

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2016

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss, T J Pendleton, N J Rushton and A V Smith MBE

In Attendance: Councillors R Adams, J Clarke, J G Coxon, T Eynon, F Fenning, G Hoult, J Legrys and S McKendrick

Officers: Mr S Bambrick, Ms C E Fisher, Mrs C Hammond, Mr A Hunkin, Mr G Jones, Mr P Padaniya and Miss E Warhurst

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Gillard.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Members declared the following interests:

Councillor N J Rushton declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 16 – Proposal to Acquire Brownfield Site for Development of Car Parking, as an owner of a car park in Ashby and he would leave the meeting for the consideration of the item.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

4. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2016.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Constitution.

5. LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY

The Leader presented the report to Members and reminded them that Cabinet had previously considered an item relating to the Combined Authority back in November 2015 and recommended the scheme to Council on the 17 November 2015, and at that meeting, powers were delegated to the Chief Executive to continue the work. Members were advised that a great deal of work had been undertaken by both the Chief Executive, as project leader and the Head of Legal and Support Services, as the lead district Monitoring Officer and it had required extensive engagement and co-ordination between the districts, county and city councils. The Leader offered his thanks to both officers on the hard work carried out so far.

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The Leader went on to highlight the next steps and that the constitution for the Combined Authority was nearing the final draft stage. Members were informed that further reports would be brought back to Cabinet and Council in the future.

The Chief Executive advised Members that an update report would be brought back to Cabinet in July and to Council in September. She informed the Cabinet that work on the devolution deal had been put on hold until after the EU Referendum and it would be picked up again after the 23 June.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

The progress of the Formation of The Leicester and Leicestershire Combined Authority and developing Devolution Deal progress be endorsed.

Reason for decision: To inform Cabinet of the development which has been made in respect of the creation of the Leicester and Leicestershire Combined Authority and the progress of the Leicestershire Devolution Deal to date.

6. **ASHBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - PROPOSED RESPONSE TO PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION**

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that the document was before Cabinet following consideration by the Town Council and that he was pleased to report that it took into account the district's main concern by including Money Hill as a future development site. He informed Members that the council would continue to provide guidance and support if needed, and that a referendum on the plan would not take place until May 2017 at the earliest.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that it was a very good piece of work.

It was moved by Councillor T J Pendleton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

The response to the pre-submission Ashby Neighbourhood Plan as set out in appendix A of the report be ratified.

Reason for decision: The District Council is a consultee and so it is appropriate to provide comments to assist with the formulation of the neighbourhood plan.

7. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2015/16**

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He reminded Members that the report was in compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice and summarised the Treasury Management Activity during 2015/16. He highlighted that it showed the Authority had complied with the prudential indicators and the policies and requirements of the Treasury Management Strategy. He referred to a couple of breaches within the report, but advised that both had been reported and managed. He informed the Members that the Council invested its money in highly rated institutions, money market funds or the Government and that was the most prudent approach.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be approved

Reason for decision: These are statutory requirements

8. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - FOOD SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2016/17

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. She informed Members that 2015/16 had been very good year and highlighted that there was more to look at than just establishments as food coming into East Midlands Airport also had to be considered. She advised the Cabinet that ongoing support was being provided to those establishments that had not complied with the law and offered her thanks to the Environmental Health Team for their amazing work.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Environmental Health Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2016/17 appended to the report be approved.
2. The performance and achievements in 2015/16 be noted.

Reason for decision: To approve the content of the Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2016/17 as required by the Food Standards Agency.

9. COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2014-17 (2016 REFRESH)

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that the strategy required its annual refresh and that it comes just after the election of the new Police and Crime Commissioner. He informed Members that the three main priorities for the district remained unchanged and that the refresh had been informed by the latest crime figures. He highlighted that there had been an increase in burglaries and theft from motor vehicles but on a positive note there had been a drop in the numbers of violent crimes.

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder went on to advise Members that early reports from the recent Download event were showing a reduction in the number of arrests compared to previous years and that the countywide priorities had highlighted a need to focus on PREVENT and child sexual exploitation, which local intelligence suggested the need for awareness to be raised in the district.

It was moved by Councillor T J Pendleton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The North West Leicestershire Community Safety Strategy 2014-17 (2016 refresh) and Partnership Action Plan for 2016-17 be noted.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Council's constitution and statutory duty to produce a Community Safety Strategy every three years, refreshed annually.

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10. 2015/16 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Leader presented the report to Members and summarised the following points:-

- Rent collection levels had exceeded the performance targets, with the level of rent loss improving during the quarter.
- All housing officers within Housing Management went live with mobile devices allowing improved efficiency when handling customers out in the district.
- All processing targets for benefits had been achieved and North West Leicestershire had been positioned 3rd in the County after achieving a 99% collection rate.
- There had been an 8% increase in Leisure Centre fitness membership and a 13% increase in the Swim Academy income, resulting in the income forecasts for the year to be exceeded.
- There had been an increase in trade waste income by £20k and recycling income had exceeded its target by £15k.
- Processing performance for planning applications had exceeded both local and national targets.

The Leader went on to advise Members that there had been 9.4 days per full time equivalent to sickness against a target of 7.4 days and that long term sickness accounted for 72% of the total days lost. He informed Members that the Council was in the process of reviewing the Occupational Health support contract to ensure more support could be given to managing the long term sickness.

Councillor N J Rushton advised Members that the General Fund current projection was £2.3m and not £1.736m as stated in the report, and that following the decision at the February Cabinet meeting to set aside any underspend to reserves, reports would be brought to future meetings to consider how the one off surplus could be spent. He did stress to Members that the authority needed to be prudent as there was uncertainty around future funding such as the reducing Revenue Support Grant, the reduction in the number of years that New Homes bonus payment would be paid and the changes to the business rates regime.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that the reason the stand alone re-let times had been high was due to the number of long term out of use properties that required more work, but he could report that the number of days had already started to reduce and he hoped that June would be lower.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor N J Rushton and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Quarter 4 Performance Report (January – March 2016) be received and noted.

Reason for decision: The report is provided for Members to effectively monitor the organisation's performance.

11. 2015/16 END OF YEAR REPORT

The Leader presented the report to Members. He advised Members that the authority chose to produce the end of year report, but it was not a requirement to do so. He outlined

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the layout and informed Members that it was a simple format informing residents of what the Council wanted to do, what it had done and the way forward.

Councillor A V Smith stated that the document was well laid out and easy to read. She congratulated the officers involved for producing the document in the simple format.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Information be received and the End of Year Report document be approved for publication.

Reason for decision: To approve the publication of the end of year summary.

12. FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE OFFS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that Cabinet were being asked to note the delegated write offs and approve the write offs for debts over £10,000. He informed Members that there were four to be approved and write off was only considered when all appropriate action had been taken.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The write offs over £10,000 detailed in this report be approved.
2. The amounts written off under delegated powers be noted.

Reason for decision: To comply with proper accounting practices.

13. MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. She thanked the Members of the working party for the continuing hard work that they carried out and that she was pleased to say that she had heard good things about the Picnic and Proms in the Park events the previous weekend. She informed Members that the Cultural Services Team Manager was due to retire at the end of July and that he would be greatly missed by the working party as he had put a lot of hard work into supporting the Members.

The Community Services Portfolio Holder went on to advise Members that the next event to be held was Coalville by the Sea on the 19 August and that a number of recommendations had been put forward by the working party to continue supporting projects in the special expense area.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The recommendations made by the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party as detailed within the minutes be noted.
2. The recommendations as summarised at 3.0 of the report be approved.

Reason for decision: To progress Coalville Special Expenses projects and programmes.

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED THAT:

In pursuance of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Reason for decision: To enable the consideration of exempt information.

15. HRA ASSET DISPOSALS

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He reminded Members that they had considered previous reports in relation to future options for some decommissioned sites in the district and that proposals for a Council led new build scheme would not be financially viable for the authority at present or it would require significant subsidy. He advised Members that the report was seeking authority for powers to be delegated to the Director of Housing with support from the Deputy Section 151 Officer to look at disposal options for the sites listed in the attached appendix.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor N J Rushton and

RESOLVED THAT:

Authority to dispose of HRA sites in appendix one for redevelopment as outlined in the report be delegated to the Director of Housing, with support from the Deputy S151 Officer, and in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.

Reason for decision: To obtain best value for the Council from the disposal of HRA sites in terms of facilitating the supply of new housing to meet local needs, and maximising the income received in order to achieve the target for disposals within the HRA Business Plan.

Having declared an interest in item 16 Councillor N J Rushton left the meeting during the consideration of the item

16. PROPOSAL TO ACQUIRE BROWNFIELD SITE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CAR PARKING

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. She advised Members that since the previous report had been considered the site had been valued by the District Valuer, and the owner of the site was only prepared to offer the site with limited title guarantee and as such the Council would proceed with the purchase at the price agreed and with limited title guarantee. She also advised that quotes had been received to create the new car park. She asked Members to note the changes and support the continuing acquisition of the site.

Councillor Blunt stated that the opportunity before them was once in a lifetime to add much needed parking to the locality and creating the new car park could then open up many new opportunities to support and develop the area. He felt that the project should go ahead.

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Councillor T J Pendleton stated that the authority could only influence what happened in the area when it invested in the district.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that he could not disagree and that he would be interested to see the plans in the future.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The updated position with regards to the acquisition of the Brownfield be noted; and
2. The acquisition of the site will be with limited title guarantee but will be subject to title indemnity insurance be accepted; and
3. The proposal to acquire the Brownfield site for the development of car parking at the agreed price as detailed in the report be approved; and
4. The overall expenditure on the acquisition and development of the site should not exceed the sum stated in the report and thus commit a further amount to the project.

Reason for decision: To provide delegated authority to the Director of Services to negotiate the acquisition of the site to develop into a new car park.

Councillor N J Rushton returned to the meeting.

17. HRA EMPTY HOMES CLEARANCE - AWARD OF CONTRACT

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He informed Members that currently the clearance of a property was sub-contracted out by our responsive repair contract as it was specialist work and this was an inefficient method of carrying out this work. He added that some of the properties were left in an awful state. He went on to add that by the Council directly letting the contract through a tender process cost savings would be achieved.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

Authority to award the contract for the provision of empty homes clearance support for the period 11 July 2016 until 10 July 2019, be delegated to the Director of Housing in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.

Reason for decision: The level of expenditure on this contract exceeds the authority threshold in the Scheme of Delegation and to improve value for money and the quality of service provided in the re-letting of our empty homes.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

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The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.41 pm