



# Rutland County Council

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Minutes of the **TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY SECOND MEETING of the COUNCIL**  
held in the Rutland County Museum, Catmos Street, Oakham on Monday, 13th  
September, 2021 at 7.00 pm

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor J Dale - Chairman Councillor P Ainsley Councillor K Bool Councillor G Brown Councillor W Cross Councillor L Stephenson Councillor J Fox Councillor A MacCartney Councillor K Payne	Councillor N Begy – Vice Chairman Councillor E Baines Councillor A Brown Councillor P Browne Councillor O Hemsley Councillor D Wilby Councillor M Jones Councillor M Oxley Councillor G Waller
<b>OFFICERS PRESENT:</b>	Mark Andrews Phillip Horsfield Sue Bingham Stacey Potter	Chief Executive Monitoring Officer Interim Corporate Governance Manager Assistant Business Support Manager
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Councillor R Coleman	

## **1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Blanksby, J Burrows, S Harvey, R Powell, I Razzell, A Walters and S Webb.

## **2 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman referred Members to his previously circulated announcements.

Thanks were also expressed to Phillip Horsfield for all his hard work over the past three and a half years as the Council's Monitoring Officer as he was due to leave Rutland County Council over the autumn. This was echoed by all Members.

The Chairman also thanked former Councillor A Lowe for all his work over the past few years following his resignation as an elected Member of Rutland County Council the previous week.

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

There were no announcements from the Leader, Members of the Cabinet or the Head of Paid Service.

**4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the 230 meeting of the Rutland County Council District Council held on the 5 July 2021.

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the 230 meeting of the Rutland County Council District Council held on 5 July 2021 be **APPROVED**.

**6 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no petitions, deputations or questions from members of the public.

**7 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

There were no questions from Members of the Council.

**8 REFERRAL OF COMMITTEE DECISIONS TO THE COUNCIL**

There were no referrals of Committee decisions to the Council.

**9 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS FROM CABINET MEETINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM 5 JULY TO 13 SEPTEMBER 2021**

No call-ins of decisions from Cabinet meetings had been received during the period from 5 July to 13 September 2021.

**10 REPORT FROM THE CABINET**

There were no reports from the Cabinet to consider.

**11 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

Report No 69/2021 was received from Councillor G Brown as Chair of the Employment and Appeals Committee.

The purpose of the report was to set out the work of the Committee for the periods 2019-20 and 2020-21 in an annual report in line with best practice. An annual report was not submitted to Committee in 2020 as meetings were reduced/cancelled due to Covid. Councillor G Brown explained to Council that it would be useful for Members to see the annual report and to understand the terms of reference.

## **RESOLVED**

That Council **NOTE** the Annual Report of the Employment and Appeals Committee.

## **12 REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMISSION / SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

There were no reports from Scrutiny Commission or Scrutiny Committees to consider.

## **13 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 1) Councillor G Waller attended the East Midlands Councils Employers Board and had circulated highlights of the meeting to Members. Councillor G Waller highlighted two items that could cause some concern, these included work placements for university level planning courses and the decisions recently taken by Government around National Insurance both as an impact on the Council as an employer and what the Unions reaction could be.

Councillor G Waller reminded Members of the up-and-coming East Midlands Scrutiny Network meeting and would circulate the date to all in due course.

- 2) Councillor J Fox attended the 4Oakham Arts and Crafts Market held in Gaol Street on 4 September 2021 which was a great success.

4Oakham was currently working with RCC Highways team, Mill Street traders and Oakham Town Council on a proposal around additional lighting on Mill Street, Oakham.

- 3) Councillor K Payne - A report on the meeting of Hanson Cement Liaison Group which took place on 28 July 2021 was presented by Councillor Payne. In attendance were Councillors K Payne and G Brown.

A very useful meeting where in addition to updates on the site performance, restoration, and emissions. Ketton was 1 of 11 cement plants in the UK and is the third largest. 60% of Ketton cement goes to London mostly by rail. 250 staff and 100 contractors involved and pay £1.3m in business rates.

Information was provided on the restoration works which were being carried out this year and next to the north-east part of the quarry some 70m acres and later in the southwest of the site which would include a permissive footpath. This was being restored in line with the Council's approved plans for agricultural land, grassland, and woodland.

Work had commenced in preparing the land to the west of the old Empingham Road for the extraction of limestone and clay with the removal of the old road. Additional woodland was being provided as a buffer between the cottages on Empingham Road and the new quarry workings.

Cement manufacturing generates high levels of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due to the chemistry involved. They generate 80% of Rutland's total emissions. Hanson are working to reduce this with a number of initiatives on the site which include:

- Using hydrogen as a fuel enhancer to improve fuel burn efficiency. A pilot plant on site will generate hydrogen and oxygen from water.
- An application had been made to amend the Environment Agency to use a range of alternative raw materials in the production process to improve cement production with lower emissions. These additional materials will include naturally occurring, manufactured and waste-based products
- A new formulation for 52N cement with more limestone which reduce the heat required during the calcining process.

Following the installation of new bag filters two years ago, particulate emissions have been reduced to almost zero and in fact the existing monitoring equipment was struggling to measure them.

- 4) Councillor E Baines attended the Welland Valley Partnership meeting in Loddington on 8 September 2021 and wanted to highlight to Members the below points:

- Natural Capital
- An Environmental Bill would be taken to Parliament in March 2022 and would require the need to show a biodiversity net gain which could have implications on the new draft Local Plan.
- A Leicester PhD student was looking at net carbon retention and emissions and whether this was altered by a change of use. If the student's modelling was accepted this could add a financial value.

## **14 NOTICES OF MOTION**

Council considered a Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor G Brown and seconded by Councillor W Cross in accordance with Procedure Rule 34. Councillor G Brown introduced the motion regarding the Government's proposals in the forthcoming changes to the planning system:

"Members will recall that the Government published a White Paper "Planning for the Future" just over a year ago in August 2020, which laid out plans to radically overhaul the planning system relating to Local Plans Development Management, Neighbourhood Plans, Design Codes and enforcement.

I'm sure that many of us will agree the current Local Plan process is a cumbersome bureaucratic and legalistic process that results in a long slow gestation period. Therefore, it is a good idea to try to shorten the Plan making process.

The White Paper proposes early enhanced engagement with neighbourhoods and communities at the Local Plan stage. There is no detail on this engagement process, nor does it recognise the importance of community engagement with developers before developing their application. What is more, the current three stages of Local Plan consultation will be reduced to 2, an initial engagement and then a Regulation 19 consultation at the same time that the Plan is being delivered to the Inspector for examination

Far fewer individual applications will go through planning committees, and Councillors will not be able to represent their communities where there are local concerns about

individual applications. The council and councillors' role in areas where communities need support, such as enforcement, is not detailed.

The White Paper does not explain how the new process will help improve better engagement or reach a wider local audience at the Plan making stage; this is particularly problematic when the early part of the Local Plan process may be a community's only opportunity to comment and will involve a wide range of potential sites.

Chris Pincher, the Minister for Housing at MHCLG, confirmed this position in a written statement in Parliament on 19 July this year.

I believe these proposals remove two vital elements of the democratic process, namely the opportunity for first of all, residents and secondly for members to have input and influence on individual development sites.

I, therefore, ask for your support in this motion and, if successful, ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Minister asking him to ensure the right of residents to present their views to the Council is retained on all planning applications as we have today.

I, therefore, propose that

Rutland County Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore, calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to support or object to individual planning applications".

## **RESOLVED**

- 1) Council **APPROVED** the motion.

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Councillor Bool entered the meeting at 19:20pm.

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## **15 POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS**

Report No 106/2021 was received from the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer introduced the report and referenced an error within the table on page 27 and that an updated appendix had been published.

The purpose of the report was to request that Council noted the changes to the composition of the political grouping of the Council and allocated seats on relevant committees appointed by Council to political groups.

Councillor O Hemsley moved the recommendations contained within the report. Councillor G Waller seconded the recommendations.

## **RESOLVED**

That Council:

- 1) **NOTED** the changes to the make-up of the political groupings of the Council.
- 2) **APPROVES** the allocated seats on relevant committees appointed by Council to political groups.

## 16 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

Report No 107/2021 was received from the Monitoring Officer. Councillor O Hemsley introduced the report.

The purpose of the report was that Council, at its Annual Council Meeting agreed the date and time of ordinary meetings of Council (and its committees) for the coming Municipal Year. This was done at the meeting in May. However, there was uncertainty at the time about meetings owing to changes in regulations and the pandemic situation and therefore it was decided that an updating report would be brought to Council to ensure that a full programme was available.

Councillor G Waller requested that religious festivals be recognised within the programme of meetings going forward. The Monitoring Officer noted this and would inform Governance of the change.

Councillor M Oxley enquired as to why the meetings of Cabinet would continue to operate virtually as by law any Body of the Council making decisions should meet in public. The Monitoring Officer explained that the Executive was a separate authority, and the Leader was able to set a scheme of delegation in relation to that which could include individual delegation to Members of the Cabinet. During Covid-19 this had been undertaken but would be reviewed going forward as Officers moved back in to the Catmose offices.

Councillor M Oxley asked if recommendations from Cabinet referred through to Council for acceptance could be seen as decisions. The Monitoring Officer stated that Cabinet would pass referrals through to Council where the elements were either part of the budget policy framework or were a material alteration to the Council's budget. These were decisions of Cabinet and could be made through the schemes of delegation made by the Leader.

Councillor G Waller stated that if the Leader had delegated decisions to be made to a Portfolio Holder that this be reflected within the Cabinet reports. The Monitoring Officer explained that the decision notices reflected this.

Councillor W Cross stated that Cabinet meetings should be undertaken in person and not virtually. The Monitoring Officer explained that Members would be reviewing the way in which Cabinet meetings took place very shortly.

Councillor A MacCartney asked if debates were taking place within the Cabinet meetings prior to a decision being made. Councillor Hemsley stated that robust debates were still being undertaken during Cabinet meetings and these could be listened to online.

Councillor M Oxley asked which committees of the Council were decision making bodies. The Monitoring Officer stated that all committees were capable of decisions.

The Executive was not a committee of Council and individual delegations could be made.

Councillor G Brown asked if the Programme of Meetings could be made available earlier so Members could plan ahead. The Monitoring Officer noted this.

Councillor O Hemsley moved the recommendations contained within the report. Councillor Stephenson seconded the recommendations.

**RESOLVED**

That Council:

- 1) **APPROVES** the programme of meetings for 2021/22.

**17 ANY URGENT BUSINESS**

No matters of urgent business were received.

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**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.37 pm.**

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