

MINUTES of a meeting of the COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2022

Present: Councillor V Richichi (Chairman)

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

Officers: Mrs B Smith, Mr D Bates, Miss E Warhurst, Mrs M Long and Mrs C Hammond

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Bridgen, D Everitt, M Hay and M French.

59. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

60. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman invited Council to observe a minute's silence to remember Jason Summerfield, a past serving member who passed away at the end of last year. Jason was a Conservative member for the Measham Ward between June 2009 and December 2010.

He then announced that this was the last scheduled meeting of Council which would be attended by Bev Smith, Chief Executive. He complimented Bev on her management style and advised that she would be a very hard act to follow. On behalf of Council, the Chairman presented Bev with flowers and a gift in recognition of her support to members.

The Chief Executive conveyed her thanks and referenced the feeling of being valued and supported by members from all sides. She gave special thanks to the Leader and Cabinet for having the trust in her to enable her to get on with her role; and to the Group Leaders for dealing with challenging issues with mutual respect and understanding. Without wishing to embarrass individual members, Bev thanked those who had taken the time to get to know her as a person and stated that she really appreciated this.

The Chairman invited comments from the floor. Several comments were made which echoed the Chairman's sentiments and which highlighted, in particular, Bev's people skills and her humanity throughout her five years with the Authority.

The Chairman thanked Councillor R Boam for his deputising role during recent events and to members who had attended his charity event; and he invited attendance at his next event where it was hoped that the amount raised for his charities would exceed the £8,000 mark.

The Chairman referred to an award for outstanding contribution which he had presented to Lee Mansfield, Licensing Team Manager for the way he had dealt with the challenges faced by the organisation in the past two years as a consequence of Covid. He advised that Lee had been invited to the Royal Garden Party to thank him for his efforts.

The Chairman referenced the aggressive political dialogue which had taken place at the previous meeting and urged councillors to refrain from this unacceptable behaviour.

He then went on to deliver a very poignant address reflecting on the atrocities in Ukraine and invited Council to observe a minute's silence to consider the fallout out of the situation and to remember those that had already fallen.

61. LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor R Blunt referred to the new Leisure Centre and Newmarket as examples of how Coalville is changing for the better. He provided an update on the progress in respect of Marlborough Square accepting that the risks and the costs were high. Funding for additional works had been included in the budget to be agreed later in the meeting. Finally, the Leader referred to the impressive work currently being undertaken in the Belvoir Centre and advised that he hoped to announce further improvements in the coming months.

Councillors were broadly supportive of the initiatives, but a question was asked about the deliverance of a cinema in the town. Councillor Blunt advised that he could not provide any details at this stage due to continentality issues. Questions were raised about the suitability of the Leisure Centre for the disabled, particularly with regard to noise; and the accessibility to it by walkers and cyclists given the proximity of the main road and there being no direct access.

Councillor A Woodman advised that he was hugely encouraged to see the Leisure Centre was already being well used. In response to the question of access, he referred to the two nearby crossings and the fact that walkers and cyclists were using the facility; adding that any issues can be addressed in the forthcoming walking and cycling strategy. He advised that he would feed back the comments regarding any disability issues to the Everyone Active Steering Group. Finally, Councillor Woodman referred to several health and wellbeing initiatives taking place across the district including the £300,000 new purpose-built fitness room at Ibstock Leisure Complex which is due to open in the next few weeks, the £300,000 extension to the fitness room at Measham Leisure Centre and the community access arrangement which has been facilitated between the parish council and Castle Donington College to the schools' grass football. In summary he advised that there was no greater investment a Council can make than in the health and wellbeing of its residents, and the total investment of around £25m demonstrates that is what we continue to do.

62. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

63. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Chairman advised that he had received one question ahead of the meeting and invited Councillor R Johnson to ask his question addressed to Councillor A Woodman.

Councillor R Johnson asked "on April 16th we are to have an official opening of our New Leisure centre with Colin Jackson and former footballers to name but a few. Can the Portfolio holder explain to me this Council's rationale to omit a local international athlete Gemma Steele; and how much will this council have to pay out for the sports personality's appearance?"

The Chairman invited Councillor A Woodman to respond.

Councillor A Woodman replied "although the date has now been set for the official opening there are a lot of preparations to be put in place for the programme of activities on the day itself. Our partner Everyone Active is leading on the organisation for the day and a press release along with relevant publicity will be shared nearer the date. Everyone Active is responsible for securing and paying the sporting VIP's who will have a key role

interacting with those attending the activities. Each of the stars is expected to lead sessions with customers and speak to the media as ambassadors for the new centre. They are all from the region and Anthony Clark is from Coalville. The stars already lined up are the following:

Colin Jackson CBE – GB Athletics – 1 x Silver Olympic Medallist and 2 x Commonwealth Gold Medallist + Frequent appearances on national TV in reality shows and as a commentator.

Anthony Clark – GB Badminton – Commonwealth Gold Medallist

Ross Davenport – GB Swimming - 2 x Commonwealth Gold Medallist

Ollie Hynd MBE – GB Swimming – 3 x Olympic Gold Paralympian

Charlotte Henshaw MBE – GB Swimming & Canoeing – Paralympian Gold, Silver and Bronze Medallist

Steve Walsh – Former Leicester City FC 2 x League Cup Winner

Muzzy Izzet – Former Leicester City FC 2 x League Cup Winner

Hannah Ward – Captain, Derby County FC Women

We can of course put Gemma Steele in touch with the relevant lead at Everyone Active to explore this further”.

The Chairman invited Councillor R Johnson to ask a supplementary question.

Councillor R Johnson asked again why Gemma Steele had not been invited to join the line-up.

Councillor A Woodman responded by stating that it was a shame that Councillor R Johnson had not taken the time to contact him directly about this as he would have been able to advise him that Gemma Steele had been contacted and subsequently added to the line-up.

64. MOTIONS

No motions were received.

65. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

66. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021.

It was moved by Councillor V Richichi, seconded by Councillor R Boam and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

67. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2022/23

Before handing over to Councillor N Rushton as portfolio holder, the Chairman set out how he intended to deal with this item given the complexities and detail of the report.

Councillor N Rushton then presented the report to members and thanked the Finance Team for all their hard work. He referred to the route the budget had taken to get to this stage where members' comments were invited; and whilst a number of comments were made, no amendments had been proposed.

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

The amendment was declared LOST.

The Chairman referred members to a second amended budget and invited Councillor Wyatt to present it. Councillor Wyatt duly set out his budget amendment which was seconded by Councillor A Black. A further debate was held before the Chairman put the amendment to the vote. A recorded vote being required, the voting was as detailed below:

The amendment was declared LOST.

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

A further debate was held which received wide support for the budget.

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 set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report and as required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, be noted.
2. The Medium Term Financial Plan approved by Cabinet on 1 February 2022, as detailed in paragraph 1.2 and the associated background paper, be noted.
3. The General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23 as summarised in section 2 of the report approved. This includes
 - (a) Freezing the District Council's share of the Council Tax in 2022/23

- (b) Changes to the Fees and Charges, as detailed in Appendix 1B, effective from 1 April 2022.
4. The Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2022/23, as summarised in section 3 of the report, be approved. This includes
 - (a) Increasing rents by up to 4.1%
 - (b) Changes to Fees and Charges and Service Charges, as detailed in Appendices 2B and 2C.
 5. The proposed General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes for 2022/23 and planned financing, as set out in Section 4 of the report, be approved.
 6. The fleet replacement programme for 2023/24, to allow vehicles to be ordered in advance, be approved.
 7. The remaining elements of the General Fund and HRA Capital Programmes 2023/24 – 2026/27 be approved for indicative purposes only.
 8. The Special Expenses Revenue Budget for 2022/23 as summarised in Section 5 be approved. This includes
 - (a) Setting the Special Expenses Band D Council Tax at the levels detailed in table 5 of the report.
 9. The following amounts for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Regulation 31b of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended be approved:
 - (a) £35,581 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.
 - (b) 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.
 10. The following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31a and 31b of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended be approved:
 1. District/Parish gross expenditure
£60,111,517 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the item set out in Section 31a (2) of the Act.
 2. Income
£51,365,280 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. District/Parish gross expenditure
£8,746,237 being the amount by which the aggregate at 10(1) above exceeds the aggregate at 10(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)

£245.81 being the amount of 10(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. Parish precepts/special expenses
£3,103,803 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 10(4) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 10(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 relate.
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 10(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 10(6) and 10(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.
11. 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 2022/23 for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in table e Appendix 6 be noted.
12. Council tax base – all bands
Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 10(8) (table c Appendix 6) and 11 (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 2022/23 for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in table e Appendix 6.
13. Referendums relating to council tax increases
The relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not excessive be noted.

Amendment to the Budget as submitted by Councillor S Sheahan (Amendment)	
Councillor Virge Richichi	Against
Councillor Russell Boam	Against
Councillor Elliott Allman	Against
Councillor Robert Ashman	Against
Councillor Roger Bayliss	Against

Councillor Carl Benfield	For
Councillor Dave Bigby	For
Councillor Angela Black	Abstain
Councillor Richard Blunt	Against
Councillor John Bridges	Against
Councillor Rachel Canny	Against
Councillor John Clarke	Against
Councillor Dr Terri Eynon	For
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 Gill Hout	Against
Councillor Jim Hout	Against
Councillor Russell Johnson	For
Councillor John Legrys	For
Councillor Keith Merrie MBE	Against
Councillor Ray Morris	Against
Councillor Nicholas Rushton	Against
Councillor Tony Saffell	Against
Councillor Carol Sewell	For
Councillor Sean Sheahan	For
Councillor Jenny Simmons	Against
Councillor Nigel Smith	Against
Councillor Jake Windram	Abstain
Councillor Andrew Woodman	Against
Councillor Michael Wyatt	Abstain
Rejected	
Amendment to the Budget as submitted by Councillor Wyatt (Amendment)	
Councillor Virge Richichi	Against
Councillor Russell Boam	Against
Councillor Elliott Allman	Against
Councillor Robert Ashman	Against
Councillor Roger Bayliss	Against
Councillor Carl Benfield	Abstain
Councillor Dave Bigby	Abstain
Councillor Angela Black	For
Councillor Richard Blunt	Against
Councillor John Bridges	Against
Councillor Rachel Canny	Against
Councillor John Clarke	Against
Councillor Dr Terri Eynon	Abstain
Councillor John Geary	Abstain
Councillor Louise Gillard	Against
Councillor Stuart Gillard	Against
Councillor Tony Gillard	Against
Councillor Dan Harrison	Against
Councillor Bertie Harrison-Rushton	Against
Councillor Gill Hout	Against
Councillor Jim Hout	Against
Councillor Russell Johnson	Abstain
Councillor John Legrys	Abstain
Councillor Keith Merrie MBE	Against
Councillor Ray Morris	Against

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

68. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY STRATEGIES 2022-23

Councillor N Rushton presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor N Rushton, seconded by Councillor K Merrie and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Capital Strategy 2022-23 (Appendix 1); The Treasury Management Statement 2022-23 (Appendix 2); The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2022-23 (Appendix 3) and the Investment Strategy 2022-23 (Appendix 4), be approved.

69. MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to members.

A question was raised about the omission of a provision which allows for councillors to be investigated even when they are not acting in their capacity as a councillor, as included in the LGA model Code. The Monitoring Officer advised that the Localism Act provides that a member must be acting in their capacity as a councillor and, whilst the LGA did extend this to include those who were not, it was the view of the Monitoring Officers across the county that this went beyond the limits of the current legislation.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The work of the Standards Working Group in respect of the draft Members' Code of Conduct be noted;
2. The new Members' Code of Conduct (as detailed in Appendix A) be adopted with effect from 1 April 2022;
3. The arrangements for dealing with complaints about member conduct (as detailed in Appendix B) be adopted with immediate effect.

70. LICENSING CUMULATIVE IMPACT POLICY

Councillor A Woodman presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor A Woodman, seconded by Councillor J Clarke and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The retention of the Cumulative Impact Assessment, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

71. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to members.

A question was asked about the car allowance policy and when this would be changed to reflect the use of only electric vehicles to reflect the zero-carbon agenda. Councillor Ashman advised that work was still ongoing on this matter.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor N Rushton and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report be

72. GENDER PAY GAP REPORT

Councillor R Ashman presented the report to members.

A member expressed dismay that traditionally male roles were still being undertaken by 100% males and when females did take up certain roles, there was evidence that pay fell. She also stated that there appeared to be a distinct lack of female apprentices. A suggestion was made that future reporting on this issue includes references to the measures being taken to address this.

The Portfolio Holder considered that these issues should be flagged up and addressed through the Equalities Group.

Following objections from the floor, the Chairman apologised for a comment he made about ~~the ability~~ of women carrying out jobs on building sites.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor N Rushton and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

73. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT DECISIONS

Councillor R Blunt presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

74. CHIEF EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENT - INTERIM AND PERMANENT APPOINTMENTS

Councillor R Blunt presented the report to members.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The process and timeline for the appointment of the new permanent Chief Executive be noted.
2. The process and timeline for the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive and the delegation of authority to make that appointment to the current Chief Executive, in consultation with the Appointments Committee, be noted
3. It be agreed that the post of Interim Chief Executive be designated as the Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.08 pm