

MINUTES of a meeting of the COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2020

Present: Councillor J Bridges (Chairman)

Councillors V Richichi, E G C Allman, R Ashman, R D Bayliss, D Bigby, A S Black, R Blunt, R Boam, A J Bridgen, 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 Houlst, J Houlst, R Johnson, J Legrys, K Merrie MBE, N J Rushton, A C Saffell, C A Sewell, S Sheahan, N Smith, D E J Tebbutt, J Windram, A C Woodman and M B Wyatt

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

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Benfield.

57. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor J Geary declared a non-pecuniary interest as a trustee of the newly formed Snibston Heritage Trust.

Councillor J Legrys declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 11 – Budget and Council Tax 2020/21, as a Director and Volunteer at Hermitage FM.

58. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

He advised Members that following discussions with officers, he had decided to cancel the Civic Dinner. The decision had come following the loss of the main sponsor and he felt that due to other pressures on the budget it was not the right time to press ahead with such a big event. He hoped that a charity event may be held in the coming months if not it would roll over to the next civic year.

59. LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman invited the Leader and Portfolio Holders to make any announcements.

Councillor R Blunt made the following announcements.

He began by supporting the Chairman's decision to cancel the Civic dinner and agreed that it was not right for the event to be subsidised by the ratepayer.

"Storm Dennis

Last weekend, our staff were once again out assisting people in our district as the country was hit by another storm.

Our housing, parks, waste staff were joined by many other on call staff to check on people and vulnerable areas and respond to reports of incidents.

We received 65 calls about the storm including flooding and wind damage. We provided sandbags across the district, concentrating on particularly badly affected areas including Measham where there was significant flooding from the River Mease.

Our sheltered accommodation at Hood Court was flooded, with the water affecting mainly communal corridors and a handful of flats. Six residents, whose flats had flood damage, were evacuated. Repairs to the flooded areas have already begun and evacuated residents will be able to return to their homes as soon as possible.

With the help of the Local Resilience Forum, we also arranged for overnight accommodation for one family from Appleby Magna, whose home had been flooded. Thank you to those staff who worked very hard over the weekend to help those who were affected by the storm, and also to members who I know were very active in their communities.

Development corporation

Last week Cabinet agreed to support the work of the Midlands Engine exploring the establishment of a Development Corporation, which would provide an opportunity to boost development, jobs and infrastructure across the East Midlands - in particular in the north of our district and across the border into Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

If it is established, one of the three sites that the development corporation would look at is East Midlands Airport, the rail freight interchange and the Segro site, which is hugely important for our district in terms of jobs and connectivity. The development corporation would attract significant investment and raise the profile of the East Midlands, addressing some of the historic under-funding this region has experienced.

It is important that this council is involved in the work from the very start to make sure we have a place at the table and we are able to advocate for our district. We will be establishing a cross member-working group to make sure you are kept informed and involved as this important project progresses.

Snibston

Whilst it is not a North West Leicestershire project, I would like to mention the start of work at the Snibston Colliery site. This county council project ties in keenly with our own regeneration work in Coalville, and it's been great to see the community pull together to support the plans for a new country park, café, heritage trail and green infrastructure.

The plans also include reopening the original colliery gates for access. It gives me an enormous amount of pride to know that those gates will open for the first time in 40 years. People will be arriving as the miners did – now to enjoy the country park.

Ashby Road

Close by to the Snibston project is the removal of the traffic calming on Ashby Road, which is due to start in the summer. Through a consultation, the county council was able to establish that 77% of people agreed that Ashby Road needed improvements and that 68% agreed with the proposed works. I am pleased that this council is able to support the project, which is clearly high on people's wish list for the town, by providing half the cost. I believe it will make a much more welcoming entrance to the town.

Big Weekend in the National Forest

And finally, this year, venues in Ashby and Coalville took part in the Leicester Comedy Festival as part of the BIG Weekend in the National Forest, sponsored by this council. This is a first for the district and I am really pleased to report that over 600 people supported nine comedy performances in venues ranging from the Century Theatre, Conkers, The Lyric Rooms and Ashby and Coalville libraries. The weekend also hosted the National Forest's Funniest Kids which saw children from Belvoirdale and All Saints schools performing."

The Chairman thanked Councillor R Blunt for his announcements and invited questions and comments from the floor.

Councillor D Harrison expressed his sincere thanks the officers for the work that they had carried out to support residents during the flood. He noted that the work to prevent further issues was complex, but it was planned that the Council would work together with other parties to, hopefully resolve the issues.

Councillor S Sheahan also wished to thank the officers that assisted residents of the Riverway estate in Measham during the recent floods. He highlighted over areas of the district that he had visited during the events and that he hoped to discuss the issue with Leicestershire County Council.

Councillor J Geary welcomed the comments in relation to Snibston site and was confident that members could all work together to support the residents that they had been elected to represent. In relation to the flooding, he asked if the Council was keeping a true record of all properties and businesses that had been flooded and parcels of land that were still under water. He felt that it would show where hotspot areas were for future flooding instances and could be used to avoid developing on flood plain.

Councillor R Blunt advised that all incidents of flooding should be reported to the LCC flood website. Any area should be reported. He noted an incident that had arisen in the past and that it involved several authorities working together to resolve. He thanked Councillor J Geary for his support in relation to Snibston and advised Members that it would be called Snibston Colliery Park and it was hoped to be open during the year.

Councillor R Canny stated that there was severe flooding at Cavendish Bridge and that residents had asked what the Council was doing about climate change, to which she advised that the Council had committed to do something about. She noted that the residents also expressed concerns over the enormous amount of building happening in the area and what more was to come. She was pleased to see that in relation to the Development Corporation the authority would look at the impact that it would have on the residents.

Councillor R Boam expressed his concerns over the support that the authority offered to its elderly residents during the floods, as many were unable to get to the depot to collect sandbags. He advised that he went himself to collect for her.

Councillor R Ashman made the following announcements.

"MHCLG praise

I am very pleased to report that this council has been praised for exceeding its house building targets. In a letter from Robert Jenrick MP, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, he thanks officers and councillors for the effort we have put in to achieve this result.

He praised NWLDC for really rising to the challenge of providing the necessary homes, and acknowledges that this can be a difficult task.

The Government will be continuing with their plans to increase the housing thresholds so it is important that we maintain an up to date Local Plan and continue to deliver housing completions for years to come.

Local Plan review

Speaking of the importance of the Local Plan, I am pleased to be able to advise members that the Local Plan review has now been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. We have met the two-year deadline imposed by the previous inspector to avoid the adopted plan being deemed to be out-of-date.

This means that the adopted Local Plan can continue to be given full weight when we determine planning applications and so we will not be in the position we were a few years ago when we were forced to approve many planning applications which we otherwise would not have wished to support.

My thanks to the officers behind the Local Plan and the members of the cross-party Local Plan Committee, who continue to work incredibly hard in this complex and detailed area of work that has an important impact on this district.”

Councillor A Woodman made the following announcements.

“At Full Council in November Councillor C Sewell queried the use of glyphosate by council employees. I am pleased to inform members that as of 1 April all council employees will cease using it. Whilst the chemical was managed in a safe way and its use was kept to an absolute minimum, our intention was to stop using it once a suitable alternative option became available which is now the case. There will be additional expense of around £5,000 per annum to the council for using the new chemical, and whilst it is unlikely that glyphosate is carcinogenic, we would not subject our employees to anything that may cause risk to their health and wellbeing if there is any possibility at all of this happening, and if there is a suitable alternative option available.”

The Chairman thanked Councillor A Woodman for his announcements and invited questions and comments from the floor.

Councillor S Sheahan thanked Councillor C Sewell for asking the question at the last Council meeting and Councillor A Woodman for ensuring the outcome that had just been made.

60. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

61. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

One question had been received.

The Chairman invited Councillor J Legrys to ask his question addressed to Councillor R D Bayliss.

“Following announcements that the current Coalville Market site will close; as will its public toilet facilities. This also follows the announcement that the current private toilet facilities within the Coop Supermarket will also be closed.

I have been contacted by Ward residents seeking clarification of future NWLDC Public Toilet facilities within Coalville Town Centre. The lack of clarity has caused distress for elderly, disabled and people with responsibilities for children and adult care.

Can I please be informed of what public toilet facilities will NWLDC provide on closure of the current market site?"

The Chairman invited Councillor R D Bayliss to respond.

"We are currently considering the range of options available for the Market Hall building once the market has relocated to its new home on Marlborough Square, and this process will include evaluating all of the options available regarding public toilets. As part of this process one of the constraints on future use will be the extensive repairs required to the existing market hall roof to make it fully watertight again, which have been estimated to exceed £240,000 to complete. Prior to any final decision being made we will consult on the options and a report will be brought before the Corporate Scrutiny Committee prior to consideration at Cabinet, to allow members to input into this process."

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

Councillor J Legrys supplementary question was that a press release was made to keep the residents informed of the future of the toilets and could the Portfolio provide an amount of how much had been spent in the past on relocating the toilets.

Councillor R Bayliss advised that a press release would be issued and that the figure will be provided outside of the meeting.

62. MOTIONS

Councillor A Woodman moved the motion as set out on the agenda and presented it to Members.

He noted that the motion had been adopted by hundreds of Local Authorities and by all major political parties. He stated that it was depressing that after seventy five years it was still an issue and that reports of Anti-semitic incidents in the first six months of 2019 were up 10% on the same period in 2018 which was very worrying that the trend. He informed Members that the Council needed to take stand against all discrimination and signal that it would not tolerate any hatred and reflect it by including in the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Councillor R D Bayliss seconded the motion and reserved his right to comment.

The Chairman welcomed comments from the floor.

Councillor T Eynon thanked Councillor A Woodman for bringing forward the motion and noted that it had been accepted by LCC. She stated that as chair of the Equality and Access Group she was pleased that there was cross party support and was glad that Councillor A Woodman mentioned that the strategy would be updated. She advised that the statement was consistent with the strategy and made clear that all discrimination was the perception of the person being discriminated against. She advised all Members to read strategy, and once updated it would hopefully be brought to Full Council to look at the action plan.

Councillor M Wyatt stated that the Liberal Democrat group was 100% in support of the motion, which was appreciated not just by Jewish community but also supported by the non-members of the Jewish community.

Councillor R Blunt stated that he was pleased that other parties supported the motion. He noted that all present in the room were good fair decent people and that the world that they lived in was a good fair decent world and it was frightening how quickly it changed. It was timely to bring forward and hoped it was unanimous

Councillor N Smith urged Members to visit the museum in Nottinghamshire, as it would bring home the reality of the Holocaust better than talking about it.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that he found it depressing that after liberation the Council had to consider motion before them. He found the resurgence a peculiar mind-set, which was morally dangerous and therefore the motion must be supported

Councillor A Woodman thanked all Members for the support and that he was happy to discuss bringing the strategy to Full Council with officers.

The Chairman then put the following motion to the vote. It was

RESOLVED:

‘That the Council adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism which is as follows:-

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

63. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

64. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

65. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that following on from comments of Councillors to the LGA peer review, it was recommended that a review of the allowances be carried out. He highlighted that the panel had met twice to consider requests to look at both the basic and SRAs, and that the panel had given consideration to detailed benchmarking information in making their decisions. The panel thanked those members who expressed interest to attend the meetings but to eliminate any sense of bias it was felt that the panel meetings should remain independent. He stated that the authority had a legal duty to publish a press notice of the findings and recommendations, and that it was proposed that the changes to the scheme would take effect from Tuesday, 12 May 2020.

Councillor D Harrison stated that he supported the recommendations was happy to second them. He acknowledged that the backbench work had been reduced but was not

aware of any issues that had been raised by colleagues. He thanked the panel for their work, as it was not an easy role to fulfil.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor D Harrison and

RESOLVED THAT

The Members' Allowance Scheme be amended to take effect from Annual Council on 12 May 2020 (when the appointments to committees are agreed) as follows:

1. The basic allowance to be increased for all Members to £5,027.10 per annum;
2. The special responsibility allowance in respect of the Planning Chairman to be increased from a multiple of 1.3 to 1.5;
3. The special responsibility allowances in respect of the Chairmen of Audit & Governance, Licensing, Local Plan & the Scrutiny Committees to be reduced from a multiple of 1.3 to 0.5; on the understanding that Scrutiny would be revisited once any changes following the recommendations of the peer review had been embedded.

66. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2020/21

Councillor N J Rushton presented the report to Members.

He advised that recommendation 17 no longer required approval following the approval of the last item and due to the Local Government Finance Settlement being decided. He informed Members of the changes to the budget consultation that had been introduced for 2020 which included early engagement with the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and enhanced public consultation.

In relation to the General Fund, he highlighted that the budget would deliver a surplus for of £630k and that it was proposed to freeze District Council Tax for the 11th consecutive year. He noted that the budget for business rates income had seen a significant increase as a result of business growth and that additional Council Tax had been budgeted for due to an increase of 2.5% in the council tax base as a result of forecast growth in the district.

Councillor N J Rushton stated that there was a specific recommendation included around increasing special expenses for the first time in 10 years, to cover the cost of managing services in these areas and outlined capital projects that would benefit from £23m that had been budgeted for.

In relation to the HRA budget, he noted that it was proposed to increase Council House Rents by 2.7% in line with the Government's national rent increase formula and that the budget summary showed a surplus of £2.8m.

Councillor N J Rushton moved the recommendations as set out in the report with the exception of number 17, which had been removed. The motion was seconded by Councillor R Blunt who reserved his comments.

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 moved the amendment to the budget. He stated that the group would like to give the creative industries a boost and support aspiring artists to get new workshop spaces research into supporting new artist to get workshop spaces by seeing

what units were available. It was also proposed to support public art festivals through grants. In relation to Customer Service standards, he acknowledged that they had improved but felt that there was still a long way to go. Therefore, it was proposed to earmark £200k to invest in technology and staff. He stated that provision had been made for a Social Needs Support Worker, which would support the Council's commitment to supporting victims of domestic abuse. He informed Members that it was proposed to put forward £20k towards improving air quality and a 1.7% increase in Council Tax, which would help to pay for many of the projects that had been detailed. The increase would also help to balance out the deficit in future years.

In relation to HRA he felt that switching Council properties over to a 'Not for Profit' supplier for energy was an excellent idea and it would not cost the authority a lot to do so. He put forward a proposal for 'Decent homes plus', which meant that rather than a tenant waiting for two items to require fixing they would only wait for one to fix under the new standard. He stated that it would cost £450k per year. He noted that new supply would eventually need to be supported by borrowing. He highlighted that the targets were not being hit for new supply nor was the administration keeping up with the right to buy losses. He expressed concerns that there was no capacity for new houses and the group felt that better decent homes was the way forward.

The motion was seconded by Councillor J Legrys who reserved his comments.

Councillor N J Rushton advised that the administration would not be supporting the amendment and reminded Members that they had the opportunity to bring forward their proposals during the scrutiny process. That would have allowed time for them to be considered and, should the proposals be approved a lot of work and additional cost would be required to initiate them. He highlighted that there had been significant spending on Customer Services and that the Council already offered support to domestic abuse victims through existing arrangements. He raised concerns over switching to 'Not for Profit' energy suppliers and reiterated that the Council was committed to providing decent homes.

Councillor R D Bayliss expressed disappointment that he had only had the opportunity to see the amendment that night and had not had chance to digest. He stated that the home improvement plan was not drawn up on a whim but planned years in advance and he agreed that some improvements were required to Customer Services but work was ongoing and new practices had been established. He concurred with Councillor N J Rushton's concerns over the energy supplier switch and advised he would be voting against the motion.

Councillor J Legrys felt that it was a no win situation as the official opposition when dealing with budget. He stated that the amendment that had been put forward, even though it was likely to be rejected, attempted to outline concerns about how the authority could deal with the limited funds that were coming from the National Government. He highlighted that the amendment would allow residents to say that they were paying and receiving something back for it.

Councillor S Sheahan advised that he could have raised at scrutiny a long with the extra parking and car charging points. He suggested that the energy supplier be put out to tender, as the concern was to prevent tenants from getting into fuel poverty.

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

Amendment to the Budget as submitted by Councillor S Sheahan (Motion)	
Councillor John Bridges	Against
Councillor Virge Richichi	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 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 Hout	Against
Councillor Jim Hout	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 Daniel Tebbutt	Against
Councillor Jake Windram	Against
Councillor Andrew Woodman	Against
Councillor Michael Wyatt	Against
Rejected	

The motion was declared LOST.

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

Councillor S Sheahan advised that the opposition would be abstaining on the main motion, as they did not like the idea of being dependent on grants.

Councillor K Merrie spoke in favour of the budget before him. He thanked all officers involved and acknowledged the new council homes that had been built. He was pleased to see all the funding for regeneration and that Council Tax had been frozen once again.

Councillor T Saffell stated that at previous meetings he had asked about staffing figures and the number of staff that were agency. He felt that the cost of agency staff made took a huge part of the budget and requested that the figures be included in future reports.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that it was the first time that he genuinely felt that his view on the budget mattered and the administration listened to new ideas. He praised the climate change fund and that the groups had the same visions in relation to the high street bid. He expressed concerns that any Leisure S106 monies that had been secured for the Coalville area should be used for the town centre, not the leisure centre. He advised that the group would be abstaining on the motion for this reason but thanked the administration for including them in the budget process.

Councillor R D Bayliss advised that in relation to new supply he referred to the MTFP, which detailed options for maintaining the housing numbers through purchasing stock, however it would take time. He agreed that it was crucial that the Council did not overstaff itself but if the services were to perform to the standard expected then maintaining staff levels was required.

Councillor R Blunt stated that since 2007 he had always ensured that the authority had balanced its books and it would be unforgivable if that were not the case by the end of the year. He advised that it was the administration's number one priority to live within its means and to honour its election commitments, 27 in total, within the budget. He noted that the Council's General Fund had a surplus of £630k and expressed concerns that the opposition than wanted to increase the Council Tax when the surplus was there.

Councillor N J Rushton advised that a report would be taken to a scrutiny committee relating to the staffing figures and the use of agency staff. He thanked Councillor M B Wyatt for his input during the scrutiny process and advised that the S106 monies collected for leisure could only be used for leisure hence why they were going toward the new centre that would benefit the greater Coalville area. He acknowledged that the district proportion of the Council Tax bill was the smallest but it was a big commitment. He informed Members that the Council was, for the first time in a long time, providing new rented accommodation for its residents. He highlighted one option would be to purchase new homes as there should be no difference between private owned homes or authority rented homes. He recommended the budget to be approved.

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

Substantive Motion (Motion)	
Councillor John Bridges	For
Councillor Virge Richichi	For
Councillor Elliott Allman	For
Councillor Robert Ashman	For
Councillor Roger Bayliss	For
Councillor Dave Bigby	Abstain
Councillor Angela Black	Abstain
Councillor Richard Blunt	For
Councillor Russell Boam	For
Councillor Alexander Bridgen	For
Councillor Rachel Canny	For
Councillor John Clarke	For
Councillor David Everitt	Abstain
Councillor Dr Terri Eynon	Abstain
Councillor Marie French	Abstain
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 Hout	For
Councillor Jim Hout	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 Daniel Tebbutt	For
Councillor Jake Windram	Abstain
Councillor Andrew Woodman	For
Councillor Michael Wyatt	Abstain
Carried	

The motion was declared CARRIED.

It was therefore

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Cabinet on 4 February 2020 be noted.
2. The S151 officer's comments on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves be noted.
3. The General Fund Revenue Budget for 2020/21 be approved.
4. The Special Expenses Revenue Budget for 2020/21 be approved.
5. The District Council Tax in 2020/21 be frozen.
6. The Special Expenses Band D Council Tax as appendix 6 table c for 2020/21 be set.
7. The ground rent increase at Appleby Magna Caravan Site of 2.6% on the anniversary of each individual rent agreement in 2020/21 be approved.
8. The amendments to the General Fund Fees and Charges as detailed in appendix 3b effective from 1 April 2020 be approved.
9. The transfer of any General Fund surplus income over expenditure in 2020/21 to the Self Sufficiency reserve (currently budgeted as £630,368) be approved.
10. The increase in Council rents for 2020/21 by up to 2.7% be approved.
11. The increase in garage rents for 2020/21 by 2.6% be approved.
12. The decrease in central heating charges for 2020/21 by 10% be approved.
13. The average increase of 0.44% in service charge for 2020/21, as set out in appendix 4d be approved.
14. Increasing the lifeline charges for East Midlands Housing and private customers by 2.6% be approved.
15. Increasing shop lease rents by an average of 14% to gradually move them to market levels be approved. The approach was agreed by Cabinet in November 2014.
16. That the surplus Housing Revenue Account income be 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 2020 be noted. The approach was approved by Council in 2019/20.

17. The proposed General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes for 2020/21 and planned financing be approved.
18. The vehicle replacement programme for 2021/22 be approved.
19. The Capital Programmes 2021/22 – 2024/25 for indicative proposes only be approved.
20. The 2020/21 Capital Strategy (in line with the prudential code) be approved.
21. The following amounts for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Sections 31b of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended be approved:
 - (1) 34,585 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 the 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.
22. The following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2020/21 in accordance with sections 31a and 31b of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended be approved:
 - (1) District/Parish gross expenditure
£59,786,409 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31a (2) of the act.
 - (2) Income
£51,542,070 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31a (3) of the act.
 - (3) District/Parish gross expenditure
£8,244,339 being the amount by which the aggregate at 23(1) above exceeds the aggregate at 23(2) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with section 31a (4) of the act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
 - (4) Basic amount of tax (including average parish precepts)
£238.38 being the amount at 23(3) 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 31 b of the act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
 - (5) Parish precepts/special expenses
£2,759.849 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 23(4) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 23(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 23(6) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's areas mentioned, divided in each case by the amount stated as the Council Tax base in parts of the Council are, 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 Councils Tax rates

The amounts set out in table c appendix 6 to this report being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 23(6) and 23(7) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in 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.

23. Major precepting authorities

The amounts set out in table d appendix 6 to this 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 as their precepts for 2020/21 for each of the categories of dwellings listed be noted.

24. Council tax base – all bands

That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 23(8) (table c appendix 6) and 24 (table d appendix 6) above, the Council in accordance with section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts of Council Tax for the Council's area for the year 2020/21 for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in table e appendix 6.

25. Referendums relating to council tax increases

The relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2020/21 is not excessive be noted.

67. INVESTMENT STRATEGY - SERVICE AND COMMERCIAL 2020/21

Councillor N J Rushton presented the report to Members.

He advised that it was a strategy requirement introduced for Councils in 2019 and that it set out how the Council would support local public services by lending to them or buying shares in them. He highlighted that approved limits had been set to limit the amount that the Council could lend and that the limits had been designed with reference to potential investment areas in 2019/20.

He added that the strategy also set out the Council's commercial property investments, its current portfolio and reliance on the income stream.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The Investment Strategy – Service and Commercial 2020/21 be approved.

68. THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY MANAGEMENT 2020/21 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2020/21-2022/23

Councillor N J Rushton presented the report to Members.

He advised that the report asked Council to approve the statement for 2020/2, which complied with all the statutory, regulatory and professional requirements. He noted that the strategy was concerned with how the Council invested its surplus cash and set out how the Council could choose to invest.

He informed Members that the investments would be one of the ways that the savings would be delivered under the Journey to Self Sufficiency Programme. He highlighted the table that projected the Council's treasury position to 2025 aligned with the Council's budgets and medium term financial plan and that the Council had a borrowing need identified in 2022/23 of £5.5m, which would be monitored by the Head of Finance.

Councillor J Legrys stated that he had every faith in the team but sought clarification that due diligence was being given to the loans provided to other partners and what would the authority do if they could not be repaid.

The Head of Finance advised when lending to other local authority partners the loan is underwritten by Council Tax and NNDR in that area so there is risk in the timing of the recovery of the loan but not in the redemption of it.

Councillor N J Rushton took the opportunity to thank the Head of Finance and the Finance team for all the hard work that they put in, adding that the Head of Finance was an asset to the Council.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2020/21, Treasury Management Prudential Indicators – revised 2019/20 and 2020/21 to 2022/23 and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement be approved.

69. GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2019

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to Members.

He advised that it was a statutory requirement to calculate, report and publish the percentage differences in pay between male and female employees in the Councils workforce, otherwise known as the "Gender Pay Gap".

He informed Members that the report was based on data from March 2019 in accordance with the requirements and that it was important to note that Gender pay was different to Equal Pay. He noted that all of the jobs were graded according to job evaluation and whatever job people do the pay band was the same, regardless of the gender of the employee.

He highlighted that the Gender pay measures the difference between men and women's average earnings across the organisation and the Council's gender pay gap shows that the females mean hourly rate was 1.45% lower than males, and the median hourly rate is 3.2% lower than males. He added that the gap had reduced from the previous year when the respective rates were 1.91% and 4.44%.

He was pleased to report a narrowing of the gender pay gap again that year and that a review of all Human resources policies and the support that was provided to encourage

females at all levels to develop their careers with authority was being reviewed to help move to a position where there was no pay gap.

Councillor C Sewell advised that the Labour group fully supported the report and were committed to reduce the gender pay gap. She noted that there was a lot of lower paid females and felt that it required more work and support.

Councillor R Ashman welcomed the support and advised that there was a lot of important challenges in the gender gap and a great deal of work still to do. He felt that cross Council support would help to get to zero.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor G Hout and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

70. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2020/21

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that it was a statutory requirement to advise Council annually of the pay and benefit arrangements for the Senior Officers of the Council and highlighted the following changes that applied to the report:-

- There have been two changes to the senior management team during the year with the appointment of a new Strategic Director, and a Joint Strategic Planning Manager.
- The Council adopted the “voluntary” Living Wage some years ago in April 2014, which raised the minimum pay rates for the Council’s lowest paid employees. The Council adopted the revised rate of £9.30 per hour when the rate was revised in November 2019.
- The cost of living settlement which would normally apply from April 1st had not yet been agreed. The settlement was agreed at national level in negotiations between the trade unions and national employers. An offer of 2% made by the Local Government employers was rejected by the trade unions, so the negotiations were continuing.
- The ratio between the highest paid officer and the median average pay decreased slightly, from a factor of 5.16 to 5.05.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The Council’s Pay Policy Statement 2020/21, as attached at appendix 1 of the report be approved.

Councillor D Tebbutt entered the meeting at 6.42pm

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.12 pm