MINUTES of a meeting of the COUNCIL held in the Remote Meeting using Microsoft Teams on TUESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2021

Present: Councillor V Richichi (Chairman)

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

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Mrs T Bingham, Mrs M Long, Mr A Barton, Mrs B Smith, Miss E Warhurst, Mrs C Hammond and Mr T Delaney

48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Benfield.

49. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor T Eynon declared a non-pecuniary interest on items 13 – Pay Policy Statement 2021/22 and 14 – Gender Pay Gap, as a member of the East Midlands Councils Employers Board, on behalf of Leicestershire County Council.

50. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman delivered a very poignant address reflecting on approaching the one-year anniversary of the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact that the virus had had on the community. He wished both Councillors A Black and D Harrison a speedy recovery from the virus and he asked all in attendance to observe a minute's silence to remember all the individuals and families that had lost their lives or loved ones during the past year.

He then took the opportunity to acknowledge and thank all key workers, in particular NHS staff, Council staff and unsung heroes that had supported the district during this difficult time.

Councillor S Sheahan echoed the sentiments of the Chairman and acknowledged the outstanding work of the vaccination centre at Measham Leisure Centre.

51. LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor R Blunt acknowledged the amazing achievement of the vaccination programme and paid tribute to the volunteers at the local centre and the local taxi drivers, who had been ensuring members of the community where able to attend their appointments. He updated Councillors on the grants that had been and were continuing to be distributed to support local businesses. He recognised the continuing work of the Coalville project following the news that the Future High Streets Fund bid had not been successful; and the progress on the new Leisure Centre. He detailed the proposals for the upgrading of heating in Council homes following the award of the Green Homes Grant and the purchase of a further 17 houses for offer to those on the housing register.

Councillor M Wyatt echoed the Leader's comments and thanked the taxi drivers in the district who were providing an essential service to the community.

Before inviting Councillor R Bayliss to make his announcements, the Chairman invited the Chief Executive to make a statement to the Council in relation to grant payments for the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme. Bev Smith, Chief Executive made her statement which outlined the issue to which Councillor Baylisss would refer, and the measures which had been put in place as a consequence.

Councillor R Bayliss advised members on the situation that had arisen with the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme and the actions that had been taken since the error had been discovered. He noted that a further report on the matter and the actions going forward would be taken back to the Audit and Governance Committee for its consideration.

Councillor R Bayliss was pleased to announce that the Customer services team had been awarded the accreditation of Customer Service Excellence, which was formal recognition of the progress of the team over the past number of years and highlighted the elements detailed in the report. He congratulated the team for their achievement.

Members were given the opportunity to comment on the announcements from Councillor R Bayliss and the achievements of the Customer Services Team were acknowledged.

52. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

53. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Chairman advised that he had received two questions ahead of the meeting and that he would take them in the order they had been received.

(1) The Chairman invited Councillor J Clarke to ask his question addressed to Councillor A Woodman.

"There is an inordinate amount of road side litter on the rural roads in the district. I am happy to pick litter in my own village but I will not collect litter on roads where there is no pavement, for safety reasons. Could the Council assist Parish Councils in litter collection on the rural roads by providing extra litter pickers, plastic bags and bag rings but more importantly an escort vehicle to protect volunteer litter pickers from traffic. In addition could the Council launch a drive against those who litter and encourage fast food establishments too high light the anti-social behaviour of those who dispose of their rubbish on the roadside?"

The Chairman invited Councillor A Woodman to respond.

"The council currently supports over 300 volunteer litter pickers across the district and this will be enhanced by the addition of a £15k budget that is being considered at this Full Council meeting which will provide much needed equipment to our army of volunteers. This equipment will be available for voluntary groups and parish/town councils to help organise litter picks and target areas of concern.

For insurance and health and safety reasons we are not able to supply escort vehicles to our volunteers, they are only advised to keep areas tidy that are easily accessible when out and about (footpath verges, community parks, hedgerows etc.).

The litter they collect should only be what is typically dropped irresponsibly by others (cans, plastic bottles, crisp packets etc.).

They are also advised to avoid large items and unidentified cans or canisters, poisons, insecticides, clinical waste, other hazardous substances, broken glass, syringes, etc.

This year, Keep Britain Tidy **'The Big Spring Clean'** will be held 28 May to 13 June. North West Leicestershire District Council will be supporting this by organising our own event where we will be asking people to 'Pick Their Own Street'. In previous years, the event has been around the Coalville and Ashby Town centres however, this year we will be offering the event to the wider district and encouraging people to pick on the road in which they reside or work. (Subject to any Covid restrictions in place at the time).

The Litter Strategy for England, which the council supports, aims to clean up the country and reduce both litter and littering behaviours by means of better education, enforcement. To help combat roadside litter new regulations were introduced in April 2018. These regulations mean that local councils may issue a Penalty Charge Notice to the registered owner of a car if it can be proved litter had been dumped from their vehicle even if someone else discarded the rubbish.

A countywide campaign was also launched in 2019 to highlight these new powers which is currently ongoing across the district."

The Chairman invited Councillor J Clarke to ask a supplementary question.

Councillor J Clarke noted the type of litter that was being left and the hard work of parishes, community groups and residents of the district for trying their best to keep the area tidy and asked if the Portfolio Holder if there was any way that the problem could be tackled.

Councillor A Woodman advised that the street cleansing service was working as hard as they could to clear the litter and he acknowledged the work of the volunteers. He noted that financial support to the volunteers would be discussed as part of the budget. He added that he and officers fully recognised the issue and would keep fighting the blight of littering.

(2) The Chairman invited Councillor S Sheahan to ask his question addressed to Councillor A Woodman.

"2021 has seen an increase in dog fouling on public footpaths and litter in grass verges & laybys, whilst fly tipping shows no signs of abating. How does the Council plan to respond?

The Chairman invited Councillor A Woodman to respond.

"A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was adopted in 2018 replacing the old dog control orders. This will be extended in March 2021 by Cabinet for a further 3 years and will give enforcement officers continued powers to deal with offences relating to dogs such as:- fouling, having a means to pick up, exclusion in children's play areas and on marked sports pitches and leads by order. The Environmental Protection Team are also looking to revamp the current 'Dog

Watch' campaign with new signage for 2021 to raise awareness around picking up after your dog and correctly disposing of the waste. There has been an increase in bagged dog waste being discarded into trees and bushes and this will be highlighted in the new campaign combining the two offences of littering and dog fouling. The team have also introduced a new impact assessment, which will form the initial part of any investigation into dog fouling. This will give clear data into the seriousness of problem areas and will enable appropriate action to be taken; the public can also assist with this by giving precise details when reporting issues to council.

The Litter Strategy for England, which the council supports, aims to clean up the country and reduce both litter and littering behaviours by means of better education, enforcement. To help combat roadside litter new regulations were introduced in April 2018. These regulations mean that local councils may issue a Penalty Charge Notice to the registered owner of a car if it can be proved litter had been dumped from their vehicle even if someone else discarded the rubbish. This will speedup investigations making it easier to fine those responsible or who allow other to litter from their vehicle. A Countywide campaign was also launched in 2019 to highlight these new powers, which is currently ongoing across the district. A Litter campaign is also being compiled which will be taken into schools throughout the district to highlight the issues litter has on our environment and wildlife.

The local authority has been under immense pressure with regard to fly tipping, which was heightened at the start of the pandemic when the local tips were closed. There has been a steady decrease since the waste disposal sites reopened and we have seen this right across the district, which is encouraging.

From an enforcement point, fly tipping investigations rely wholly on gathering intelligence and the use of technology to apprehend those responsible and I'm pleased to inform you that the council's 2021/2 budget is proposing a new fund of £15k for cameras which have been specifically designed with fly tipping in mind. It is important when possible to stop a problem at source and our campaign 'Your Waste, You responsibility' is an ideal example of how the council is trying to deal with and educate those people who use rogue waste carriers to take their rubbish away. This campaign was taken into the three main DIY outlets in the district and the team has already started to see signs of this education working.

Monitoring of social media sites has seen an increase in people advising others against giving their waste to unregistered waste carriers highlighting that the message is getting through which will hopefully see less people using illegal carriers in the future"

The Chairman invited Councillor S Sheahan to ask a supplementary question.

Councillor S Sheahan asked if the Portfolio Holder would agree to bring a report to Scrutiny on dog fouling, fly tipping and littering in the autumn to look at the measures that had been set.

Councillor A Woodman agreed that an update report could be taken to Scrutiny.

54. MOTIONS

No motions were received.

55. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

56. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2020.

Councillor N Smith made a comment in respect of the minutes of the meeting in relation to the comments that he made at the September meeting. He apologised if the comments had been misunderstood and had not wanted to infer that any whipping had taken place.

It was moved by Councillor V Richichi, seconded by Councillor J Hoult and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

57. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2021/22

Councillor N Rushton presented the report to members. He thanked the Finance Team for all the work

Councillor N Rushton moved the recommendations as set out in the report. The motion was seconded by Councillor R Blunt.

The Chairman referred to the amendments to the motion, which had been circulated in the additional papers. He invited Councillor S Sheahan to put forward his amendment.

Councillor S Sheahan outlined the amended budget as detailed in the additional papers and echoed Councillor N Rushton's thanks to the Finance Team in assisting with the amended budget. The motion was seconded by Councillor J Legrys.

A full and lengthy debate was held which received some support but reservations were expressed over the use of the surplus budget, when there was an unknown financial future due to the pandemic, unsupported borrowing and lack for money towards the climate change emergency.

The Chairman then put the motion to the vote. A recorded vote being required, the voting was as detailed below:

The motion was declared LOST.

The Chairman referred members to the substantive motion as set out in the agenda.

A further debate was held which received support for the budget and acknowledged the amendment that was circulated which would not see any increase to the precept for the Coalville Special Expense area,.

The Chairman then put the substantive motion to the vote. A recorded vote being required, the voting was as detailed below:

The motion was declared CARRIED.

It was therefore

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The S151 Officer's comments on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves, as required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 be noted.

2. The Medium Term Financial Plan approved by Cabinet on 2 February 2021 as detailed in appendix 2 be noted.

3. The General Fund Revenue Budget for 2021/22 as summarised in appendix 3a be approved.

4. The ground rent increase at Appleby Magna Caravan Site of 0.5% on the anniversary of each individual rent agreement from 1 April 2021 be approved.

5. The amendments to the General Fund Fees and Charges as detailed in appendix 3c effective from 1 April 2021 be approved.

6. The District Council Tax in 2021/22 be frozen.

7. The transfer of any general fund surplus income over expenditure in 2021/22 to the Self Sufficiency reserve (currently budgeted at £1,102,407) be approved.

8. The Special Expenses Revenue Budget for 2021/22 as summarised in appendix 3d be approved.

9. The Special Expenses Band D Council Tax as appendix 6 table b for 2021/22 be set.

10. The Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2021/22 as summarised in appendix 4a be approved.

11. The increase in Council Rents for 2021/22 by up to 1.5% be approved.

12. The increase in garage rents for 2021/22 by 0.5% be approved.

13. The decrease in central heating charges for 2021/22 by 5% be approved.

14. The average decrease of 3.54% in service charge for 2021/22, as set in appendix 4d be approved.

15. The increasing of the lifeline charges for East Midlands Housing and private customers by 0.5% be approved.

16. The surplus Housing Revenue Account income is transferred to the Loan Redemption Reserve, but that Cabinet maintains the ability to use the surpluses more flexibly now the reserve has sufficient money to repay the loans due in 2022 be approved. This approach was approved by Council in 2019/20.

17. The 2021/22 Capital Strategy included in appendix 5a (in line with the Prudential Code) be approved.

18. The proposed General Fund (appendix 5b) and Housing Revenue Account (appendix 5c) Capital Programmes for 2021/22 and planned financing be approved.

19. The General Fund and HRA Capital Programmes 2022/23 – 2025/26 for indicative purposes only be approved.

20. The following amounts for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Regulation 31b of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended be approved:

    (1) 34,841 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base (England) Regulations 2012, as its Council Tax Base for the year.

    (2) The amounts specified in appendix 6 table a of this report being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as the amount of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

21. The following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 31a and 31b of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended be approved:

    (1) <u>District/Parish gross expenditure</u>
    £59,594,749 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the item set out in Section 31a (2) of the Act.

    (2) <u>Income</u>
    £51,142,626 being the amount by aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31a (3) of the Act.

    (3) <u>District/Parish gross expenditure</u>
    £8,452,123 being the amount by which the aggregate at 21(1) above exceeds the aggregate at 21(2) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31a(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.

    (4) <u>Basic amount of tax (including average Parish precepts)</u>
    £242.59 being the amount of 21(2) above, divided by the amount stated as the Council Tax Base in parts of the Council's area, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31b of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

    (5) <u>Parish precepts/special expenses</u>
    £2,927,037 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 35(1) of the Act.

(6) Basic amount of tax (basic council tax – District)
£158.58 being the amount at 21(4) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 21(5) above by the amount as stated as the Council Tax Base for the whole of the Council area, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relates.

(7) Basic amount of tax (Parished areas)
The amounts listed in column 5 of table b appendix 6 to this report, being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 21(6) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned, divided in each case by the amount stated as the Council Tax Base in parts of the Council area, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its areas to which one or more special items relate.

(8) District/Parish council tax rates
The amounts set out in table c appendix 6 to this report being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 21(6) and 21(7) above by the number which, the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band D, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

22. Major precepting authorities
The amounts set out in table d appendix 6 to the report are the amounts notified by Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Combined Fire Authority in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts of Council Tax for the Council's area for the year 2021/22 for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in table e appendix 6 be noted.

23. Council tax base – all bands
Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 21(8) (table c appendix 6) and 22 (table d appendix 6) above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amount of Council Tax for the Council's area for the year 2021/22 for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in table e appendix 6.

24. Referendums relating to council tax increases
The relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2021/22 is not excessive be noted.

Amendment to the Budget as submitted by Councillor S Sheahan (Motion)	
Councillor Virge Richichi	Against
Councillor Jim Hoult	Against
Councillor Elliott Allman	Against
Councillor Robert Ashman	Against
Councillor Roger Bayliss	Against
Councillor Dave Bigby	For
Councillor Angela Black	Against
Councillor Richard Blunt	Against
Councillor Russell Boam	Against
Councillor Alexander Bridgen	Against
Councillor John Bridges	Against

Councillor Rachel Canny	Against
Councillor John Clarke	Against
Councillor David Everitt	For
Councillor Dr Terri Eynon	For
Councillor Marie French	Against
Councillor John Geary	For
Councillor Louise Gillard	Against
Councillor Stuart Gillard	Against
Councillor Tony Gillard	Against
Councillor Dan Harrison	Against
Councillor Bertie Harrison-Rushton	Against
Councillor Michael Hay	For
Councillor Gill Hoult	Against
Councillor Russell Johnson	For
Councillor John Legrys	For
Councillor Keith Merrie MBE	Against
Councillor Nicholas Rushton	Against
Councillor Tony Saffell	Against
Councillor Carol Sewell	For
Councillor Sean Sheahan	For
Councillor Nigel Smith	Against
Councillor Jake Windram	Against
Councillor Andrew Woodman	Against
Councillor Michael Wyatt	Against
Rejected	
Substantive Motion (Motion)	
Councillor Virge Richichi	For
Councillor Jim Hoult	For
Councillor Elliott Allman	For
Councillor Robert Ashman	For
Councillor Roger Bayliss	For
Councillor Dave Bigby	Abstain
Councillor Angela Black	Against
Councillor Richard Blunt	For
Councillor Russell Boam	For
Councillor Alexander Bridgen	For
Councillor John Bridges	For
Councillor Rachel Canny	For
Councillor John Clarke	For
Councillor David Everitt	Abstain
Councillor Dr Terri Eynon	Abstain
Councillor Marie French	Against
Councillor John Geary	Abstain
Councillor Louise Gillard	For
Councillor Stuart Gillard	For
Councillor Tony Gillard	For
Councillor Dan Harrison	For
Councillor Bertie Harrison-Rushton	For
Councillor Michael Hay	Abstain
Councillor Gill Hoult	For
Councillor Russell Johnson	Abstain
Councillor John Legrys	Abstain
Councillor Keith Merrie MBE	For

Councillor Nicholas Rushton	For
Councillor Tony Saffell	For
Councillor Carol Sewell	Abstain
Councillor Sean Sheahan	Abstain
Councillor Nigel Smith	For
Councillor Jake Windram	Against
Councillor Andrew Woodman	For
Councillor Michael Wyatt	Against
Carried	

58. INVESTMENT STRATEGY - SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL 2021/22

Councillor N Rushton presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Investment Strategy – Service and Commercial 2021/22 be approved.

59. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2021/22 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2021/22-2023/24

Councillor N Rushton presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22, Treasury Management Prudential Indicators – Revised 2020/21 and the 2021/22-2023/24, and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement be approved.

60. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22, as attached at appendix 1 of the report be approved.

61. GENDER PAY GAP 2020

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor L Gillard and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

62. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET IN QUARTER 3 2020/21

Councillor R Blunt presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor J Hoult and by affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.28 pm