

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on TUESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2026

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chair)

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

In Attendance: Councillors D Cooper, J Legrys, P Moulton, J G Simmons and R Sutton

Officers: Mrs A Thomas, Mrs A Crouch, Ms B Leonard, Ms K Hiller and Mrs C Hammond

#### **114. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor N Rushton.

#### **115. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no interests declared.

#### **116. 2026/27 GENERAL FUND BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX**

The report was presented by the Finance and Corporate Portfolio Holder.

Following the presentation, Councillor K Merrie summarised the decisions made at the meeting of the 3 of February.

A question was asked by Councillor J Legrys.

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN LEGRYS**

'Can I ask the Leader why the following publicly announced changes to proposals are not shown:

-10% Increase car parking charges (to be removed?)

-extension of 'free two hour'

parking charge exemption for Money Hill car park (not shown)'

#### **RESPONSE FROM THE FINANCE AND CORPORATE PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

'The Government announced details of the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 on 9 February 2026. Given the unprecedented and significant changes to the funding formula, and the consequent material impact on the Council's funding position over the medium term, it was agreed that an extraordinary Cabinet meeting should be convened on 17 February 2026 to consider the implications.

While the agenda for the Full Council meeting on 19 February 2026 was issued on 11 February 2026, it was considered more appropriate to await the outcomes of the extraordinary Cabinet meeting on 17 February 2026. Accordingly, it was agreed that an addendum report would be presented to Full Council, incorporating all updates since the budget proposals were considered by Cabinet on 3 February 2026, including both the announcements made at that meeting and the details of the final finance settlement. This approach ensures that Members are presented with a single, consolidated view of all changes affecting the budget proposals.'

A supplementary question was asked. The Head of Finance informed those present that an addendum report, covering all updates, would be taken to full Council on Thursday 19 February. Officers hoped to be able to publish the addendum on Thursday morning; earlier if possible.

The carparking review was welcomed by members, as was the confirmed plans to introduce up to 2 hours free parking in all Council-run car parks in Coalville and the Money Hill car park in Ashby. Details of its implementation was explained by a member and its implementation aimed to be from 6 July 2026. This was expected to boost access to town centres and support local businesses. Alongside this change, the Council would conduct a data-gathering exercise to better understand car park usage and identify what visitors wanted, helping to inform future operational decisions.

Thanks were extended to Councillor A Woodman for his contribution to discussions regarding Ashby's parking facilities.

In response, it was noted that a full parking review was timely and important, particularly in areas where car parks were currently at capacity and better turnover was needed to support local access and trade.

It was moved by Councillor K Merrie, seconded by Councillor M Wyatt and

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The proposed general fund budget as detailed in this report and attached appendices was endorsed and recommended to Council for approval at its meeting on 19 February 2026.
- 2) The contribution to a contingency budget as detailed in appendix 1 was approved and responsibility delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources (Section 151 officer) and the relevant portfolio holder to incur expenditure under that budget.
- 3) The fees and charges as set out in Appendix 3 was approved.
- 4) Authority was delegated to the Section 151 officer, in consultation with the Finance and Corporate portfolio holder to make amendments to the budget prior to its consideration at council on 19 February 2026 in response to any requests from portfolio holders in respect of their portfolio.
- 5) The creation of a £2m Legacy fund to support communities with capital and revenue projects was approved.
- 6) Two hours free parking at Moneyhill Car Park in Ashby was approved.
- 7) Car parking charging increases were frozen across the district pending the outcome of a car parking review.
- 8) The grant to Age UK was allocated for befriending services to ensure value for money.
- 9) The reinstated grant to Ashby Museum was approved on the condition that the funding was to support the cost of IT equipment and services.
- 10) The removal of the agency model for the leisure contract saving as outlined in Appendix Two was approved.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chair closed the meeting at 5.10 pm

Chair's initials