

MINUTES of a meeting of the COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 21 MAY 2019

Present: Councillor J Clarke (Chairman)

Councillors E G C Allman, R Ashman, R D Bayliss, C C Benfield, D Bigby, A S Black, R Blunt, R Boam, A J Bridgen, J Bridges, R Canny, D Everitt, T Eynon, M French, J Geary, L A Gillard, S Gillard, T Gillard, B Harrison-Rushton, D Harrison, M D Hay, G Houlst, J Houlst, R Johnson, J Legrys, K Merrie MBE, V Richichi, N J Rushton, A C Saffell, C A Sewell, S Sheahan, N Smith, D J Stevenson, D E J Tebbutt, J Windram, A C Woodman and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Mrs T Bingham, Mr G Jones, Mrs M Long, Mrs M Meredith, Mrs B Smith and Miss E Warhurst

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor S Sheahan declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 16 – Appointment of Representatives on Community Bodies, having been appointed to the New Albion Revised Liaison Committee and Redbank Manufacturing Liaison Committee as a member of Leicestershire County Council.

Councillor T Eynon declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 16 – Appointment of Representatives on Community Bodies, having been appointed to the Bardon Hill Quarries Liaison Committee as a member of Leicestershire County Council.

Councillor M B Wyatt declare a non-pecuniary interest in item 14 – Council Delivery Plan 2019/20, as an owner of two businesses in Coalville town centre.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor J Clarke said a few words regarding his year as Chairman of the Council and mentioned in particular the wonderful people he had met at events he had attended, in particular those involving the armed forces charities. He thanked the staff for their support during his year as Chairman.

Councillor J Clarke presented his Consort with a bouquet of flowers as a small token of his thanks for her support and assistance over the past year.

Nominations were then sought for the Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt that Councillor J Bridges be appointed as Chairman of the Council for 2019/20.

The motion was seconded by Councillor R Ashman.

Upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J Bridges be appointed Chairman of the Council for 2019/20.

Councillor J Bridges then took the Chair and the retiring Chairman invested him with the Chain of Office. The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Chairman's initials

The Chairman presented Councillor J Clarke with his past Chairman's badge and proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring Chairman.

4. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor V Richichi be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Council for 2019/20.

5. APPOINTMENT OF LEADER

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor K Merrie and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor R Blunt be appointed as the Leader of the Council for 2019/20.

Councillor R Blunt thanked members for electing him as Leader of the Council and added that he considered this to be an incredible honour. He commented that here was a huge amount of work to do and he looked forward to working with all members.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman expressed thanks to the people who had voted for him and to the members of the public in attendance at the meeting. He welcomed all newly elected members to the Council. The Chairman announced that his chosen charity was the Alzheimer's Society.

7. LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R Blunt welcomed all new and returning councillors. He announced the appointments and delegations of executive functions for the forthcoming municipal year as follows:

Deputy Leader and Planning and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder - Councillor Robert Ashman

Community Services Portfolio Holder – Councillor Andrew Woodman

Corporate Portfolio Holder - Councillor Nick Rushton

Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder - Councillor Roger Bayliss

Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder - Councillor Tony Gillard

As in previous years the Executive responsibilities were to be delegated to the Cabinet to take decisions collectively.

Councillor S Sheahan congratulated the Leader on his appointment and announced the Shadow Cabinet as follows:

Leader and Corporate – Councillor Sean Sheahan

Planning – Councillor John Legrys

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Infrastructure – Councillor Michael Hay

Coalville Project Lead – Councillor John Geary

Housing, Property and Customer Services – Councillor David Everitt

Leisure Services – Councillor David Bigby

Business and Regeneration – Councillor Daniel Tebbutt

Community Services – Councillor Carol Sewell

8. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

9. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions received.

10. MOTIONS

Councillor S Sheahan moved the following motion:

“Modern slavery is an appalling crime in which people are exploited and treated as commodities. It includes forced and compulsory labour, servitude and human trafficking. Taken together, these are fast becoming the most profitable global crime activity.

The most robust estimate to date of the scale of modern slavery in the UK was produced by the Home Office in 2014. The estimate suggested that there were between 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK in 2013, although the National Crime Agency (NCA) has been reported as saying that these figures were just the 'tip of the iceberg.'

In its latest UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery (October 2018,) the Home Office states "The NCA assesses that the actual scale of modern slavery in the UK is gradually increasing and, if drivers remain at their current levels, will continue to do so over the next three years."

This Council believes -

a) that action needs to be taken to raise awareness of the scale and extent of modern slavery in the UK

b) that councils have an important role to play in ensuring their contracts and supplies don't contribute to modern day slavery and exploitation.

This Council resolves to -

1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.
2. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.

Chairman's initials

3. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.
4. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
5. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
6. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
7. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.
8. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.
9. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.
10. Report instances of concerns raised and referred to national referral agencies to the Audit and Governance Committee as part of the quarterly Standards and Ethics report.
11. Publicise annually actions undertaken by the Council".

Councillor S Sheahan spoke to the motion and stated that modern slavery was a crime resulting in the abhorrent abuse of human rights. He added that the Council must take action to guard against modern slavery.

Councillor N J Rushton seconded the motion and thanked Councillor S Sheahan for agreeing to the minor amendment. He felt it was important to unite on this matter and stated that he was happy to support to motion. He advised that a list of actions had been prepared in support of the motion which would be circulated after the meeting.

Councillor D Everitt spoke in support of the motion and felt that modern slavery had become more apparent. He referred to particular cases in the media and urged all Councillors and staff to be vigilant.

Councillor S Sheahan exercised his right of reply and thanked members for their comments and co-operation.

The Chairman then put the motion to the vote and it was declared CARRIED. It was therefore

RESOLVED THAT:

a) Council believes that action needs to be taken to raise awareness of the scale and extent of modern slavery in the UK

b) Council believes that councils have an important role to play in ensuring their contracts and supplies don't contribute to modern day slavery and exploitation.

Council resolves to:

1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.

Chairman's initials

2. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.
3. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.
4. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
5. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
6. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
7. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.
8. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.
9. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.
10. Report instances of concerns raised and referred to national referral agencies to the Audit and Governance Committee as part of the quarterly Standards and Ethics report.

Publicise annually actions undertaken by the Council.

11. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

12. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2019.

It was moved by Councillor J Bridges, seconded by Councillor V Richichi and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13. COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2019/20

Councillor R Blunt presented the report to members, highlighting the Council's priorities in the coming years.

Councillor T Eynon referred to the list of key tasks on page 29 of the agenda, which stated that the Council would work with partners to make the most of our heritage to bolster the town's identity and sense of place. She highlighted that Historical England had acknowledged the historical uniqueness of the Century Theatre, however it could not be listed by the Theatre Trust as it was a mobile structure. The Century Theatre was also considered unsuitable for inclusion in the Council's recent list of local heritage assets as the theatre was neither in situ nor intact. She commented that it was pedantic and typical that the Century Theatre was being left to drop between the definitions, despite being on

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the Theatre Trust's at risk register. She felt that this was a Manifesto promise which was unlikely to be delivered.

Councillor M B Wyatt commented that the administration had created a ghost town over the last 12 years. He felt that the Council Delivery Plan lacked vision and ambition and he stated that he would not support it.

Councillor J Legrys referred to some of the promises made in the early years of the administration. He felt that it was disingenuous to make promises in the Council Delivery Plan which may or may not be delivered. He made reference to the current environment of decreasing funding and an ever-changing national climate and stated that he could not support the Council Delivery Plan.

Councillor N Smith commented that the only way to regenerate a town was by bringing people in to the town, creating jobs and spending money. He reminded members of what had been achieved.

Councillor R Canny referred to page 36 of the agenda and the commitment to work with 3 schools on skills development in the next 3 years. Having read the document she commented that she would want to know which schools the Council was working with. She also highlighted the fact that Castle Donington was not mentioned in the Council Delivery Plan, which she found very sad for such an area of growth. She added that she would particularly like to see improved transport links as the people of Castle Donington would be unable to use the new leisure facility in Coalville due to the lack of a direct transport link.

Councillor D Bigby commented that the Council Delivery Plan appeared to reflect the pledges made in the last election. He requested a copy of the manifesto. He highlighted the pledges made on social media, and in particular the pledge to reopen the Royal Hotel, which was a matter of great local concern. He questioned why this pledge had not been included in the Council Delivery Plan neither as a key task, nor as an aspiration. He commented that it was highly irresponsible to commit the Council to reopen a commercial enterprise.

Councillor R Blunt exercised his right of reply and stated that he was passionate about the Century Theatre, and the Council would work closely with the owners to ensure it continued to thrive. He added that Historic England and the Council were aware of its importance. He expressed his personal commitment to reopening the Royal Hotel.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and

RESOLVED THAT:

The proposed Council Delivery Plan for 2019/20 be approved.

14. REVIEW OF LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to members, highlighting the operation of the Local Plan Committee since its establishment a year ago, and the review of the Committee that had been undertaken by officers. He highlighted the progress made as set out in the report and added that the Local Plan Committee was now responsible for all aspects of the Local Plan process with the exception of adoption, which was a matter reserved for full Council. He advised that officers had concluded that overall the Committee was working well and had carried out its business in a positive and constructive manner. He thanked the members of the Local Plan Committee for their work and commended the report.

Chairman's initials

Councillor J Legrys expressed support for the recommendations and highlighted the opportunities to discuss detailed planning matters at the Local Plan Committee and the excellent cross-party work that had been undertaken. He added that there were issues requiring further discussion which were not referred to in the report, such as the issue of gypsies and travellers.

Councillor R Ashman thanked Councillors J Legrys and J Geary in particular for their input into the peer review process and Councillor J Bridges for chairing the Local Plan Committee. He stated that the peer review had been a collaborative experience and members needed to continue to work in collaboration to find solutions to take the district forward in a sustainable way. He emphasised the importance of the review of the Local Plan, and added that the Local Plan Committee was crucial to that process.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor V Richichi and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The performance of the Local Plan Committee to date be noted.
- b) No changes are currently required to the Constitution in respect of those matters delegated to the Local Plan Committee.

15. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND GROUPS, ELECTION OF CHAIRMEN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMEN

The Chairman referred members to the nominations as set out in the additional papers.

Councillor S Sheahan made reference to the request for a member of the opposition to chair the scrutiny committees. He stated that he would bring this issue to the attention of the corporate peer review team.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor N Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The appointments to the Committees and Groups as set out in the additional papers be agreed.
- b) The Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Committees and Groups as set out in the additional papers be agreed.

16. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON COMMUNITY BODIES

The Chairman referred members to the nominations as set out in the additional papers.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor N Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

Representatives be appointed to serve on the community bodies as set out in the additional papers.

17. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2019/20

Councillor J Legrys asked that members be notified in good time of any meeting cancellations.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and

RESOLVED THAT:

The proposed schedule of meetings for 2019/20 be agreed.

18. MEMBER CONDUCT ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

Councillor N J Rushton presented the report to members.

Councillor V Richichi, as Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee for 2018/19, spoke about the varied and important work undertaken by the Committee. In particular he drew members' attention to the low number of complaints in respect of member conduct received by the Monitoring Officer in the previous year. He thanked the staff and the pool of independent persons who gave their time voluntarily.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor V Richichi and

RESOLVED THAT:

The member conduct annual report 2018-19 be received and endorsed.

19. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

Councillor N J Rushton presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The term of office of the independent persons be extended to the end of the 2019/20 municipal year.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.38 pm