



# **Rutland County Council**

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

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Minutes of the TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY FOURTH **MEETING of the COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP on Monday, 8th November, 2021 at 7.00 pm

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor J Dale (Chairman)	Councillor N Begy (Vice Chairman)
	Councillor P Ainsley	Councillor E Baines
	Councillor D Blanksby	Councillor K Bool
	Councillor A Brown	Councillor G Brown
	Councillor P Browne	Councillor J Burrows
	Councillor W Cross	Councillor O Hemsley
	Councillor L Stephenson	Councillor A Walters
	Councillor D Wilby	Councillor M Jones
	Councillor A MacCartney	Councillor M Oxley
	Councillor K Payne	Councillor R Powell
	Councillor L Toseland	Councillor G Waller
	Councillor S Webb	

<b>OFFICERS</b>	Mark Andrews	Chief Executive
<b>PRESENT:</b>	Marie Rosenthal	Monitoring Officer
	Sue Bingham	Interim Corporate Governance Manager
	Tom Delaney	Governance Officer

## **1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Harvey, J Fox and I Razzell.

## **2 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that since the last meeting of the Council, he or the Vice-Chairman had attended the following events:

- The Mayor of Stamford's Georgian Walk/Afternoon Tea
- The High Sheriff's Justice Service at All Saints' Church
- The RBL Festival of Remembrance at De Montfort Hall
- The Chairman of South Kesteven District Council's Civic Service

The Chairman also informed Members that on Thursday 11 November he would be attending the Oakham Act of Remembrance at the grounds of Oakham Castle. On the afternoon of Sunday 14 November, the Chairman would also be attending a service taking place at All Saints' Church in Oakham followed by a wreath laying ceremony and a parade in the High Street.

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

The Chairman invited Councillor O Hemsley, Leader of the Council, to make his announcements:

- Councillor Hemsley expressed his thanks to Richard Coleman for his service following his recent resignation as a Councillor.
- For personal reasons Councillor A Walters had stepped away from the Conservative Group. Councillor Hemsley expressed his thanks to Councillor Walters and asked Members to recognise the great work Councillor Walters had undertaken as Cabinet Member with the health agenda and leisure.
- An initial draft of a new Shared Vision for Rutland for the Future Rutland Conversation had been issued on Friday 5 November. Councillor Hemsley encouraged Members to ask their residents to take part in the survey which would close on 28 November.
- A Cross Party Working Group for the Local Plan had been established and the first meeting had taken place. Members would be updated on the work undertaken by the Working Group.

The Chair invited Councillor L Stephenson, Deputy Leader of the Council, to make her announcements:

- Due to increased work pressures for Councillor Stephenson, Councillor I Razzell would be soon taking on the Portfolio for Highways and Transport.
- During the 3-month road closure for the works undertaken on the Manton railway bridge an A road diversion was highlighted for use as a diversion. Many members of the public opted to use an unofficial diversion route; therefore, Network Rail had voluntarily contributed £10,000 for remedial works to take place along the unofficial route. Councillor Stephenson expressed thanks to Members and the Highways team.
- Rutland County Council (RCC) had taken part for the first time in the National Highways Transport Customer Survey. This was undertaken during the road closure for the bridge remedial works. 3,300 households were contacted, and 942 responses were received. The average response rate for other Local Authorities was 23.8% compared to Rutland which had a rate of 28.6%. Out of 112 Local Authorities that had taken part, Rutland came third.
- Councillor Stephenson highlighted recent successes by RCC and the Lord Lieutenant towards securing a place in the second round of the Place Based Climate Action Network (PCAN) fund. The broad aim in the proposal was to create a multi-agency approach to develop policy action and investment in framework of carbon sequestration. If successful work would commence in March 2022.

The Chairman invited Councillor A Walters, Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Care, to make his announcements:

- Councillor Walters welcomed Councillor Toseland to the Council following success at the recent Oakham North-West by-election.
- Councillor Walters asked Mark Andrews, Chief Executive to thank the teams behind the Portfolio for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Care for all their hard work supporting him in this role.

- Due to a possible by-election taking place in January 2022, Councillor Walters had suggested that the Health and Wellbeing Board's ratification of the 6-week consultation results for the Place Based Plan for Health for Rutland be deferred until February 2022.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

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

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2021 be **APPROVED**.

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

A petition had been received from Councillor L Toseland prior to her election as a County Councillor. The petition was in relation to the Council identifying funding for a public swimming pool and had a total of 1124 valid signatures. In presenting the petition Councillor Toseland highlighted

- Within the Future Rutland Conversation respondents were asked what sport and leisure activities they would normally participate in, swimming ranked third in the top five activities.
- When people were asked what leisure provision, they felt Rutland needed in order to maintain or improve the wellbeing of its residents, swimming was the top answer.
- When asked if residents had any other comments about the future of leisure and wellbeing provision in Rutland, respondents once again highlighted access to swimming facilities.
- That the Future Rutland Conversation's findings clearly highlighted that the residents want and need a public swimming pool.

Under Procedure Rule 28 2) c) the Chairman referred the Petition to Cabinet to consider and respond as part of their agenda item 'Leisure Options' at the meeting on 16 November.

#### **7 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

Councillor A MacCartney delivered her question to Councillor K Payne as the Portfolio Holder for Finance, which had been circulated to Members in the agenda supplement.

The Chairman invited Councillor Payne to respond.

"CIPFA, who are our standard setting body, are currently consulting on the Treasury Management Code of Practice which we follow. One of the anticipated changes relates to a requirement for our policies to set out our approach to environmental, social and governance (ESG) investment considerations. We will be looking at how we meet this requirement when we update our Treasury Management Strategy for next year, following the CIPFA code of practice advice".

“In terms of the Pension Fund, then we are Members of the Leicestershire Pension Fund. The Committee that runs the fund is required to have an Investment Strategy. That Strategy includes a section on Responsible Investment. Responsible Investment is an approach to investment that aims to incorporate environmental including climate risk, social and governance (ESG) factors into investment decisions, to better manage risk and generate sustainable investment returns. The Strategy includes guiding principles and explains how they are applied in practice. The full strategy can be found on the website, and I will provide the link to members following this meeting”.

[Pension Fund and Finance - altair Member Self-Service \(pensiondetails.co.uk\)](https://pensiondetails.co.uk)

“There has been widespread media coverage of Local Government Pension Funds following publication of a report from Platform and Friends of the Earth. The report highlighted the investment of local government pension funds in ‘fossil fuel’ companies and encourages divestment”.

“Leicestershire Pension Fund produced a response to the report. It estimated that only c1.8% of its total fund is invested in ‘fossil fuels’ and explained the steps it is taking to end fossil fuel investments and invest in a green and fair way. This year it has been transitioning its funds away from fossil fuel companies to renewable energy funds. One example given relates to a £750m investment into the LGPS Central Climate Balanced Fund which invest in companies in ‘green revenues’. Leicestershire Pensions Fund full report can be found on their website, and I will be happy to supply the web address following the meeting”.

[Queries about fossil fuel investment | Leicestershire County Council](#)

In response to Councillor Macartney’s supplementary, Councillor Payne stated that the Treasury Management Strategy would be updated around 3 months’ time due to the CIPFA guidelines currently being consulted on.

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

There had been no referral of committee decisions to the Council.

## **9 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS FROM CABINET MEETINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM 11 OCTOBER TO 8 NOVEMBER 2021 (INCLUSIVE)**

There had been no call-in of decisions from Cabinet meetings.

## **10 REPORT FROM THE CABINET**

There were no reports from the Cabinet to consider.

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

There had been no reports from Committees of the Council to consider.

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

There had been no reports from Scrutiny Commission or Scrutiny Committees to consider.

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

Councillor G Waller had substituted for Councillor E Baines on the Anglian (Northern) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee. The current priorities were flooding of coastal areas in Lincolnshire and the Fens and flooding of the River Nene. Councillor Waller would circulate headlines from the meeting to Members in due course.

Councillor M Oxley highlighted to Members that the Rutland Fairtrade Christmas Market was taking place on the 27 of November between 10am and 3pm at Oakham Castle.

## **14 NOTICES OF MOTION**

Council were asked to consider the Notice of Motion from Councillor M Jones which was seconded by Councillor J Burrows in accordance with Procedure Rule 34.

Councillor Jones presented the previously circulated motion.

It was suggested by Councillor N Begy that the motion be taken to the cross-party Climate Action Group and then returned to Council with an actionable Rutland focussed response incorporating Rutland's unique and rural landscape to then be submitted to Parliament. Councillor Begy moved an amendment to the motion for it to read:

"That the motion of the bill should be passed to the Climate Action Group for cross party debate and a full Rutland response to the bill be brought back to Council for approval".

The amendment was seconded.

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Councillor S Webb departed the meeting at 19:39pm and returned at 19:43pm

Councillor Oxley departed the meeting at 19:41pm and returned at 19:42pm

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Members in support of the amendment expressed the need to offer practical solutions and not to promise what could not be fulfilled. It was also stated that the report of the Citizens Climate Action Assembly which was published in September outlined that 96% of the attendees made clear that it was their desire that the climate crisis was not partisan and that it was owned by the people for the people.

Members opposing the amendment observed that the original motion committed no substantial officer time and climate change needed immediate action rather than a referral to another body before coming back to Council. As the motion was requesting an open letter to the MP, Alicia Kearns urging the support of the bill and letters to other bodies there would be no risk to the Council from the original motion. It was also observed that the Climate Action Group was not a formal body of the Council with

political representation and was a mechanism for community involvement in combatting climate change.

Upon being put to the vote, with 10 votes in favour, 11 against and 2 abstentions, the amendment was defeated.

A vote was then taken on the original motion moved by Councillor Jones and with 11 votes in favour, 7 against and 5 abstentions, the motion was carried.

## **RESOLVED**

That Council:

- 1) Notes that many local authorities, including this Council, are playing an important role in the UK, taking action to achieve net zero carbon emissions, and to protect and revitalise local wildlife and natural habitats.
- 2) Notes that Parliament in May 2019 declared an Environment and Climate Emergency and this Council has already declared a Climate Crisis.
- 3) Declares an Ecological Emergency.
- 4) Supports the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill.
- 5) Informs the local media of this decision.
- 6) Writes an open letter to Alicia Kearns MP urging her to sign up to support the Bill.
- 7) Writes to the CEE Alliance, the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, expressing its support.

## **15 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS**

Report No. 150/2021 was introduced by Councillor K Payne, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation. The purpose of the report was to ask Council to opt into the national sector-led arrangements for the appointment of the external auditor.

It was moved by Councillor Payne that Council endorse the contents of the report. This was seconded and upon being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously carried.

## **RESOLVED**

That Council **APPROVES** for Rutland County Council to opt into the national sector-led arrangements for the appointment of the external auditor.

**16 ANY URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business for consideration.

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**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:12pm**

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