

Minutes



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| Meeting name | Cabinet |
| Date | Wednesday, 30 October 2019 |
| Start time | 4.00 pm |
| Venue | Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH |

Present:

Chair Councillor J. Orson (Chair)

Councillors L. Higgins (Vice-Chair) R. de Burle
A. Freer-Jones J. Illingworth
A. Pearson

In Attendance P. Cumbers

Observers J. Douglas P. Faulkner

Officers Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive & Director for People & Communities
Director for Corporate Services
Director for Growth and Regeneration
Director for Law and Governance
Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services
Democratic Services Officer (CR)

| Minute No. | Minute |
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| 40 | <p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE There were no apologies for absence.</p> |
| 41 | <p>MINUTES The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2019 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair.</p> |
| 42 | <p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillors Orson and Pearson each declared an interest in any items relating to Leicestershire County Council, due to their roles as County Councillors.</p> <p>Edd de Coverly, Chief Executive declared an interest on behalf of all officers in agenda item 8 (Corporate Structure Realignment and Resources Plan).</p> |
| 43 | <p>PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) CONFIRMATION Councillor John Illingworth, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services introduced the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval on the making of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) relating to dogs, in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the Act).</p> <p>Councillor Illingworth provided a brief summary of the report, highlighting that Cabinet approval of the recommendations at paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the report were sought following a lengthy process of stakeholder engagement, which included public consultation (the results of which were detailed at Appendix 2 of the report). Following receipt of evidence, it was proposed to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) covering the whole Borough and requiring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog faeces to be removed • Persons to produce a device or other means of removing dog faeces on demand • Dogs to be put and kept on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer • Dogs to be excluded from enclosed children’s play areas. <p>During discussion the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members thanked Councillor Illingworth and officers for the work they had done on this issue, which had resulted in the recommendations before them. • The public consultation survey had demonstrated that dog fouling was a major concern for people in Melton and there was considerable support for the PSPO. • Action on dog fouling was well overdue and managed correctly, the PSPO would make a significant impact on the Borough. |

- The existing Dog Control Order would be repealed in October 2020, leaving the Council with no provision under which to enforce dog related offences.
- Dog fouling was a Borough-wide problem. Signage and Enforcement Officer time would be apportioned appropriately across the town and rural areas and needs discussed with Parish Councils and be intelligence led.
- Agenda item 8 detailed proposals for a new corporate structure, which would enhance the Council's ability to tackle this type of issue.

DECISIONS (KEY)

- 1) Cabinet **APPROVED** the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), to come into force on 1 January 2020;
- 2) Cabinet **APPROVED** the £100 fee for the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for PSPO offences.

Councillor Freer-Jones here entered the meeting.

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CAR PARKING CHARGES REVIEW

Councillor Leigh Higgins, Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide Cabinet with an overview of the options for car parking charge increases and advise on the introduction of a cashless payment service in Council owned car parks.

Councillor Higgins provided a brief summary of the report highlighting the recommendations at paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2. It would be over five months before any changes would be brought into force as a result of the proposed public consultation and it was intended to implement the free trial for cashless payments in Council owned car parks on 1 April 2020.

Councillor Higgins highlighted that the proposed options for car parking charge increases would result in an increase in £150k annual revenue for the Council (a further £7k would be generated from the introduction of a 20p charge for designated 20 minute bays (which were currently free). These bays were valued by customers but the forthcoming consultation would confirm if the public wanted to keep them. The option to charge a nominal fee for evening and Sunday parking was in respect of St Mary's car park only. It would bring charges in line with car parks located next to it and the revenue generated from that specific proposed charge would be used to support environmental projects. Customers would be given the option to purchase season tickets and park at reduced prices for long-stay parking. Ticket prices would be reviewed and increased every two years (from 2021 and in accordance with inflation). Customers would also be given the option to maintain the current profile of charging across the week, with Tuesday continuing to include a premium or equalisation of pricing across the week. Income generated through Option B would be a little more than Option A.

Councillor Higgins commented that the Welsh Government had undertaken a review in relation to car parking charges and had found that price increases

throughout Wales had not negatively impacted on footfall.

Councillor Higgins commented that Members considered it important to continue to provide disabled parking bays free of charge.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Members welcomed the report. Car parking was an contentious issue but prices were higher in some local areas. A Member asked if by comparison the nearest town to Melton was subject to greater or less car parking charges. The Regeneration Manager advised that he would look into this query and would provide Members with the information outside the meeting;
- There had not been a review/increase in car parking charges for four years;
- A season ticket was clearly good value. This should be promoted in the consultation;
- The Tuesday premium charges were implemented in 2010/11 to encourage the 'green agenda'. The Council could consult with the Cattle Market to find out if customers travelling from further afield, as well as local people, were in favour of equalising the pricing across the week to reduce the Tuesday premium;
- Council web pages about season tickets for car parking needed to be improved, particularly in relation to the display of ticket prices;
- A Member raised the possibility that the proposed changes, once implemented could result in increased parking in residential areas. It was highlighted that the Council employed Enforcement Officers to deal with problem parking but drivers were able to park insured and taxed vehicles on any roads they wished, providing there were no prohibitions.
- The introduction of a cashless payment system was positive. The technology would be convenient for customers and would benefit the community.

DECISIONS (KEY)

- 1) Cabinet **APPROVED** the incorporation of a period of public consultation on the two car parking charge options within the wider Corporate Strategy 2020-2024;
- 2) Cabinet **APPROVED** the implementation of a free trial for cashless payments in Council owned car parks within Melton.

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MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

Councillor Alison Freer Jones, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement highlighted the recommendations at paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the Community Grants Review report.

Councillor Pat Cumbers, Chair of Scrutiny Committee, provided feedback on behalf of the Committee on the Community Grants Review advising that Councillor Freer-

Jones and the People Manager had given a presentation on the Review at Scrutiny Committee meeting on 26 September 2019. A summary of the Committee's feedback was detailed at section 2 of the Committee's feedback report.

Councillor Cumbers highlighted that she had been part of Melton's voluntary sector for a number of years (including representing the Council on The Furniture Project). It would be beneficial for both organisations in receipt of grants and the Council to include Councillor representation on the organisations' Boards/Management Committees.

Councillor Cumbers suggested that based on problems encountered by the Council funded Citizens' Advice Bureau Melton, it may be a good idea to issue grant monies in instalments, rather than in a lump sum.

Councillor Cumbers noted that within the new Community Grants Policy, there was an expectation that those organisations in receipt of grant funding would engage with the Melton Community Lottery. Members should consider whether they wish to continue the Lottery, due to costs associated with administering it.

Councillor Cumbers highlighted Scrutiny Committee's desire that recipients of grants be subject to a requirement to provide annual accounts to the Council and that there be a smaller funding pot available for smaller grants.

Councillor Freer-Jones commented that the Review had been one of the best discussed and consulted on matters since the Council implemented its new governance structure.

Councillor Freer-Jones advised that it would be difficult for the Council to ensure that there was Councillor representation on Boards/Committees of organisations in receipt of grant monies, without knowing who the successful applicant would be.

Councillor Freer-Jones confirmed that it was difficult to decide whether to issue grant funds in quarterly instalments or in a lump sum until the applications had been considered, as this depended largely on the size of the grant.

Councillor Freer-Jones advised that the Council's Melton Lottery was one of the options for organisations who were unsuccessful at securing grant funding. The Director for Corporate Services confirmed that there was not a direct net cost to the Council in relation to managing the Lottery. However, estimated costs relating to staff time amounted to £40k.

Councillor Freer-Jones advised that as part of the application process, organisations would have to commit to providing annual accounts. The application form was very thorough and included a section about the accounts, as well as asking why the grant is needed and how it would benefit the community etc.

Councillor Freer-Jones thanked Councillor Cumbers and the Scrutiny Committee for the feedback. Although, not all feedback was able to be implemented, it was

very useful.

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COMMUNITY GRANTS REVIEW

Councillor Alison Freer-Jones, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement introduced the report, the purpose of which was to outline and seek approval for a new Community Grants Policy to allocate grants, following extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including elected Members and community groups.

Councillor Freer-Jones provided a brief summary of the report, thanking the People Manager for her work and acknowledging her passion for this issue.

Councillor Freer-Jones highlighted that the new Community Grant Policy was in line with a number of corporate priorities and it applied across the whole Borough. The Community Grants Review process started early in 2019, prior to the Council implementing its new governance structure. There were already three recipients of Council funding and applications for further grant monies were encouraged from them, but opportunities for funding were being widened to other organisations.

Councillor Freer-Jones confirmed that in addition to the £43.6k pot of grant funding available, £88k discretionary business rates relief was given to organisations by the Council, Axis Social Fund was another pot of money used by the Council for the community.

Councillor Free-Jones summarised the application and decision processes, advising that the Council would have flexibility to hold some funding back, in the event of any smaller projects which may apply. The Assessment Panel, responsible for awarding grants would be made up of the People Manager, the Community Policy Officer and herself. From this panel recommendations would come back to Cabinet for final decisions.

Councillor Freer-Jones advised that Service Level Agreements would not form part of the arrangements between the Council and grant recipients, but commitment from recipients would be obtained through the application process.

Councillor Freer-Jones advised on the next steps, highlighting that stakeholders would be informed about the Policy and application window and that this process of administering grants would help to inform a 'community-commissioning' approach.

Councillor Freer-Jones confirmed that any applicant that was unsuccessful unsuccessful in their bid for funding would be signposted to other suitable support.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Members noted the excellent work undertaken by Councillor Freer-Jones and the People Manager and thanked them for the comprehensive report.
- Members thanked Councillor Cumbers and the Scrutiny Committee for their feedback, which had helped to inform the Policy.

- It would not be appropriate to fund transport links through the Community Grants pot of funding.
- It was anticipated that performance monitoring would be undertaken possibly half way through or at the end of the first tranche of applications.
- A Member cautioned against Councillor involvement in ‘too many’ organisations due to reputational risk for both Councillors and the Council.
- Members agreed with Scrutiny Committee that awarding a sum of money with the aim of having a significant impact was a good idea, rather than ‘spreading the money too thinly’.

DECISIONS (KEY)

- 1) Cabinet **APPROVED** the Community Grants Policy;
- 2) Cabinet **OPENED** the application window for applying for Community Grants with immediate effect, with grant funding to be allocated in 2020/21.

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CORPORATE STRUCTURE REALIGNMENT AND RESOURCES PLAN

Councillor Joe Orson, Leader of the Council introduced the report, the purpose of which was to set out proposals for a new corporate structure, which would redirect resources to key priority areas to ensure they could deliver more effectively.

Councillor Orson provided a brief summary of the report, advising that the proposed corporate restructure and resources plan represented significant change for the Council, brought about by Members and initiated by the Council’s performance in relation to housing, specifically non-decent homes (previously the fourth lowest in the country). There had been fire safety concerns and now there were a number of other landlord health and safety compliance issues that the Council needs to address

Councillor Orson highlighted the recommendations at paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the report, advising that if agreed, the corporate structure and resources plan would be referred to Employment Committee for final approval and then to initiate the recruitment process for the new Director role.

Councillor Orson commented that the Council had implemented a new governance structure and a new set of corporate priorities. Now was the time to improve the corporate structure to increase the Council’s housing expertise.

Councillor Orson emphasised that ‘the customer is king’. The aim was to equip the Council with expertise to carry out day to day challenges and provide excellent customer service.

Councillor Orson highlighted that the Council employed approximately 200 full-time employees. Staff retention of senior officers had been tackled and Senior Management and Members agreed that employees were the Council’s greatest asset.

Councillor Orson confirmed that formal consultation on the restructure had been undertaken and the Chief Executive had briefed all staff on the matter.

Edd de Coverly, Chief Executive, confirmed that the restructure and plan gave effect to the strategy Members were developing and provided the tools to be able to deliver against Members' priorities. This increased resources in enforcement, tenancy management and housing. The restructure created a dedicated team and enabled proper focus and prioritisation of commercial aspects.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The restructure proposals and resources plan were welcomed by Members, who noted the hard work Senior Management and officers had undertaken to review and improve services. The Council was putting all tools in place to be able to move forward and deliver on Members' priorities.
- There was no requirement to realign the scope of Portfolio Holders as a result of the proposed changes but this would ultimately be a matter for the Leader.
- The proposals and plan offered a good strategic view of 'how to get things done for our residents' and proactively tackle issues.
- Members noted the importance of maintaining Council assets, increasing housing stock, tackling homelessness and focussing on the Council's commercial agenda.
- A Member sought assurance that focus on specific functions, such as grounds maintenance would not be lost as a result of the proposed changes. Mr. de Coverly confirmed that although the aim of the proposals was to improve the strategic aspect of services, operational needs would not be overlooked and the waste and environmental services team were looking at what needed to be put in place to support this.

DECISIONS (NON-KEY)

- 1) Cabinet **ENDORSED** the strategic direction and resource plan, which would be supported by the overall corporate structure;
- 2) Cabinet **RECOMMEND** approval of the corporate structure and resource plan to the Employment Committee.

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INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

This item was withdrawn.

The meeting closed at: 5.45 pm

Chair