

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 16 JUNE 2015

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss, T J Pendleton and N J Rushton

In Attendance: Councillors F Fenning, J Geary, R Johnson, J Legrys, S McKendrick, T Neilson and M Specht

Officers: Mr S Bambrick, Mr R Bowmer, Ms C E Fisher, Mr G Jones, Mrs R Wallace and Miss E Warhurst

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors T Gillard and A V Smith.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no public questions received.

4. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2015.

Councillor R D Bayliss requested the following amendment in relation to minute number 109, Tenant Scrutiny Panel Report – Performance Monitoring and Access to Performance Information:

The paragraph on page 5 to read ‘He stressed that the report at appendix 2 was the work of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (and not officers) and that such inspection reports informed a large part of the work that the panel did.’

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

RESOLVED THAT:

Subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - FOOD SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2015/16

The Leader presented the report to Members on behalf of the Community Services Portfolio Holder.

He highlighted that it had been another successful year for the team with the number of establishments achieving a rating of three stars or higher on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme having increased from 663 to 718. Other key successes were that 100 percent of programmed inspections at high risk food establishments were carried out, 99 percent of programmed food interventions were carried out and 90 percent of non compliant establishments selected to receive enhanced levels of interventions saw their hygiene standards improve significantly. He commented that the team were doing a good job and providing an outstanding service.

Chairman's initials

Councillor T J Pendleton commented that it was good to see the facility increasing and dealing with issues well.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Environmental Health Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2015/16 be approved.
2. The performance and achievements in 2014/15 be noted.

Reason for decision: To approve the content of the Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2015/16 as required by the Food Standards Agency.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2014/15

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He outlined the key points of the report and highlighted that the Council's debt had been reduced, and that although investment returns were currently low the Council had achieved £171,559 interest compared to a budget of £68,000. Overall he felt that the finances were being managed well and he congratulated the officers for the work undertaken.

Councillor R D Bayliss asked why the Authority still had a billing account with the Co-op Bank. The Head of Finance explained that it was purely a holding account for the receipt of PayPoint payments and would be cleared regularly.

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

RESOVLED THAT:

The report be approved.

Reason for decision: It is a statutory requirement.

7. WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He reported that the policy was first introduced in 1999 and had been revised on a regular basis with the last revision being in November 2014. The draft revised policy was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 25 March 2015 for Members to note, comment and recommend its adoption to Cabinet.

Councillor T J Pendleton commented that it was a good policy that should give anyone with concerns a framework by which to report.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOVLED THAT:

The updated Whistle Blowing Policy be approved.

Reason for decision: To formally approve the Council's updated Whistle Blowing Policy.

Chairman's initials

8. LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP REVENUES AND BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report and nominated Councillors R D Bayliss and T J Pendleton to serve on the Joint Committee.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillors R D Bayliss and T J Pendleton be appointed to serve on Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Constitution of the Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee.

9. RE-DESIGNATION OF SUPPORTED HOUSING PROPERTIES

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He informed Members that the Council had 720 supported housing properties which were originally allocated to people over a certain age which changed in 2010 with the introduction of Choice Based Lettings to people with a support need. For the past three years the Council had offered a financial incentive to households who were eligible to move to supported households to release family homes and to date only 27 households had made the move. He added that the scheme would increase revenue and referred Members to the results of the tenant consultation on page 70 of the agenda.

In response to a question from Councillor R Blunt, the Housing Portfolio Holder explained that by delegating powers the process would be quicker and that Cabinet were agreeing the principle so that the Director of Housing could continue to approve other re-designations. The Director of Housing confirmed this.

Councillor T J Pendleton expressed concerns that it was difficult to let first floor flats to older people in his Ward and that the scheme would really help.

Councillor R Blunt congratulated the Director of Housing for putting together the initiative as it was a good, pragmatic scheme.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The 'supported' designation of the flats at Cherry Tree Court in Moira be removed.
2. Authority be delegated to the Director of Housing to re-designate these properties, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.
3. Authority be delegated to the Director of Housing to re-designate other properties in future, after consulting with tenants and Ward Members, and in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.
4. The 'supported' designation be removed from properties on a street by street basis where there is no or low demand from eligible home seekers and where there is a clear demand for general needs accommodation.

Reason for decision: To provide a framework that enables the prompt letting of properties, an efficient use of the housing stock, and effectively meets current and future housing demand within the District.

10. FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE OFFS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The write offs over £10,000 as detailed within the report be approved.
2. The amounts written off under delegated powers be noted.

Reason for decision: To comply with proper accounting practices.

11. 2014/15 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT AND END OF YEAR SUMMARY

The Leader presented the report to Members.

He reported that overall performance had improved and highlighted that the number of leisure centre members had increased, the targets met by the Housing and Waste Collection services, the increase in recycling income and that finance figures were under budget.

At the request of the Leader, the Chief Executive explained that there had been an increase in two areas of sickness absence, one being recovery from operations and the other in personal and family mental health. She confirmed that the increase in absence was not due to work related illness and it would continue to be monitored.

In response to a question from the Corporate Portfolio Holder, the Chief Executive explained that the sickness levels were average compared to similar sized Local Authorities and slightly lower than the private sector.

Councillor R D Bayliss referred Members to the Housing performance dashboard and reported that he was pleased with the progress.

Councillor T J Pendleton advised Members that the throughput of applications was high which had led to an increase in fees received, which was great news. Also 100 percent of major planning applications had been processed within 13 weeks and the River Mease problem had now been resolved. He also highlighted that although the target percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks had not been met, the new recruits within the service were now in place and an increase was inspected in the next quarter.

Councillor N J Rushton asked the Director of Housing to thank his officers for the swift response he had received recently to an enquiry as it had been dealt with very well.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Quarter 4 Performance (January – March 2015) report be received and noted.

Chairman's initials

Reason for decision: The report is provided for Members to effectively monitor the organisation's performance.

12. MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY

The Leader presented the report to Members on behalf of the Community Services Portfolio Holder.

He advised Members that there was a new addition to the events programme 'Proms in the Park' which would feature a number of local bands playing traditional music culminating with the Land of Hope and Glory. He referred to the Capital Programme improvements and in particular the significant external funding of £150,000 for a new changing pavilion at Owen Street in Coalville. He also confirmed that warden presence was being increased in the parks, play areas and open spaces and concluded that the Coalville Special Expenses account was forecast to come in under budget with a surplus of approximately £16,000 being returned to balances.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. An additional sum of £1,500 from Coalville Special Expense balances be allocated to support signage and infrastructure for Proms in the Park / Picnic in the Park weekend as recommended by the Events Sub Group.
2. The sum of £1,800 be allocated from balances to undertake height reduction work to trees at Owen Street.
3. The sum of £1,443 be allocated from balances to undertake further one off improvements to Bardon Road, Phoenix Green and Ashby Road.
4. The sum of £2,500 be allocated from unallocated capital as a 10 percent contribution to the £25,000 Thringstone Bowls Club Toilet project.
5. An additional sum of £1,000 be allocated from balances for the Peace Garden project at Coalville Park.
6. The amounts requested from recommendations 1 to 5 inclusive total £8,243. It is proposed that this is funded via £5,743 from balances and £2,500 from unallocated capital reserves.

Reason for decision: To progress Coalville Special Expenses projects and programmes.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.29 pm

Chairman's signature