



Rutland County Council

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP on Monday, 9th September, 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT:

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Mr K Bool | Mr J Dale |
| Mr O Hemsley | Mr G Brown |
| Mrs L Stephenson | Mr A Walters |
| Mr P Ainsley | Mr E Baines |
| Mr N Begy | Mr D Blanksby |
| Mr A Brown | Ms J Burrows |
| Mrs J Fox | Mrs S Harvey |
| Miss M Jones | Ms A MacCartney |
| Mr M Oxley | Ms K Payne |
| Mrs R Powell | Mr I Razzell |
| Miss G Waller | Mrs S Webb |
| Mr N Woodley | |

OFFICERS

PRESENT:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Mr M Andrews | Strategic Director for People |
| Mrs H Briggs | Chief Executive |
| Mr P Horsfield | Deputy Director – Corporate Governance (Monitoring Officer) |
| Mr K Silcock | Governance Officer |

ABSENT:

196 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Cross, Mr Lowe and Mr Wilby.

197 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised that the list of engagements had been circulated.

198 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

The Leader announced that the Peer Review would now take place 25th-29th November 2019.

The Deputy Leader made the following announcement regarding the Local Plan:

“Colleagues will recall that in June I reported on the progress of the Local Plan at the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel. Over two months have passed

since then and I believe it is appropriate that I bring you up to date with current situation this evening.

Officers continue to work on the Sustainability Appraisals covering social, economic and environmental assessments of the individual sites which have been put forward by land owners and developers along with reviewing their viability and deliverability. All of this work is required to develop an appropriate Spatial Strategy as laid out in the Government's Planning Policy Guidance.

The two larger sites, SGB and Woolfox, which have been put forward, are in the process of having a more detailed assessment in particular for their viability and the ability of the developer to deliver new homes over the Plan period. This is because when the Examiner comes to consider these sites he will need to be provided with evidence to this effect.

SGB has almost been completely assessed based on the November 2018 Evolving Masterplan. This has confirmed that SGB is viable but does require the Housing Infrastructure Fund funding of £30m. To date that bid, submitted in February 2019, has been fully scrutinised by Homes England, both of their external their consultants, MHCLG and against the Treasury's Green Book. Over 200 questions that have been asked and the answers provided seem to have been satisfactory however the bid still lies in the "to be decided" pile.

We continue to lobby government to make a decision, either way, so that we can decide whether SGB can be considered as part of the Local Plan or not. This lobbying has included contact with MOD, Homes England, MHCLG and via the Mayor of the Combined Authority, Cambridge and Peterborough as well as the Chair of the LGA who meets with the Secretary of State on a weekly basis. I am also in the process of arranging to meet the MHCLG Secretary of State in his constituency in Newark, Nottinghamshire in the next couple of weeks. To date no news has been forthcoming. Six bids have been announced as successful but these were on average for about £100m. No bids have been rejected since our bid was submitted in February of this year.

Woolfox also continues to be assessed based on the information provided by the Agent, most recently a traffic assessment. This information has been on a drip feed basis from their consultants since last September.

The Planning Policy Team will continue to assess all of the evidence and come to a conclusion on an appropriate strategy which will be recommended to Cabinet in due course with time being provided for the GIR Scrutiny Panel to consider the Spatial Strategy and provide input to Cabinet ahead of their meeting. This will probably involve additional meetings for both.

It is still our intention to commence the Pre-submission consultation on all the elements of the Plan including the Spatial Strategy, proposed policies and allocated sites in early 2020 subject of course to input from the Scrutiny Panel and then the approval of the Pre-submission by Cabinet and Council again all probably involving additional specific meetings."

199 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr G Brown declared an interest in item 10 of the agenda and stated that if there was any discussion regarding the key decision made by Cabinet on the Barrowden and Wakerley Neighbourhood Plan, he would leave the meeting as he was involved with the development of the plan.

200 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the 283rd meeting of the Rutland County Council District Council held on 8 July 2019 were confirmed by the Council and signed by the Chairman.

201 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No petitions, deputations or questions from members of the public had been received.

202 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

- i. Ms MacCartney

Can the portfolio holder please detail the measures that Rutland is taking to reduce our carbon footprint and what measures RCC is taking to promote renewable energy generation and use within Rutland?

Response provided by Mr G Brown (Portfolio Holder for Environment):

I don't know what measures Rutland is taking to reduce its carbon footprint but I can say that what RCC is planning.

I am in the process of drafting a Climate Change Action Motion to bring to Council within that Motion will be a series of proposals to reduce the Council's carbon emissions to zero by 2050. I would be happy to circulate the very rough draft to Councillors.

With regard to promoting renewable energy, the draft Local Plan published in 2017 Para 7.22 states:

"The NPPF states that local planning authorities should have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low energy sources and design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts. RPL 36 explains how both wind farms including the most suitable locations and solar farms would be supported."

Ms MacCartney asked the following supplementary question:

Could we invite applications from businesses that might be interested in promoting renewable energy?

Mr G Brown responded that the idea would be considered.

ii. Miss Waller

In light of recent press reports of the actions local authorities have put in place to mitigate the effects of Brexit, particularly a no deal Brexit, can the Leader tell us the actions RCC has taken to try to protect our population and employers in the short to medium term following Brexit?

In addition, can the Leader tell us what discussions RCC has had with our health authorities to ensure vulnerable residents will continue to receive their prescribed drugs, even when those drugs are manufactured outside the UK, and continue to receive treatment when EU citizens working in the health service return to their home countries?

Response provided by Mr Hemsley (Leader of the Council):

Although it is the Government's responsibility to play a central role in co-ordinating the preparations for Brexit, local authorities have also been making their own preparations for the potential impact of Brexit on their localities. RCC has been developing plans with partners through the Leicestershire and Rutland Resilience Forum Partnership, on which our Strategic Director for Places is our designated Brexit Lead Officer. The Partnership has been preparing plans for some time and positive feedback has been received from Government on the work that has been undertaken and our level of preparedness.

The plans that have been prepared by the Partnership cover the themes of community engagement, advice and support to EU nationals seeking right to remain, support to business, employment, supply chains and communications. These plans will continue to be reviewed in the coming weeks as the current Brexit deadline approaches. In addition, the Partnership is undertaking a range of exercises/scenarios to test our preparedness, which will include issues such as fuel shortages, transport issues and cyber plans, which is as the Partnership would do in the lead up to any major event, whether local or national.

With regard to pharmaceutical supplies the government is working directly with suppliers to make sure there is a continued supply of medicines, medical devices and clinical consumables when the UK leaves the EU. The general principle of advice is that no one should stockpile any medicines, medical devices or clinical consumables. Stockpiling could cause shortages in other areas and put other service users at risk. In terms of health and care workforce, organisations have been asked to review their capacity and activity plans regularly and ensure business continuity plans cover the supply of staff they need to deliver services before and after Brexit. Further staff who are EU citizens are being informed and supported to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Miss Waller asked the following supplementary question:

Could members be sent information regarding any Rutland activities that are set up?

Mr Hemsley responded that they can do, but it was difficult to know exactly what Brexit would bring.

iii. Miss Waller

Can the portfolio holder for children advise us on:

- 1. How many school days were lost because of family holiday by children in Rutland Schools for financial year 2018-19?*
- 2. How many parents were fined for taking their children on holiday during term time?*
- 3. What other sanctions against parents has RCC taken?*
- 4. How many families has this affected?*

Response provided by Mr Hemsley (Leader of the Council):

We should be very proud of the work done by schools and the council to ensure school attendance at our schools in Rutland. Both primary and secondary schools in Rutland have the best school attendance in the country. That said in 2017/18, the latest national data return, 0.17% of sessions were lost due to holidays in Rutland Primary's (787days) and 0.14% of sessions were lost due to holidays in Rutland Secondary's (617days).

The Council receives information on individual unauthorised absence from schools only when the school wishes the Council to take action. 85 parents were fined in the last academic year for holidays in term time, 120 fines were issued in total. If a penalty notice is not paid by parents then the Council can progress a case to prosecution. The service has not needed to do this in the last academic year.

Miss Waller asked the following supplementary question:

Would cabinet consider reviewing the performance indicators that we publish, to include something that indicates if some schools have more of a problem than others, happy to discuss with officers outside of meeting to figure out how.

The Leader responded that they would consider it and would collaborate with the Portfolio Holder, Mr Wilby.

iv. Mrs Burrows

Could the Leader of the Council please:

- a) Advise us of what action RCC has taken in the last year to contribute to a reduction in the factors which lead to climate change?
- b) Advise us of which working groups have been established within RCC to work on climate change reduction and the membership of these?
- c) What climate change targets has RCC given itself and how successful at meeting these has it been?

Response provided by Mr G Brown (Portfolio Holder for Environment):

Four fleet buses were replaced with Euro 6 compliant engines in 2018. The boilers in Catmose have been replaced with high efficiency boilers and we have a project to find ways of improving the heating system controls and improved radiator efficiency.

Installation has commenced for an electric charging point for a fleet car and design for electric charging points for the King Centre.

There are no specific working groups but the St George's Barracks Project Board has included PV panels and electric charging points on the homes on the St George's Barracks site.

The Commercial Property Board has a project on the drawing board for the Kings Centre to install PV panels however this is subject to Smart Export Guarantee Order 2019 but this does not come into effect until January 2020.

We would like to do the same at Oakham Enterprise Park but there are issues with the electricity supply arrangements which presents difficulties of installing solar or wind turbines and we are investigating how these might be overcome at a reasonable cost.

At this point RCC does not have specific climate change targets however as part of the discussions around the Climate Change Action Motion work will be brought forward. It is part of the Strategic Aims of the Corporate Plan.

Mrs Burrows asked the following supplementary question:

Are there any plans to setup working groups in the future?

Mr G Brown responded that the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Committee would be looking at the possibility of a Task and Finish Group regarding the environment.

v. Mrs Burrows

Could I ask the Chair of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Committee what plans her Scrutiny Committee have to review RCC's actions regarding climate change and plan for future action?

Response provided by Miss Waller (Chair of the Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Committee):

At the first meeting of the GIR Scrutiny Committee for this municipal year held on 13 June 2019 I invited Committee members to consider topics they wished the Committee to scrutinise during the year. I allowed 10 minutes for committee members to split into groups to do this and subsequently captured their ideas on a flip chart. Climate Change as a general topic was not offered as a topic for consideration although environmental policy, the Local Plan, the St George's project, speeding in Rutland, supply of transport services and the in-house fleet replacement programme; all of which to some degree, if managed badly, would exacerbate climate change, were listed. For its meeting this coming Thursday, September 12th, to which all members of the Council are invited, the Committee will be considering the proposed annual work plan. This includes some of the items mentioned above. In addition the Committee is being asked to agree scoping for a Task and Finish Group focussing on the environment to be submitted to this Council for approval. If an individual Committee chooses to

start a Task and Finish Group, it must be approved by Council. Any councillor can propose a topic scrutiny.

203 REFERRAL OF COMMITTEE DECISIONS TO THE COUNCIL

No Committee decisions had been referred.

204 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS FROM CABINET MEETINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM 5 JULY 2019 TO 6 SEPTEMBER 2019 (INCLUSIVE)

No call-ins were received.

205 REPORT FROM THE CABINET

Report No.123/2019 from the Cabinet was received, the purpose of which was to consider the recommendations referred to the Council for determination and report the Key Decisions made by Cabinet since the publication of the agenda for the previous meeting of the Council held on 8 July 2019.

Mrs Stephenson introduced and moved the recommendations in the report. Mr Hemsley seconded the recommendations.

- 1) Council **NOTED** the Key Decisions made by Cabinet since the publication of the agenda for the previous meeting of the Council on 8 July 2019, as detailed in Appendix A to this report.
- 2) **16 July 2019**
Decision No. 130
Report No. 99/2019
Moving Rutland Forward and Associated Documents

During debate the following points were noted:

- i. Mr A Brown welcomed the inclusion of a potential relief road for Caldecott. Mrs Stephenson noted that external funding was essential for the project to take place.
- ii. Miss Waller was concerned that a lot of the document was a wish list and questioned what the Council was going to do in the shorter medium term. Miss Waller felt that the document was repetitive and wordy.
- iii. Mrs Stephenson stated that need for Rutland to be as accessible as possible and to encourage a healthy lifestyle. Specific concerns regarding future highways management could be directed to the Highways and Transport Working Group where specific concerns would be logged and looked at.
- iv. Moving Rutland Forward was a living document and would provide Rutland with a direction of travel.

RESOLVED

Council **APPROVED** Moving Rutland Forward, and associated documents and assessments as an indicator of the direction of travel, understanding that

financial implications would be considered with each individual policy as it was developed.

- 3) **20 August 2019**
Decision No. 181
Report No. 115/2019
Council Tax – Council Tax Support, Care Leavers Relief and Empty Homes Premium

RESOLVED

Council **APPROVED**:

- a) To continue with the existing Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme and to adjust it annually for inflation in line with the Governments Adjudications and Operations Circulars from 2020/21 financial year and onwards.
- b) To retain the existing Discretionary Fund Policy and to approve the addendum to the Policy for Care Leavers detailed in Appendix A of Report No. 115/2019, effective from 2020/21 financial year and onwards.

206 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

There were no reports from Committees of the Council.

207 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMISSION / SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no reports from Scrutiny Commission or Scrutiny Committees.

208 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- i. Mr Bool – Combined Fire Authority

Mr Bool stated he was working to have councillors visit the fire station in Oakham. However it was proving difficult to find a date for maximum attendance.

- ii. Mr A Brown – Rural Conference

Tuesday and Wednesday last week I was at Rural Services Network conference in Cheltenham.

Sponsored by Post Office.

1. *PO largest retailer in UK, provides banking for every major bank. 93% of people live with a mile of a PO. Footfall predicted to double as more banks close. Are prepared to come and present to groups at any time.*
2. *Plenary session about rural communities. Presentation for HB villages which makes villages better places to live for vulnerable people. Later*

living accommodation needs economies of scale- at least 60 dwellings in a block. Schemes on edges of villages frees up other housing. Rural villages cannot be pickled in aspic they are living working spaces.

3. *RSN document- Time for a Rural Strategy*

Want Government to have a long term funded rural strategy which is rural proofed-laudable objectives but not sure how it will be funded. No input from NFU/CLA and no mention of climate change.

4. *Lord Foster of Bath- Chair of Select Committee on Rural Economy*

Government underestimates the ability of rural economies to contribute to national economy. Only 17% of population live in rural areas. Must have a ring fenced rural funding scheme post post Brexit.

Government admits rural proofing is needed but rejects we need a comprehensive rural strategy.

5. *Chair of Institute for Economic development. By 2039 50% of houses will contain over 65s.*

Productivity in rural businesses is 88% of the national average. Less than half of rural businesses take up superfast broadband where it is available.

6. *Vectos-Rural Transport SMARTA- smart rural transport areas. Ringalink in Ireland is a scheduled bus service with no fixed route. Sopotniki in Slovenia and Rezapouce in France good examples. Got some interesting links and contacts to share with Cllr Stephenson.*

Conclusion:

Government must have a properly funded national rural strategy, it currently has a blind spot for rural areas and no real rural strategy. Bizarrely London Boroughs can get funding due to sparsity because of their parks and green spaces which is a flaw in the way funding is distributed.

The elephant in the room is adult social care and loneliness now has as much impact on health as smoking. A lot of underreporting of health issues in rural areas.

Main take away point:

No one should be disadvantaged because they live in a rural location.

209 NOTICES OF MOTION

The Notice of Motion submitted by Mr M Oxley in accordance with Procedure Rule 34 was received.

Mr Oxley introduced the motion and moved the recommendation below. Miss M Jones seconded the recommendation.

That Rutland County Council supports the motion that the Council should support and take any necessary action to retain the registration of Rutland as a Fairtrade County.

RESOLVED

Council **AGREED** to support the motion.

210 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES - AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION & APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY

Report No. 129 was received from the Monitoring Officer.

Mr Hemsley introduced the report the purpose of which was to address an anomaly that has been raised in a meeting of the Constitution Review Working Group in relation to the appointment of vice-chairmen for scrutiny committees and to appoint a representative to the Victoria Hall Trustees Board.

Mr Hemsley moved recommendations 1 and 2 in the report but asked that the decision regarding the appointment of two representatives to the Victoria Hall Trustees Board be deferred to a future meeting so the Council can have discussions with Victoria Hall prior to a decision being made.

Miss Waller seconded the recommendations.

RESOLVED

- 1) To **APPROVE** a change to the Constitution to allow Procedure Rule 99 to apply to Scrutiny Committees.
- 2) To **AUTHORISE** the Monitoring Officer to make the required amendments to the Constitution to show the new application of Procedure Rule 88.
- 3) To **DEFER** the appointment of two representatives to the Victoria Hall Trustees Board to a future meeting.

211 RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

Report No. 138 was received from the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to present the Rutland County Council Annual Report 2018/19 to Council and show how it will be used and distributed to highlight the impact the Council is making across the key service areas. The report also updates Council on the impact of the 2017/18 report and gives an introduction to the high level 2019/2024 Corporate Plan.

Mr Hemsley introduced and moved the recommendations in the report. Mr Oxley seconded the recommendations.

During debate the following points were raised:

- i. Mr Oxley asked that a banner be placed on the website so the annual report could be easily accessible rather than having to search for it.
- ii. Miss Waller asked that a large print copy of the report could be included on the website.

- iii. Miss Waller expressed concern that the description of 'outstanding schools' in the introduction was misleading as it may be interpreted as 'outstanding' Ofsted results.
- iv. The report had been circulated to all parishes.

RESOLVED

To **ENDORSE** the RCC Annual Report 2018-19.

212 ANY URGENT BUSINESS

No matters of urgent business were received.

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

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