some of the governance challenges identified by the LGA and recognised by all at the Council. He was delighted that the change received such strong support from the Council and thought it gave a clear platform to build on;
- (b) since that time the Director for Legal and Democratic Services and colleagues had been working tirelessly on writing a brand new, streamlined and more effective constitution. At that meeting the Council was to consider the first set of documents which would ultimately form the new constitution from May. The Governance Development Group had continued to meet and was joined by Councillor Blase who made some excellent contributions to help shape and develop the early drafts. These were shared with all members enabling wider comments to be fed in. Last week the Governance Committee considered all the documents before the Council and the views expressed and any proposed amendments made as a consequence of the discussion, had been shared with the Council for consideration and approval at this Council meeting. The constitution would always need to be a live document and would continue to adapt over time. It was anticipated that some further sections would be presented to the Council for consideration later in the month and then again in April, so a fully approved, new constitution was ready for the new Council in May;
- (c) another area the Council had been focussing on for improvement was planning; as the Council looked to deliver the housing and jobs Melton needed. Through the recent service prioritisation exercise members made the planning service one of their top three priorities and for this reason the Council wanted to ensure it had the most effective planning service possible. This may mean an increase in resources, but first the Council needed to ensure its structures, processes and procedures were as effective as they could be. The Council was awaiting the final review report and as a consequence was starting to consider how it might want to develop and how the Planning Committee operated. He looked forward to discussing the findings with members in due course and any proposed changes as to how it operated would be fed into the constitutional changes considered in April;

- (d) he was delighted the Corporate Committee recently approved its new Fire Safety Policy alongside additional resources for a new Compliance Officer as the Council looked to continue its investment into its housing stock. Over the last year he had made improving the quality of housing a priority and was delighted the Council had been joined by two new Housing Tenancy Officers to strengthen how the Council managed both its assets and the tenants who live within them. There was more work to do in this area and later this year the Council would be refreshing its HRA Business Plan to ensure it invested sufficiently in its existing stock, as well as consider any ambitions for new build in the future;
- (e) Members be reminded about the informal briefing to be held before the next Council meeting regarding the progress made in developing a new 'story' or 'vision' for Melton. This was something the Council had been working on with a wide variety of stakeholders. In early January the Council hosted over 80 people at Parkside for a Town and Place Partnership workshop and the Council was in the process of finalising a Destination Management Plan which would drive a range of activities all geared around improving Melton's profile and attracting new businesses and tourists to the area. He thanked Councillors Freer-Jones, Sheldon and Glancy for their support and leadership on this work and looked forward to the session on 27 February where officers would share more details about the work being undertaken and the preparations being made for a sizable bid to the government's Future High Street Fund;
- (f) in terms of specific town centre developments, the St Mary's Way toilets would be opened on 20 February as per the recent announcement and the arrangements for the Wilton Road toilets were being finalised and the opening was expected to be in mid-March. At the same time the Council was also undertaking some signage and environmental improvements in the area to maximise the benefits to visitors and users of the town centre. Whilst a successful bid to the Future High Street Fund could make a huge difference to our ambitions for the town, he was pleased with the steady progress made over recent months. The investment in 7 King Street saw a new business, Beerheadz, move into Melton and the Council's work and partnership at the Cattle Market also recently enabled the opening of a new brewery;
- (g) he referred to frustration and disappointment at the BBC study published in the previous week which suggested Melton was a poor place for young people. It was fully recognised that there was more to do and bids to things like the Future High Street Fund and the adoption of the Local Plan and Strategic Growth Plan highlighted the work being done to transform the town. The BBC datasets used were however, skewed against rural areas and did not reflect the many positive attributes of Melton. The Council rejected the BBC's findings and would be writing to them to challenge what they had said and suggesting that rather than just being critical they offer some assistance. Who knows, maybe Melton will host the Radio 1 Big Weekend Festival this year;

	<p>(h) being ambitious for town and place as well as ensuring core services were properly resourced underpinned the key elements of the budget before the Council later in that meeting. As discussed numerous times, and the LGA had advised the Council had to prioritise and the current levels of funding available could not sustain everything the Council did. To be effective the Council had to ensure resources were moved away from non-priorities and towards its priorities. Based on the service prioritisation work already done and the feedback from all members, he believed the budget before the Council achieved that and ensured the Council continued to do those things that mattered most to Melton's communities and he would speak more on this later in the meeting;</p> <p>(i) finally he felt he should mention Brexit. Whatever perspective anyone had on this, it could not be ignored in the current uncertainty of what might happen. All Councils in the UK were making preparations for a potential 'no deal' scenario and as recently announced there was some funding support for local authorities. The Council was working with partners through the local resilience partnership to make necessary preparations and these would step up significantly if the prospect of a 'no deal' scenario remained. This would take up officer time and capacity and he asked Members to be mindful of this and the impact it may have on other activity as the end of March approached.</p>
CO62	<p><b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> There were no public questions submitted for this meeting.</p>
CO63	<p><b>PETITIONS</b></p> <p>In accordance with Procedure Rule 24.1 the Chief Executive reported on a petition which was received on 4 February 2019 containing 362 signatures, and as required, more than 20 of those were residents of the Borough.</p> <p>The petition was received from the Chair of the Bottesford Youth Club Committee and Mr Brian McInerney, Treasurer of the Youth Club was in attendance to present the petition to the Mayor.</p> <p>The purpose of the petition was as follows:</p> <p><i>"We really need your help to ensure that Melton Borough Council continues to fund a Youth Worker for 10 hours a week to guarantee that our local Youth Club can stay open after February 2019. Bottesford is a village in the Vale of Belvoir and forms part of the Borough of Melton in Leicestershire. Bottesford Youth Club is the ONLY youth provision for young people in this area.</i></p> <p><i>Melton Borough Council created this funded role in 2007 to (successfully) address the significant amount of anti-social behaviour coming from local young people - specifically the increase in vandalism, graffiti, criminal damage such as damage to cars, arson and antisocial behaviour in the village.</i></p>

	<p><i>We were informed on Tuesday 11th December 2018 that the funding for the Youth Worker role is likely be stopped by Melton Borough Council and that you, the Melton Borough Councillors, will be voting on this issue in February 2019. Without this Youth Worker role we are also specifically concerned about the following issues:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>That a significant amount of anti-social-behaviour in the villages will return.</i></li> <li>• <i>That the Young People of Bottesford and Vale of Belvoir villages will be at an increased risk of being involved in “County Lines” drug dealing/taking and other serious organised crime.</i></li> <li>• <i>That the young people in the villages will not have a safe and fun environment to meet up, play, and talk about any issues affecting them.”</i></li> </ul> <p>Before presenting the petition Mr McInerney explained the work and outcomes of the youth club in Bottesford and that the Youth Club Leader was exceptionally talented in his role. The club met 3 nights per week and up to 30-40 young people attended from Bottesford and other villages around the Vale. There were many different types of activities for young people such as dancing, football as well as a place to get together. He gave examples of areas of support needed by young people as being low self-esteem, bullying, fitting in with peers as well as support to those from unstable backgrounds. The Youth Club Leader used role models as a means of support and had received many testimonials to his approach and had built a good reputation for the club. Mr McInerney was aware that the Parish Council valued the club as did the older generation of the village as it had helped to reduce anti-social behaviour such as vandalism and graffiti in Bottesford and other villages in the Vale. He felt that £100 per week was not a lot to ask the Council to continue to fund for this outstanding youth service.</p> <p>Following presentation of the petition to the Mayor, the Chief Executive advised that in line with the procedure rule, the petition would be referred to the next meeting of the People Committee to be held on 19 March 2019.</p>
CO64	<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES</b> There were no recommendations or reports from Committees other than the budgetary and governance matters listed as separate items on the agenda.</p>
CO65	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS</b> There were no questions from members received.</p>
CO66	<p><b>MOTIONS ON NOTICE</b> There were no motions received.</p>
CO67	<p><b>MEMBER ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2019/20</b> The Mayor welcomed Mr John Cade, Chair of the Welland Independent Remuneration Panel and invited him to present the panel’s report on the Member Allowances Scheme for 2019/20 following approval of the Council’s new governance arrangements.</p>

Mr. Cade explained that

- (a) as legally required the panel was convened to consider any changes to the Member Allowances Scheme mainly relating to the Special Responsibility Allowances for those Members who would hold a position within the new governance structure but they also considered comments from 4 other Councillors. The panel met on 9 January and invited the Leader, Chief Executive and Director for Legal and Democratic Services to present their views. He thanked the Director for Legal and Democratic Services and the Senior Democracy Officer for their support;
- (b) the timing of the new arrangements gave the panel some certainties for instance that a Scrutiny Committee Chair was needed to be in place. However some other areas of responsibility were still being worked through around the roles of the Leader and Cabinet members and how decisions would be made; whether these were by the Cabinet, delegated to Cabinet members or delegated to officers, and these levels of decision-making needed to be in place for the panel to be able to work out the demand and responsibility attributable to each of the different roles;
- (c) therefore the panel felt that a follow up review 6 months on from May 2019 eg. January 2020, would allow time for the new arrangements to be embedded and any change proposed at that time to the existing allowances could be backdated to May 2019 if required;
- (d) the panel recommended that the Leader and Cabinet members remain at the same rate (Cabinet member to have parity with the existing Chairs) and the Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chair align with the current Chair and Vice Chair allowances;
- (e) the panel was pleased to note that scrutiny was to be a key factor of good governance in the new arrangements and this was reflected in the Chair allowance being set at the same level as the Cabinet member;
- (f) the panel felt that the Deputy Leader role did show a clear increase in responsibility in taking on a portfolio as well as the Deputy Leader role and therefore recommended an increase of 1.85 of the basic allowance;
- (g) the panel was requested to review the workload of the Planning Committee Chair and this was considered alongside the Chair for Licensing and Regulatory matters and it was felt that the responsibility levels were similar and therefore no change was recommended however if requested the panel could review this position in January alongside the impact of the Cabinet member responsibility on these areas;
- (h) the panel was asked to look at the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership and was subsequently advised that this role would be incorporated into the relevant Cabinet member's responsibilities therefore this was not pursued.



There was concern expressed by a Councillor that planning was a big job in the rural area and the Member was disappointed that there had been no change in the allowance for this role. Mr Cade responded that the panel recognised the demand and could review the position in January when looking at the Cabinet member role but it was felt there was not a case for an increase at this stage.

It was noted that paragraph 3.11 of the report included the word ‘percent’ and this was an administrative error.

The Leader thanked Mr Cade and declared a personal interest in being a friend of one of the panel members. He explained that the panel’s recommendations should be followed and welcomed the increase to the Deputy Leader allowance. He was also pleased to see the parity for the Chair of Scrutiny with the Cabinet member and moved the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Freer-Jones seconded the motion

On being put to the vote, there were 21 in favour with 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED** that

(1) the following Special Responsibility Allowances be approved :-

<b>Position</b>	<b>Detail relating to role</b>	<b>Allowance per annum</b>
Leader of the Council	Role includes Chair of Cabinet with authority to take delegated decisions	£12,781
Deputy Leader	Role includes Vice Chair of Cabinet and portfolio with authority to take delegated decisions	£8,887
Cabinet Member	Role includes portfolio with authority to take delegated decisions	£4,084
Chair	Scrutiny Committee	£4,084
Chairs	Regulatory Committees	£4,084
Vice Chairs	Scrutiny and Regulatory Committees	£1,204

(2) the Member Allowances Scheme be amended to reflect the changes approved

	<p>at this meeting and be incorporated as part of the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>(Councillor Lumley left and re-entered the meeting during the preceding item.) (Mr Cade here left the meeting.)</p>
CO68	<p><b>REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2019-20 - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)</b></p> <p>In a report jointly prepared by the Director for Corporate Services and the Deputy Chief Executive the Council was asked to set the rents of Council dwellings, following consultation with the Place Committee, approve the HRA estimates for 2019-20 and set the working balance for 2019-20.</p> <p>The report was presented by Councillor Pearson who moved the recommendations and stated that since the Place Committee meeting held on 9 January it had become evident that the report for that meeting did not reflect the 53 week rent year for 2019/20. As a consequence the rent decrease per week should be 1.56% in order to adhere to the Government policy on rent reductions, as opposed to the 1% in the original report. For this reason the report had been resubmitted to this meeting showing the correct figures.</p> <p>The motion was seconded by Councillor de Burle.</p> <p>On being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED</u></b> that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) a weekly rent decrease of 1.56% for all Council dwellings for 2019-20 with effect from 1 April 2019 be approved and that when a property is re-let the rent continues to be brought into line with the Governments formula rent;</li> <li>(2) the estimates for 2019-20 be approved subject to the receipt of the limit rent Determination, with delegated authority being given to the Director for Corporate Services in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive to amend the estimated working balance based on any changes to this determination;</li> <li>(3) approval of a working balance of £975,079 be budgeted for at 31 March 2020 based on a 1.56% rent decrease.</li> </ol>
CO69	<p><b>CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019-20</b></p> <p>Members had before them a report prepared by the Director for Corporate Services which sought approval for the Council's Capital Programme for 2019/20.</p> <p>The Leader moved the recommendations in the report and stated that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) he was pleased to present the proposed Capital Programme for 2019/20 which had been recommended for approval by the Corporate Committee following the review at its meeting on 30 January 2019. These capital schemes were also presented to Members at the Strategic Planning Development Day held on 16</li> </ol>

January 2019. The report outlined the proposed capital schemes for the forthcoming year along with how the schemes would be funded. This covered the capital programmes for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account;

- (b) the Capital Programme was integral to the budget framework and sat alongside the other key strategies presented to members at this meeting such as the Treasury Management and Capital Strategies;
- (c) in particular the requirement for an undated Capital Strategy had been a key focus for the Council over recent months in order to provide an overarching document which set the policy framework for the development, management and monitoring of capital investment. The Capital Strategy sought to align with the priorities set out in the Council Plan. The Strategy aimed to drive the authority's capital investment ambition whilst ensuring capital expenditure and capital financing were sustainable in the long term;
- (d) however, Members may have noticed that the Capital Programme was relatively light which was a reflection of the need for condition surveys to be undertaken on Council's assets to help inform the future capital requirements. Officers would prioritise this work during 2019 with any associated capital requirement arising from the work being presented to Members in due course as the Capital Programmes and Strategies were further developed.

The motion was seconded by Councillor de Burle.

There was a Councillor query relating to the £2m loan and external funding in respect of Gretton Court Extra Care listed on Appendix B and whether this was in partnership with the County Council. The Director for Corporate Services advised that the project needed a business case which would assess the loan and the work to be done.

There were questions asked by a Councillor relating to a new ICT system for Customer Services and would that be forthcoming over the coming year, the Councillor also requested an update on the Country Park Masterplan and the S106 agreement to ensure this money was not lost through being out of time. The Councillor referred to a previous instance on the Doctors Lane development when S106 contributions expired due to agreement not being reached within the time limit.

The Leader requested that officers respond to the Councillor after the meeting and copy in all Councillors to the response.

There was a general discussion around S106 agreements being out of time and a particular reference to a County Council highways scheme and it was noted that this was due to issues in reaching agreement with all the parties involved.

The Director for Growth and Regeneration reassured the Council that there was no

issue with the S106 linked to the Country Park Masterplan being out of time and the Council was currently appointing consultants. She further advised that the Council was working on the design, access and inclusion with the friends and residents of the Country Park.

On being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) funding for capital schemes in respect of General Expenses for 2019/20 and the sources that funding will be taken from, be approved as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- (2) funding for capital schemes in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the sources that funding will be taken from be as approved by the Place Committee and set out in Appendix B to the report;
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Director of Corporate Services to amend the amount in the capital programme for DFG's once funding confirmation has been received as referred to in para 3.3. of the report.

CO70

**REVENUE BUDGET 2019-20 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

(Councillor Cumbers here left the meeting due to her pecuniary interest declared at Minute CO60.)

Previously circulated with the agenda was a report prepared by the Director for Corporate Services which provided information on the budget issues facing the Council in 2019/20 and beyond, and which sought a decision on the level of the budget including growth and savings, and asked the Council to agree the level of Council Tax for the Borough Council purposes. With regard to paragraph 11.5 of the budget report, Members received an update on the position for Bottesford Youth Club, CAB and other Community Grants.

The Leader moved the motions contained within the report but altered recommendation 2.1 to add the wording shown in italics. The meeting's consent to the alteration was signified without discussion:-

- '2.1 The proposals for General Expenses and Special Expenses MM as set out in Appendix A (i) and (ii) and summarised in para 3.5.1 be approved for inclusion in the 2019/20 budget resulting in the estimates set out in Appendix B subject to an adjustment to the saving from the CAB from £17k to £13k (for 2019/20 only) the shortfall being met as a first call from any savings identified in the financial year *and the saving referenced PPL02 Community Grants for £6,440 be not implemented unless alternative and adequate arrangements are negotiated with other agencies or bodies to provide an equivalent level of funding for one year only, and that any shortfall be funded from the Corporate Priority Reserve for one year only.*'

The Leader explained that with regard to the above addition he felt the Community Safety Partnership may be able to fund the Bottesford Youth Club for one year only from an underspend in its anti-social behaviour budget but this decision was down to the partnership and if agreement was not forthcoming, funding would be met from the Council's reserve; again for one year only; thus ensuring the Council delivered both the required ongoing savings, whilst providing sufficient time for the youth club to make alternative longer term funding arrangements.

The Leader stated that

- (a) before the Council was a budget designed not only to ensure support of the priorities but also one which sought to ensure support of the core services. It was a budget which recognised the Council could no longer do everything and therefore had to focus on those things which matter most to Melton's communities; ensuring new affordable homes get built, transforming the high street, attracting new jobs and investment and ensuring services become more customer focussed. Over the last 8 years the Council had lost significant amounts of government funding and in this budget, revenue support grant drops to £0 for the first time. The Council's funding was now much more dependent on housing and business growth and whilst the Council now had a number of building blocks in place, up to now it had had relatively little growth and it would take some time for the council to realise the financial benefits. Currently the council got under £300k in New Homes Bonus, compared to other districts in Leicestershire getting over £3m. If the Council wanted to be ambitious for the area, it had to make positive choices about the things it would fund as it could not fund everything;
- (b) if the Council tried to avoid making difficult decisions it would risk spreading itself too thinly and ultimately services failing because they did not have sufficient capacity. The LGA Peer Challenge was very clear on this point and he knew many members shared his view on how important it was to get the basics right. This was only possible if the Council resourced things properly and the need identified to reinvest in the housing stock was one example and demonstrated the importance of ensuring key services were properly supported and not stripped back. This was only possible if the Council diverted resources away from other things. If it tried to do too much, with diminishing resources, it would not deliver and risk service failure;
- (c) the budget before the Council proposed savings of £66,100 from those areas identified by members as lower priorities or where value for money could not be demonstrated. It also included investment of £51,800 in areas where resources were required to ensure services got the basics right and met their obligations. The Council had been discussing these options for some time. As early as last October it first considered many of the options before the Council at this meeting. Councillors considered them again in more detail at the Development Day in January and more recently at the Corporate Committee. He believed the balance was right between ensuring financial stability and meeting objectives, but even in proposing the budget, he was still very conscious that the Council

was projecting a £49k deficit on its budget for 2019/20. This was manageable and the Council could take steps later in the year to bring the position back into balance however it could not ignore the pressure the reserves were under and the steps that must be taken to ensure the long term sustainability of the Council;

- (d) if any of the proposed investments or savings were not approved at this meeting he would be concerned that key services would remain under pressure or that the budget deficit may be too great to enable the Council to invest in its priorities. It was vital the Council did not spread itself too thinly and put in jeopardy any work which sought to regenerate the town, attract jobs and see more houses built. The Council must also acknowledge and prepare for the review of local government funding and the uncertainty this created for the funding streams in future years;
- (e) in relation to the proposed savings, the Council had done lots of work with various stakeholders to mitigate any negative impacts associated with them and the update briefing note, circulated at the meeting, provided the latest position relating to each;
- (f) in terms of Bottesford Youth Club the Council had been in dialogue with the Parish Council and was of course aware of the petition submitted at this meeting. It was worth noting that the number of signatories was below the level which required a more formal Council response but the feelings and sentiment expressed of the importance to the local community were shared and recognised by the Council. This was not a question about whether the youth club should continue, rather it was about whether the Borough Council should fund it. Youth services were typically a County Council responsibility and the Borough did not provide funding to any other youth provision in the area. This was an anomaly and in times of financial challenge the Council needed to find alternative funding streams. The Council would encourage the Parish Council to consider its own position as it sets its own budget and precept, as well as encouraging the youth club itself to promote its membership of the Melton Lottery. This was a great way for community organisations to gain vital extra funds and currently they only had 1 regular participant. It was somewhat ironic that if just over half of those who signed the petition bought a weekly lottery ticket, the shortfall in funding would have already been met. That being said, the importance of finding a manageable solution to this issue was recognised and the Council was aware that the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) would be reviewing the position at a meeting in early March. Knowing the Police also valued the youth club, he was confident that if the Council could choose to accept the budget proposal tonight, some one-off transitional funding from the CSP could be found to support the club for a final year, ensuring they had the time to find alternative financing for the future;
- (g) in terms of the proposals regarding community grants, the Council had been advised of no negative impacts in relation to the Clockwise proposal and had received little from Shopmobility either. In relation to the Citizens' Advice

Bureau (CAB), the Council currently paid the highest level per head of population compared to every other district in Leicestershire. This coupled with the transfer of responsibility by the DWP of Universal Credit support from the Council to the CAB made the proposed funding reduction necessary. By accepting the proposal at this meeting, the Council would be on a par with contributions from other Councils and the CAB had agreed to look at alternative delivery models with the Council. There would obviously need to be a change but the Council would work with the CAB in constructing a new service model and would likely need to provide some transitional support for 3 months to make this possible;

- (h) in relation to the review of civic arrangements, he made the following absolutely clear. The Mayor would remain the Civic Head of the Borough and there need be no significant reduction in their visibility or impact. There would still be some officer support just not dedicated or as intensive as currently. The Mayor would still be able to attend events and represent the Council and Borough. What was proposed was to stop a number of set piece Council-organised events both because of the costs associated with them and the amount of officer time used to organise them;
- (i) on this basis he proposed the recommendations in the report, and with the consensus of the meeting, he would make the alterations to recommendation 2.1 to incorporate the additional reference regarding the transitional cost for the CAB proposal as explained in the update briefing paper circulated at the meeting and to add the wording relating to Bottesford Youth Club as mentioned earlier in this speech;
- (j) in summary, the budget helped to keep the Council on track with the commitments made last year in the Corporate Delivery Plan. It keeps the Council focussed on its ambitions to deliver more homes, more jobs and to transform town and place. It enables the Council to support its residents and delivery better, more customer focussed services. It also ensures the Council continues to direct resources to those services which are under significant pressure and need re-investment. Being effective means the Council has to take decisions, sometimes difficult decisions. Not doing so puts the progress the Council was making in jeopardy and he urged Councillors to support the budget in full so that the Council could take another positive step forward for Melton.

The motion was seconded by Councillor de Burle.

The Mayor commented on the Bottesford Youth Club position that she was grateful for the support and amendment and that she was aware that the club also had to pay a commercial rent for their property plus other overheads for heating, lighting, insurance etc which had not been highlighted and taken into account.

The Leader responded that officers were talking with the Parish Council and the Youth Club to consider options and the Council would look to support its employee

who he had met on a recent visit. He mentioned that there were not many young people present when he attended but this may have been due to the bad weather.

The Leader was thanked for adjusting the motion to accommodate giving Bottesford Youth Club some time and support for another year to look for future funding. The Councillor felt the club and its leader were to be treasured and wished there were more youth leaders like him in the Borough. With regard to the budget the Councillor had broader concerns at the loss of grant mentioned in para 3.23 of the report. The Councillor said that the Council was under considerable pressure in due to the cuts in local government grants and that there no guarantee that the pressure would not continue in 2020. The Councillor referred to the great uncertainty about the UK's economy and that there was only a certain amount of money to go round and priority was given to the NHS. Therefore the Councillor felt there were no guarantees of funding in the future and the Council needed to plan for this in its Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Councillor considered that although there was a deficit of £49k this year, the following year could be worse and the new homes bonus could disappear and the needs analysis might not give a good settlement. Also due to the depletion of the Council's reserves the Councillor felt resilience was at a minimum level and he recommended the Council start a serious cost reduction programme to reduce spending by 10 per cent and this would put the Council in a stronger position for the future.

It was mentioned by a Councillor that Bottesford Parish Council could be in a position to assist the youth club and the Council should pursue this as he believed they had reserves and a precept which he felt made the £6k affordable

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that following this meeting, there would be dialogue with all parties to consider alternative funding for the youth club.

Another Councillor spoke in support of the youth club and welcomed the Leader's comments and the amendment to the recommendation. The Councillor added that the club attracted young people from all around the vale therefore its community and benefits were wider than the area the Bottesford Parish Council precept covered.

It was mentioned that youth clubs made a valuable contribution to the area and a positive impact on crime and anti-social behaviour therefore such youth facilities were needed in areas besides Bottesford and how would the Council cope if it was faced with petitions for youth club funding in residential areas in the town.

It was noted that up to 2007 the County Council funded Bottesford Youth Club and there was other external funding until recent years when the Council took over the commitment. There were other youth groups in Bottesford such as scouts, cubs, guides and brownies. There was a suggestion that Rushcliffe be approached to assist with funding if young people from over the border used the service.

There was concern expressed by a Councillor at the budget proposed and they felt that a £12 per month increase in Council Tax was too much for a resident to find. Although the Councillor understood it was not wholly Melton Borough Council's



costs that were to blame but all the other external partners/services that contributed to make up the Council Tax. He referred to another Council which had frozen its Council Tax for 8 or 9 years as well as was concerned at payroll and pension arrangements and how this affected the budget.

There was also concern to the deficit of £50k from another Councillor. The Councillor also felt that although the Cattle Market was flourishing, the BID could do more to help businesses and fill empty shops.

The Leader responded that he understood that vacant shops were needed to bring more new businesses to the town and that visitors liked coming to Melton. He referred to the BID being a national organisation which was beyond the Council's control however the Chief Executive had set up the Town and Place Partnership which would be building on what Melton already had to improve the town's facilities and high street. With regard to the increase in Council Tax, he agreed that the Council had no choice but to make the increase due to the other partner/service contributions; he believed that the Council would get the deficit back during the year. The underspend of the Community Safety Partnership would hopefully be forthcoming to support Bottesford Youth Club for another year.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.5(b), the vote on the motion was taken by a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows :-

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Baguley	√			
Bains				√
Beaken	√			
Botterill		√		
Chandler		√		
Cumbers				*Not in the meeting
De Burle	√			
Douglas	√			
Faulkner	√			
Freer-Jones	√			
Glancy				√
Graham				√
Greenow	√			
Higgins				√
Holmes		√		
Hurrell				√

Hutchison	√			
Illingworth	√			
Lumley		√		
Orson	√			
Pearson	√			
Posnett	√			
Rhodes	√			
Sheldon	√			
Simpson	√			
Wright	√			
Wyatt	√			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

\*Councillor Cumbers was not in the meeting for the vote due to having a pecuniary interest.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the proposals for General Expenses and Special Expenses MM as set out in Appendix A (i) and (ii) and summarised in para 3.5.1 be approved for inclusion in the 2019/20 budget resulting in the estimates set out in Appendix B subject to an adjustment to the saving from the CAB from £17k to £13k (for 2019/20 only) the shortfall being met as a first call from any savings identified in the financial year and the saving referenced PPL02 Community Grants for £6,440 be not implemented unless alternative and adequate arrangements are negotiated with other agencies or bodies to provide an equivalent level of funding for one year only, and that any shortfall be funded from the Corporate Priority Reserve for one year only;
- (2) the revenue budget for 2019/20 for General and Special Expenses as set out in Appendix B be approved resulting in an overall council tax increase of 2.99%, the individual council tax levels being as set out in para 3.5.5 of the report;
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive to implement the necessary HR arrangements as a result of the savings and growth proposals including amendments to the permanent establishment and drawing any funding from the Corporate Priorities Reserve to meet any non-recurring HR costs that cannot be met from within the revenue budget;
- (4) any increase or shortfall against the target working balance on General Expenses at 31 March 2019 be adjusted by transfers to/from the Corporate Priorities Reserve and for Special Expenses Melton Mowbray any surplus/deficit be transferred to/from the Special Expenses Reserve;

- (5) the changes made to the risk categorisation of budgets as set out in para 3.6.3 and Appendix D of the report be noted;
  - (6) the Capital Strategy at Appendix G as recommended by the Corporate Committee be approved;
  - (7) a Regeneration and Innovation Reserve be created as set out in para 3.8.5 of the report.
- (Councillor Cumbers here re-entered the meeting.)

CO71

**PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2019/20**

The Leader presented the report of the Director for Corporate Services which outlined the Council's prudential indicators for 2019/20 – 2021/22 and set out the expected treasury operations for this period. This met with the key legislative requirements and provided an approved framework within which officers undertook the day to day capital and treasury activities.

The Leader stated that

- (a) he was pleased to present the annual Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20 alongside the prudential indicators which was a key strategy for the Council that sat alongside the annual budget report and capital strategy which were also presented at this meeting;
- (b) it was a requirement that this be scrutinised in advance which this Council had delegated to the Corporate Committee. Members of that Committee scrutinised the Treasury Strategy for the forthcoming financial year at their meeting on 30 January 2019 and recommended that the Council approve this key document;
- (c) this report outlined the Council's prudential indicators for 2019/20-2021/22 and sets out the expected treasury operations for this period covering the legislation requirements placed upon the Council to manage its treasury function effectively. These policies and parameters provided an approved framework within which the officers undertook the day to day capital and treasury activities;
- (d) he was not proposing to go through all of the indicators and information in detail but the Director for Corporate Services and the Corporate Services Manager were available to answer any specific queries;
- (e) the Treasury Management Strategy covered the operation of the treasury function and its activities for the forthcoming year and reflected the Council's capital and commercial investment strategies. Officers had reviewed and taken advice from the Council's treasury management advisors when developing the strategy;

- (f) he drew attention to the Director for Corporate Services' reports that the Council had complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and did not envisage difficulties for the future which recognised the good financial management at this Council;
- (g) he also highlighted in terms of investment performance that the Council was currently achieving an average rate of return of nearly 1% which was very good in the current economic environment with bank rates remaining low. Through effective management of the treasury portfolio officers were forecasting an additional £40k in additional investment returns during 2018/19 compared to the original budget.

The Leader moved the recommendations contained in the Order Paper circulated at the meeting and the motion was seconded by Councillor de Burle.

On being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the prudential indicators and limits be adopted and approved;
- (2) the Treasury Management Strategy and treasury management prudential indicators be adopted and approved;
- (3) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement which sets out the Council's policy on MRP be approved,
- (4) the linkages to the Capital Strategy due to the integral nature of how the Councils manages its treasury finances to support capital development be noted.

CO72

**COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONS**

(Councillors Chandler, Holmes, Orson, Rhodes and Simpson here left the meeting due to their pecuniary interests declared at Minute CO58.)

(Deputy Mayor in the Chair.)

In a report previously circulated, the Deputy Chief Executive requested the Council to consider a number of proposed changes for discretionary aspects that impact upon charging for council tax in respect of unoccupied properties following a period of consultation, and also to consider a proposal for council tax relief in respect of Care Leavers and to consider the development of a Care Leavers Policy.

Councillor de Burle stated that the report was about the use of discretionary powers, firstly in respect of empty properties and secondly to exempt care leavers from council tax up to the age of 25. The Council had used the empty homes discretions available since 2013. In 2018 further legislation was introduced that gave the Council the opportunity to review these discretions. He considered all

were aware of the negative effect that empty properties could have on any area. Empty homes that were left empty for too long contributed to the overall pressures on housing and could be a blight on communities. There was national evidence that the proposals in the report could have a positive impact on the number of empty properties. The Council was also proposing the development of an empty homes policy to look at what else could be done to expedite the return of uninhabitable properties back into occupation. He moved the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Pearson seconded the motion and added that empty homes put pressure on the housing stock.

It was suggested by a Councillor that Councillors should be vigilant in looking out for empty homes on their wards and reporting these to ensure there were no long-term vacancies.

Also on being commercially minded a Councillor mentioned that it was often cheaper to renovate than to build new therefore when properties came to the market, the Council should consider whether it was interested.

On being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED** that

(1) the current 100% discount for the first month for Class C properties be removed with effect from 1 April 2019 be approved;

(2) Council Tax Empty Home Premium charges be applied to properties that have remained empty and unfurnished, as shown below :-

100% extra (for properties empty for 2-5 years) from 1st April 2019  
200% extra (for properties empty for 5-10 years) from 1st April 2020  
300% extra (for properties empty for 10+ years) from 1st April 2021

(3) an Empty Homes policy with a particular focus on homes that are uninhabitable be developed and which includes the use of Class D Council Tax Discount, the Empty Homes Premium as well as any other appropriate council services be approved;

(4) care leavers be exempted from paying 100% council tax up until the age of 25 with effect from 1 April 2019;

(5) delegation is granted to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Director for Corporate Services to finalise of the Care Leavers policy, together with any subsequent amendments and the signing of the relevant Memorandum of Understanding.

(Councillors Chandler, Holmes, Orson, Rhodes and Simpson here re-entered the meeting.)

	(Mayor in the Chair.)
CO73	<p><b>PAY POLICY AND PENSION DISCRETIONS</b></p> <p>The Director for Corporate Services had previously provided Members with a report which sought the Council's approval for the 2019/20 Annual Pay Policy Statement so that it could be published in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. In addition, Members were asked to review the Council discretions in relation to the Local Government Pensions Scheme. (LGPS) to ensure they were fit for purpose.</p> <p>The Leader stated that the pay policy report was in two parts. The first related to the Council's requirement under the Localism Act to agree and publish a Pay Policy Statement for the forthcoming year. This had been in place since 2011. There had been no major changes to the policy this year other than refreshing current pay rates and making reference to a new pay spine which would be implemented in April 2019 and was part of the National Employers' pay negotiations. The second part of the report related to the Council's responsibilities to the pensions regulator where the Council was required to formulate and publish policies in respect of certain areas of the pension scheme where the Council could apply discretion. As well as the review of the current arrangements, for which there was a proposal that no changes were made, the Council was asked to consider discretion in two new areas affecting former members of the pension scheme. The proposals were that the new discretions were not applied and that any changes to this could have a significant financial impact. The Leader proposed the recommendations in the report.</p> <p>The motion was seconded by Councillor Freer-Jones.</p> <p>On being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED</u></b> that</p> <p>(1) the Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 at Appendix A to the report be approved and published;</p> <p>(2) the revisions to the pensions discretions at Appendix B be adopted.</p>
CO74	<p><b>NEW GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS</b></p> <p>Previously circulated with the agenda was a report prepared by the Monitoring Officer which referred to the approval of the Council's new governance arrangements at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 21 November 2018. As a consequence, the Council was now asked to approve a set of documents, as listed and appended to the report, which would form part of the new Constitution to take account of the change in decision-making structure to the Leader and Cabinet model. Following the Governance Committee on 5 February 2019, some proposed changes had been made to the published Appendix A7 – Access to Information Procedure, which was circulated to Members at the meeting.</p>

Councillor Cumbers thanked the Director for Legal and Democratic Services for her work on the new Constitution as well as the Members who had contributed. She referred to an updated Appendix A7 that had been circulated to Members at the meeting. Councillor Cumbers proposed the recommendations including the updated Appendix A7.

Councillor Simpson seconded the motion and endorsed the hard work that had gone into producing these parts of the Constitution.

On being put the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) Appendix A1 - Introduction, Summary & Explanation be approved effective from the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (2) Appendix A2 - Introduction to Decision-making be approved effective from the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (3) Appendix A3 - Diagrammatic explanation of Decision-making be approved effective from the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (4) Appendix A4 - Council/Committees Procedure Rules be approved effective from the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (5) Appendix A5 - Call In Procedure Rules be approved effective from the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (6) Appendix A6 - Substitute Procedure Rules be approved effective from the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (7) Updated Appendix A7- Access to Information Rules be approved effective from the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (8) Appendix A8 - Employment Procedure Rules be approved and adopted following the conclusion of the Annual Meeting in May 2019;
- (9) delegated authority be given to the Director for Legal and Democratic Services for
  - (a) amendments to the constitution as a result of comments received by Members;
  - (b) changes to the structure and layout of the constitution;
  - (c) minor amendments (as and when required) that in her opinion do not substantially alter the content of the constitution; and/or
  - (d) any changes to the Constitution as required by the law.

The meeting closed at: 8.47 pm

Mayor

