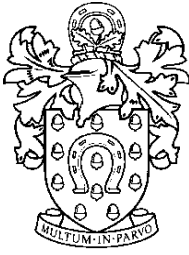


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# Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

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Minutes of the 256<sup>th</sup> **MEETING of the COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP on Monday, 26th February, 2024 at 7.00 pm

**PRESENT:**

|                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Councillor A Brown (Chairman) | Councillor N Begy           |
| Councillor P Browne           | Councillor T Carr           |
| Councillor M Chatfield        | Councillor G Clifton        |
| Councillor K Corby            | Councillor H Edwards        |
| Councillor D Ellison          | Councillor M Farina         |
| Councillor K Heckels          | Councillor O Hemsley        |
| Councillor A Johnson          | Councillor S Lambert        |
| Councillor S McRobb           | Councillor K Payne          |
| Councillor R Payne            | Councillor R Powell         |
| Councillor R Ross             | Councillor T Smith          |
| Councillor L Stephenson       | Councillor G Waller         |
| Councillor A West             | Councillor D Wilby          |
| Councillor C Wise             | Councillor H Zollinger-Ball |

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor S Harvey

|                 |                  |  |
|-----------------|------------------|--|
| <b>OFFICERS</b> | Mark Andrews     | Chief Executive                              |
| <b>PRESENT:</b> | Dawn Godfrey     | Strategic Director for Children and Families |
|                 | Penny Sharp      | Strategic Director for Places                |
|                 | Kim Sorsky       | Strategic Director for Adults and Health     |
|                 | Kirsty Nutton    | Strategic Director for Resources             |
|                 | Angela Wakefield | Strategic Director for Law and Governance    |
|                 | Mathew Waik      | Communications Services Manager              |
|                 | Tom Delaney      | Democratic Services Manager                  |

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Harvey.

### 2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed Members that since the last meeting of Council he or the Vice-Chairman had attended the following civic events:

- Lord-Lieutenant of Rutland's Festival of Remembrance, St George's Barracks
- Armistice Day Service, Grounds of Oakham Castle
- Service of Remembrance, All Saints' Church
- Citizens Advice AGM, Victoria Hall
- Preview to Christmas, Belvoir Castle

- Mayor of Melton's Carol Service, St Mary's Church, Melton
- Chairman of North West Leicestershire's Charity Dinner, The Royal Arms Hotel, Sutton Cheney
- Combined Police & Fire Carol Service, Leicester Cathedral
- Stocken Prison Carol Service
- 2248 Air Cadet Squadron Presentation Evening, Oakham Cadet Centre
- Mayor of Melton's Charity Quiz Night, Melton Borough Council
- University of Leicester Winter Graduations, De Montfort Hall
- Mayor of Peterborough's Holocaust Memorial Service, St John's Church, Peterborough
- Lord Mayor of Leicester's Holocaust Memorial Service, De Montfort University
- Annual Meeting of the University Court, Leicester University
- Mayor of Northampton Town Council Civic Service, All Saints' Church, Northampton

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

Councillor G Waller, informed Members that she had attended several meetings on behalf of the Council, and a written update on these meetings would be circulated with the minutes.

### 4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K Payne notified Members that with regard to her report at Item 13 – Joint Arrangements and external Organisations – Heidelberg Cement had submitted a planning application to the Council. Councillor Payne confirmed that as a Member of the Planning and Licensing Committee she had not participated in any discussion at the liaison committee with regard to the application and would therefore not be able to answer any questions from Members with regard to the application.

### 5. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of Council held on 6 November, 6 December and 18 January.

A motion to approve all minutes was moved by the Chairman and seconded, and a separate vote was taken on each set of minutes.

With 24 votes in favour and 2 abstentions, the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November were approved.

With 21 votes in favour and 6 abstentions, the minutes of the special meeting held on 6 December were approved.

With 24 votes in favour and 2 abstentions the minutes of the special meeting held on 18 January were approved.

### **RESOLVED**

- a) That the minutes of the meetings of Council held on 6 November, 6 December and 18 January be **APPROVED**.

## 6. PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

## 7. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

One question had been received from Councillor R Ross and this was put to Councillor A Johnson as detailed in the agenda supplement.

In response Councillor Johnson confirmed that relief for Oakham School was £370,000 and for Uppingham School £451,000. The Council retained 50% of the remaining £220,000 business rate yield meaning it received £110,000 in income from the schools. Councillor Johnson also outlined the benefits arising from the schools including combined employment of 1000 people and offering of leisure facilities to the public. It was also set out that both schools owned several domestic dwellings in Rutland in which their pupils and staff reside and for which council tax was paid in addition to business rates.

## 8. REFERRAL OF COMMITTEE DECISIONS TO THE COUNCIL

No referrals had been received.

## 9. CALL-IN OF DECISIONS FROM CABINET MEETINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM 6 NOVEMBER 2023 TO 26 FEBRUARY 2024 (INCLUSIVE)

No call-ins had been received.

## 10. REPORT FROM THE CABINET

Two reports had been received from the Cabinet.

### A) CORPORATE STRATEGY REFRESH 2024 - 2026

Report No. 03/2024 was introduced by Councillor G Waller, Leader of the Council. The report set out revisions to the strategic priorities of the Council covering the period 2024-2026. The revision had been undertaken as part of a scheduled refresh of the existing Corporate Strategy which was approved by Council in July 2022.

Members spoke in support of the revised strategy highlighting its role as a high-level document with more specific delivery plans and policies coming separately, for which Members set out a wish for changes and their implications to be carefully considered, particularly with regard to climate change and transformation.

A motion to approve the recommendations of Report No 03/2024 had been moved by Councillor G Waller and seconded. Upon being put to the vote, with 26 votes in favour the motion was unanimously carried.

### **RESOLVED**

- a) That Council, on the recommendation of Cabinet, **APPROVED** the Corporate Strategy Refresh 2024-2026

## **B) INTEGRATED BUDGET PLAN AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY - 2024/25 TO 2027/2028**

Report No. 04/2024 was received from Councillor A Johnson, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Resources and Governance. The report came to Council as part of the Council's formal budget setting process and set out a number of required decisions from Council, including the setting of Council Tax (including an Adult Social Care precept), and approval of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Fees and Charges Strategy. It was noted a revised Appendix Q had been circulated in the agenda supplement with updated figures from the Combined Fire Authority.

Members spoke in support of the proposed budget, highlighting the Council's commitment to operate within its means through investment in transformation activities to reduce expenditure in the long term. Members noted the difficult financial circumstances and subsequent choices facing many local authorities based on national government policy and the lobbying the Council was engaging in seeking fairer funding for rural authorities.

Thanks were also expressed to the Council's Section 151 Officer and all officers who had worked throughout the budget-setting process in order to bring the budget before Council. Thanks were also expressed to the members of the public who had engaged in the Council's budget consultation.

A motion to approve the recommendations of Report No. 04/2024 had been moved by Councillor A Johnson and seconded with the inclusion of the updated Appendix Q, a recorded vote being required voting was as follows:

There voted in favour:

Councillors N Begy, A Brown, P Browne, T Carr, M Chatfield, G Clifton, K Corby, H Edwards, D Ellison, M Farina, K Heckels, O Hemsley, A Johnson, S Lambert, S McRobb, K Payne, R Payne, R Powell, R Ross, T Smith, L Stephenson, G Waller, A West, D Wilby, C Wise and H Zollinger-Ball.

There being 26 votes in favour and no votes against nor any abstentions, the motion was unanimously carried.

### **RESOLVED**

That Council **APPROVED**:

- a) The budget including a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (2.99% general Council Tax and 2.0% Adult Social Care precept), as outlined in section 5.1.2, Appendix F and the Council Tax resolution in Appendix P.
- b) The updated budget assumptions, to be incorporated in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 – 2027/28. These are outlined in sections 5 and 6.
- c) The grant funding receipts estimated across the MTFS as contained in Appendix D.

- d) The Fees and Charges Strategy that details the approach to be adopted by directorates when setting and updating fees and charges as provided in Appendix E.
- e) The revised capital programme and schemes outlined in section 6.5 and referencing Appendix K and M.
- f) The funding of the capital programme as detailed in the treasury management and capital strategies in Appendices L and M
- g) The updated Reserves Strategy and forecast reserve commitments to fund the cost of transformational investment and previously identified departmental commitments as outlined in section 7.4, and Appendices B, C and I.
- h) The Education budget as outlined in section 6.6 and Appendix N.
- i) The budget virement limits as outlined in section 9.
- j) The Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 – 2027/28 as set out in the body of the report and following appendices:
  - Appendix A – 2024/25 – 2027/28 MTFS detailed budget position
  - Appendix B – Budget proposals tables (pressures / savings / investments)
  - Appendix C – Directorates Overview, Service Ambitions and Budget Variation Statements
  - Appendix D – Grant Register
  - Appendix E – Fees & Charges Strategy / Policy & Schedule
  - Appendix F – Funding strategy
  - Appendix G – Financial Health Indicators
  - Appendix H – Financial Risk Register
  - Appendix I – Reserve Strategy
  - Appendix J – Consultation document & responses
  - Appendix K – Capital Programme Schemes 2024/25 – 2027/28
  - Appendix L – Treasury Management Strategy & Annual Investment Strategy
  - Appendix M – Capital Strategy
  - Appendix N – Dedicated Schools Grant and the Schools budget
  - Appendix O – Carbon Impact Assessment
  - Appendix P – Reconciliation of budget adjustments since Cabinet 11 January and 13 February 2024
  - Appendix Q – Council Tax Resolution (As updated)

That Council **NOTED**:

- k) The changes that had been made since the 11 January and 13 February 2024 Cabinet reports that were shown in Appendix P and included additional grant announcement allocations resulting in a net increase in income for 2024/25 of £0.5m and updating of assumptions applied for estimated expenditure and income.
- l) The statutory advice from the Chief Finance Officer contained in section 7 'The Robustness (Section 25) Statement'

- m) The Council's core funding position following the outcome of the Local Government Settlement outlined in section 5.
- n) The strategic financial approach taken by the Council outlined in section 3 of the report.
- o) The financial health indicators which consider the key financial considerations of revenue and balance sheet performance, and that capital investment is not resulting in undue burden on future funding, section 8.
- p) The feedback on the budget proposals from residents, staff and the community as detailed in Appendix J.

#### **11. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

There were no reports from Committees of the Council.

#### **12. REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY**

There were no reports from Scrutiny.

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

Councillor R Ross presented his report on the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, noting that since production of the report the proposed item on Dentistry had been deferred from the upcoming March meeting to a later date.

Councillor K Payne presented her report on the Heidelberg Cement Liaison Meeting attended by herself and Councillor M Farina.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) That the reports be **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**.

#### **14. NOTICES OF MOTION**

No notices of motion had been received.

#### **15. ANY URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

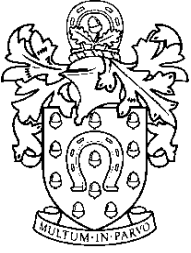
#### **16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

This was noted to be Tuesday, 25 March 2024.

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**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.09 pm.**

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**MEETING: COUNCIL**

**MEETING DATE: 26 FEBRUARY 2024**

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

### **Leader's Announcements to Council**

1. I attended my first meeting of the National Association of Regional Employers (NARE) this month as one of the two representatives of East Midlands Councils. Updates from the regions was interesting, particularly the report from London Region on their developing HR Metrics Service which will not only enable councils to benchmark performance but also give us better insights into local government capacity.
2. East Midlands Councils organised an event at Portcullis House, Westminster, last week "Unlocking the Opportunities of East Midlands Infrastructure". We heard how poorly the East Midlands was funded regarding infrastructure and Government investment more widely compared with other regions and also what positive features there are in the East Midlands that would make investment here particularly beneficial. There were a number of East Midlands MPs present including Lilian Greenwood, the Shadow Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, but Alicia Kearns was not present.
3. Earlier in February Councillor A Johnson, Councillor R Ross and I attended the East Midlands Councils General Meeting in Nottingham. These meetings are open to any councillor to attend although you need to be nominated by your political group to vote (there are rarely any votes). We had a very informative talk from the Local Government Information Unit as well as receiving useful updates on immigration and asylum seekers and employment.
4. I have been keeping in touch with Leaders and senior members of neighbouring authorities. This month with Leicester, Leicestershire and North Northants. I also attend the Leicestershire Districts catch-up meetings where devolution is a regular agenda item.

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