

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2025

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chair)

Councillors M B Wyatt, T Gillard, K Merrie MBE, A C Saffell and A C Woodman

In Attendance: Councillors P Lees, A Barker, J Geary, J Legrys, P Moulton and S Sheahan

Officers: Mrs A Thomas, Mr J Arnold, Mr A Barton, Mr P Stone, Ms K Hiller, Mr T Devonshire and Mr M Murphy

#### **111. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor N Rushton.

#### **112. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillors T Gillard and K Merrie declared an other registerable interest in the Devolution White Paper Update report, as they were both Members of Leicestershire County Council.

#### **113. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no questions received.

#### **114. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2025 were considered.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor T Saffell, and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2025 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

#### **115. ADMISSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEM**

RESOLVED THAT:

By reason of special circumstance in that an additional item of business needs to be considered before the next meeting of the Cabinet, the item entitled "Devolution White Paper Update" be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Reason for decision:** To enable the consideration of urgent business.

#### **116. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025/26 AWARD**

The Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder presented the report.

A Member welcomed the ongoing and planned work at Moira Furnace and the restoration of Ashby Canal.

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The Chair also welcomed the work at Moira Furnace and commended the continuation of the UKSPF funding stream.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor A Woodman, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The £789,998 grant from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26 be accepted.
2. The UKSPF funded projects set out in the report be approved.
3. Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder, to review and amend the project proposals set out in this report where required to respond and adapt to the changing economic environment and/or local needs.
4. Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder to submit the required formal reporting to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
5. It be recommended to Council, at its meeting on 13 May that £145,859 be added to the Council's Capital Programme for delivery of the UKSPF 2025/26 Programme.

**Reason for decision:** For Cabinet to provide feedback on, and approve the proposed UKSPF 2025/26 award projects.

For Cabinet to review and approve the recommended delegations to oversee the delivery of the UKSPF 2025/26 award.

## 117. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Infrastructure Portfolio Holder presented the report. He highlighted a range of examples of positive progress against various KPIs. Planning KPI's were again in excess of the targets for determining all types of planning applications, 80% of district food businesses now held a five-star rating in respect of Food Hygiene, a balanced budget had been agreed at full Council on 20 February 2025, and progress continued to be made on both the Transformation Programme and key regeneration projects.

There had been a fall in response times to customer complaints and this was being addressed through improved analysis of the causes of complaints to help prevent future occurrences, and complaint investigation training had been developed for managers which would commence shortly. Weekly reports on complaints progress were being sent to Directors where complaints were not being responded to.

The Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder welcomed the significant reduction in the housing repairs backlog during the quarter, and said that a more detailed update on this would be presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 13 March 2025 and then the Cabinet on 22 April 2025. He also set out in further detail the strengthening of the Council's approach to handling complaints, and welcomed the introduction of a computer aided facility management system, to assist the Property Services Team.

The Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder said that the quarterly performance report demonstrated that the Economic Regeneration Team were

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continuing to achieve their targets and progress with ambitious projects to regenerate the district.

The Planning Portfolio Holder welcomed the comfortably above target performance for dealing with planning applications in the quarter, a testament to the hard work of the Planning and Development Team, and advised that an upcoming all-Member briefing would explain to Members how the new Enforcement Plan operated.

The Strategic Director of Resources, on behalf of the Corporate Portfolio Holder, highlighted the continued progress to resolve the Statement of Accounts backlog, the commitment to enhance the organisation's finance system and the continued work of the Transformation Programme to close the medium-term funding gap.

The Chair commended the contributions and said that the ethos of the organisation was changing.

It was moved by Councillor K Merrie, seconded by Councillor R Blunt, and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

**Reason for decision:** To update members on the progress of the plan. It is the Cabinet's responsibility to monitor the performance of the Council Delivery Plan.

#### 118. DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER UPDATE

The Leader of the Council presented the report. Additionally, he thanked Members from all parties for their contribution to the debate at full Council on 20 February 2025, and said he would consult regularly with the Leader of the Opposition.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor K Merrie, and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The work being undertaken by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council to respond to the government's English Devolution White Paper by the deadline of 21 March 2025, be noted.
2. That the views of members of the Council expressed at its meeting on 20 February 2025 will also be considered as part of the process, be noted.
3. That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Leader of the Council, to submit a joint response with the other district and borough councils in Leicestershire and Rutland County Council on a suggested approach to local government reorganisation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to meet the Government's deadline of 21 March 2025.
4. That further stakeholder engagement will be undertaken leading up to the submission of a final proposal by 28 November 2025, be noted.

**Reason for decision:** It is a Cabinet function to consider and make proposals in relation to local government reorganisation. Due to the tight timescales, a

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delegation is required to enable an initial response to be provided by the deadline of 21 March 2025 on a possible approach to local government reorganisation in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. This would be subject to wider stakeholder engagement prior to final proposals being submitted by 28 November 2025.

**119. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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

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.

**120. AWARD OF CONTRACTS**

The Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report and referred to the additional papers.

A brief discussion was had.

It was moved by Councillor A Woodman, seconded by Councillor R Blunt, and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations contained within the report be approved.

**Reason for decision:** To comply with the Council's contract procedure rules.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chair closed the meeting at 5.24 pm