

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Glenfield on Friday, 23 June 2023.

PRESENT

Mrs D. Taylor CC (in the Chair)

Mr. B. L. Pain CC
Mrs. C. M. Radford CC
Mr. O. O'Shea JP CC
Mr. L. Breckon JP CC

Mrs H. L. Richardson CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC
Mr. P. Bedford CC

Apologies

Mr. N. J. Rushton CC

In attendance

Mrs. P. Posnett MBE CC, Mrs. M. Wright CC, Mr. C. Smith CC, Mr. R. Allen CC, Mr. M. Mullaney CC and Mrs. A. Hack CC

241. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2023 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

242. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

243. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Mrs. D. Taylor CC declared an other registrable interest in respect of item 9 on the agenda (Charnwood Borough Council's Local Plan) as a member of Charnwood Borough Council.

244. Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel - SHIRE Community Grants and SHIRE Environment Grants.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive presenting the key findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel on SHIRE Community Grant and SHIRE Environment Grant schemes. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 4' is filed with these minutes.

The Scrutiny Commission considered the report of the Scrutiny Review Panel at its meeting on 12 June 2023 and a draft minute is also filed with these minutes.

Comments from Mr Mullaney CC regarding the proposed recommendations of the Panel are also filed with these minutes.

Members acknowledged that this review had been difficult, but supported the recommendations of the Panel, given the considerable pressure on the Authority.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the comments of the Scrutiny Commission be noted;
- b) That the report of the Scrutiny Review Panel on SHIRE Community Grants and SHIRE Environment Grants be accepted;
- c) That the Chief Executive be requested to ensure that the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel are acted upon.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Panel has considered the operation of the SHIRE Communities Grant and SHIRE Environment Grant schemes and made recommendations that the schemes should operate on a reduced budget and tighter criteria during the current financial year and cease operating after that. This will enable savings to be made. The Panel also recommends that the County Council should continue to provide advice, guidance and signposting to Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations requiring funding.

245. Annual Treasury Management Report 2022/23.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources advising of the action taken and the performance achieved in respect of the treasury management activities of the Council in 2022/23. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', is filed with these minutes.

Mr Breckon CC commended the way that the Council managed its finances, despite inflationary pressures.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The Authority's full adoption of the CIPFA Code of Practice for treasury management requires an annual report on Treasury Management activity and performance to be considered by both the Cabinet and the Corporate Governance Committee before the end of September each year.

246. Annual Report of the Commercial Strategy and Traded Services Strategy 2023-28.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources advising of the performance of the County Council's Commercial Strategy and seeking approval for the adoption of the Traded Services Strategy 2023 – 28. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

The Scrutiny Commission had considered the Annual Report on the Commercial Strategy at its meeting on 12 June 2023 and a draft minute is also filed with these minutes.

Mr Breckon CC stressed the significant rise in costs to the Council's traded services which had led to a reduction in margin and indicated that the Traded Services Strategy would provide an opportunity to restore this.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the comments of the Scrutiny Commission be noted;
- b) That the performance against targets in the Commercial Strategy during 2022/23 be noted;
- c) That the future developments, as outlined in the report, and the Leicestershire Traded Services Review and Outlook for 2023/24 (appended to the report) be welcomed;
- d) That the Traded Services Strategy 2023-2028 be adopted.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Annual Report on the Commercial Strategy outlines the progress that has been made by the County Council (via the Leicestershire Traded Services) by introducing a more commercial approach to ensure that trading income makes an increasing and meaningful contribution to the Council's budget.

The new Traded Services Strategy sets a future direction for all traded services in the County Council.

247. Leicester and Leicestershire Business Rates Pool.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the performance of the Leicester and Leicestershire Business Rate Pool, the associated distributions and the changes required to the pooling agreement. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

The Business Rates Retention System enabled local authorities to enter into pools and retain net surpluses. The Director reported that, following recent changes, it had been agreed that the surplus would be distributed on a one third basis to Leicester City Council, the County Council and the Leicestershire district councils collectively.

The Director also corrected an error in recommendation (c) to read '... gains from the Pool for 2020/21 and 2021/22...'.

Members expressed disappointment at the final allocation to the County Council and noted that this would affect the funding to support the development of local plans.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the change to the distribution mechanism for the gains from the Leicester and Leicestershire Business Rate Pool be noted;
- b) That the County Council's share of the gains from the Pool be allocated through the annual Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) process, with effect from the 2024/25 financial year;
- c) That an initial allocation of £7.5m be made towards capital works on Zouch Bridge, in the event that the Council's share of gains from the Pool for 2020/21 and 2021/22 is received before the next MTFS;
- d) That from the 2024/25 financial year, the Council will:
 - (i) only commit to arrangements for the allocation of gains from the Pool for a single year;
 - (ii) not accept less than one-third of the available funding;
- e) That the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the Lead Member for Resources, be authorised:
 - (i) to approve governance arrangements for the Pool from 2024/25;
 - (ii) in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, to approve the associated legal agreements.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The current agreement for the Pool requires the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) to distribute gains for priority economic projects. Following the Chancellor's Budget in March 2023, the LLEP responsibilities will transfer to local authorities by April 2024, necessitating a new agreement.

The LLEP had historically required councils to submit bids for funding for specific projects, the preference for all participants in the Pool is to move to fixed cash allocations, to reduce the administrative burden.

The Leicester, Leicestershire Pool partners have agreed that gains up to and including 2023/24, that have not been distributed by the LLEP, are to be distributed on a one third basis to the City Council, County Council and the District Councils collectively.

Revising the agreement will support the smooth operation of the Pool.

248. Participation in the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order Process - Relevant Representation and Request for Delegation.

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Transport advising of the County Council's Relevant Representation on the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) application and seeking approval for the Chief Executive to submit any further representations to the examination on the HNRFI proposal on behalf of the Council. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

The Chief Executive reported that, in respect of Flood Risk and Drainage, the Environment Agency had requested that the wording of the third sentence of the County Council's Relevant Representation be amended to read *'albeit it has been agreed with the Environment Agency that the LLFA will take the lead on surface water drainage proposals on-site with the remaining flood risk and modelling elements remaining with the Environment Agency'*.

It was now anticipated that Stage 4 of the examination stage would now commence in the autumn, rather than early/mid July.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the comments set out in the Appendix to the report be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as the Relevant Representation of the County Council on the HNFRI proposal, subject to the following amendment to the third sentence of the Relevant Representation as requested by the Environment Agency:

"Albeit it has been agreed with the Environment Agency that the LLFA will take the lead on surface water drainage proposals on-site with the remaining flood risk and modelling elements remaining with the Environment Agency".

- b) That the Chief Executive be authorised to make submissions on behalf of the County Council during the Examination stage on the HNFRI proposals, in line with the deadlines set by the Planning Inspectorate.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Relevant Representation sets out key concerns for consideration by the Planning Inspectorate and the applicant, Tritax Symmetry, and will be used by the Examining Authority to inform the key questions to be posed during the examination process.

Local Authorities are advised to ensure delegated powers are in place given the short deadlines often imposed during the process.

249. Charnwood Borough Council's Local Plan.

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Transport advising of the potential risks to the progress of Charnwood Borough Council's Local Plan and the County Council's progress towards securing developer contributions and managing development in respect of highways needs in the Borough, following a change of administration at Charnwood Borough Council. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

Comments from Mr Miah CC regarding the report are also filed with these minutes.

The Chief Executive reported that a letter to Mr O'Shea from Charnwood Borough Council's Lead Member for Planning in respect of the report had been received. This, and the reply from the Leader of the County Council, is also filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the letter from Charnwood Borough Council's Lead Member for Planning be noted;
- b) That Charnwood Borough Council be reminded that:
 - (i) the County Council's support for the Charnwood draft Local Plan, approved prior to Examination in Public, was qualified in respect of committing to constructing new infrastructure upon receipt of funds from developers and the requirement to develop Area Transport Strategies to secure developer contributions; and
 - (ii) the later decision of the County Council to develop an interim approach to transport contributions reflected its concern that the extended period of Charnwood having no Local Plan created the risk of developer contributions being missed;
- c) That the County Council's objective remains in supporting the Borough Council in demonstrating that the draft Local Plan is viable, but it requires the Borough Council to recognise that:
 - (i) the Area Transport Strategies and the interim approach will be delivered through the local planning process and therefore should be jointly owned and approved as such by both Councils, without which there can be no assurance that developer contributions will be secured to provide the infrastructure required by the draft Local Plan, something which the Borough Council has chosen not to accept; and
 - (ii) the County Council's affordability limit to support the infrastructure requirements of district councils' local plans has been reached in respect of existing commitments; and
- d) That the chief executive and relevant chief officers, following consultation with the Leader of the County Council and relevant Lead Members, be authorised to respond to information requests from Charnwood Borough Council following the letter to the Borough Council from the Planning Inspectors of 23rd May 2023.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To ensure the County Council's interests are protected, in respect of its responsibilities as County Highway Authority, both in advance and post Charnwood Borough's adoption of its Local Plan.

To ensure additional County Council resource dedicated to the Local Plan examination process, interim and long term strategies are not abortive.

Any delays to the implementation of the Transport Contributions Strategy risks further developer contributions being missed and continued difficulties in covering shortfalls to highways mitigation, increasing levels of financial risk to the County Council.

250. Street Lighting - Proposed Service Changes.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport advising of the possibility of achieving financial savings in the provision of street lighting across the County and the potential risks associated with the options presented. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

The Director highlighted the context for the need for savings, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023-27, and sought approval to undertake a four week engagement/consultation exercise, prior to the development of a risk assessment of the preferred service change.

The Director also reported the potential reduction in carbon emissions that could be achieved from proposed changes to the provision of street lighting.

Mr O'Shea CC indicated the importance of undertaking consultation/ engagement with the public and stakeholders to ensure that there was confidence in any proposal that was agreed. He also reiterated the need to make the savings indicated in the MTFS.

Mr Pain CC said that work had already been undertaken to reduce carbon emissions, but this would add to the reduction and also to the County Council's net zero commitment. It was also felt that the public would notice little visible difference in the amount of lighting provided.

RESOLVED:

- a) That an engagement/consultation exercise be undertaken on Option 2 – to dim all street lights, including those on traffic routes, to 30% from 20:00 across the County – as outlined in the report;
- b) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in December 2023 providing feedback on the engagement/consultation exercise and the associated risk assessment and seeking approval for a final scheme proposal;
- c) That the risks associated with each of the four Options (as detailed in the report) for a reduced provision of street lighting be noted, in particular those that would represent a departure from national design standards and an increased exposure to risk.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Council's MTFS requires savings of £150,000 in 2023/24, rising to £500,000 in subsequent years, to be made in the street lighting service.

A reduced provision of street lighting would also reduce carbon emissions and therefore contribute to the Council's net zero target on its own operations by 2030.

Any reduction in lighting that is a departure from national design standards inherently carries greater risk. Whilst Option 2 is not risk-free, it is considered that this is likely to carry fewer risks whilst delivering the required full-year savings from 2024/25.

Undertaking engagement/consultation on the proposals will help further assess the risks involved, the potential effect of the changes, and mitigation measures to be considered.

The subsequent report to the Cabinet will enable a decision to be made as to whether the proposed service change should be implemented.

251. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and the Local Authority's Duties and Responsibilities.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services advising of the increasing numbers of adult asylum seekers and migrants being housed in different locations throughout Leicestershire. Attention was also drawn to the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in Leicestershire and the safeguarding responsibilities arising from this, along with the County Council's duties and responsibilities to UASC who are initially placed in adult dispersal hotels and the associated costs. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Members acknowledged the resource implications and significant pressure on services. It was felt that MPs should be lobbying for Government to provide sufficient funding for local authorities to support asylum seekers and migrants and UASC.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Children and Family Services be requested to write to the Home Office and Department for Education to highlight the need for an urgent review of funding for local authorities to support asylum seekers and migrants, in particular Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To ensure that the Cabinet is fully informed of the current situation in relation to asylum seekers and migrants being housed in Leicestershire, the County Council's duties and responsibilities including for safeguarding, and the resource implications.

The number of asylum seekers and migrants requiring support and the way in which the dispersal system is operating is placing considerable pressure on the Council's capacity and resources.

252. Transforming Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion in Leicestershire - Programme Update.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services advising of progress with the Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire (TSIL) programme, in particular the design phase, and seeking approval for the ongoing delivery of the programme. This would involve extending the Council's contract with its strategic partner, Newton Europe. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

Comments from Mr Hunt CC regarding the delivery of the project are also filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Children and Family Services be authorised to move to the next phase of the Transforming SEND and Inclusion in Leicestershire programme with the Service's strategic partner, Newton Europe, making the necessary contract variations under the April 2022 procurement exercise.

REASON FOR DECISION:

Continuation of the arrangement with the Children and Family Service's strategic partner, Newton Europe, will enable the Authority to capitalise on the required expertise and skills required to deliver the identified improvements and savings needed in the complex national and regional Special Educational Needs (SEN) landscape. The continuation of the relationship will ensure that there is a fully contingent model under which £10m of annualised recurrent savings will be delivered, along with key other non-financial benefits.

253. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Joint Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2024-28.

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Director of Adults and Communities and Director of Public Health which presented the draft Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Joint Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2024-28 and sought approval to launch a formal consultation exercise on the Strategy. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 13', is filed with these minutes.

The Director reported that, since the report had been finalised, it had been determined that Leicester City Council would host the consultation on behalf of the County Council, Leicester City Council and Rutland Council.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the progress of the work under the current Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2019-2022 be noted;
- b) That the draft LLR Joint Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2024-28 be approved for a formal eight-week consultation exercise;
- c) That a further report be presented to the Cabinet in the autumn providing the outcome of the consultation and seeking approval of the final LLR Joint Living Well with Dementia Strategy and delivery plan for Leicestershire.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The Strategy seeks to support people with dementia in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area and has been informed by the experiences of those living with dementia or as a carer, their families and the organisations supporting them. The proposed consultation exercise will inform the new Strategy for 2024-2028, which is being developed in partnership with local health, social care and voluntary sector organisations.

254. Review of Homeless Support Services.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Public Health seeking approval to consult on the revised delivery model for homeless support services. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 14', is filed with these minutes.

Comments from Falcon Support Services and Mr Miah CC regarding the provision of homeless support services are also filed with these minutes.

Mrs Richardson CC reported that a meeting was due to be held with Falcon Support Services in the coming days. However, she stressed that difficult decisions would need to be made and consideration was being given to providing support in a different way. She also highlighted the funding received paid for support to individuals, not the provision of a building.

The Director stated that concern had been raised by Falcon Support Services that the Falcon Centre in Loughborough would lose its exempt accommodation status. However, it was not anticipated that this would be the case.

RESOLVED:

- a) That following a review of the current service model, which does not fund the running of the Falcon Centre or any other homeless hostel, the commencement of consultation on a draft revised delivery model for homeless support services be approved;
- b) That it be noted that the proposed new service model continues to provide advice and support for those at risk of homelessness, focussed on the Council's duty to improve health and wellbeing;
- c) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in November 2023 regarding the outcome of the consultation exercise and seeking approval to proceed with the proposed model.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Following a review of the current service model, a revised delivery model is proposed.

The current contract for the provision of homeless support services ends on 31 March 2024.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 – 2026/27 includes a requirement for savings via a review of homeless support services.

255. Health in All Policies in Leicestershire County Council.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Public Health which informed of the approach being taken to embed Health in All Policies across Leicestershire County Council in order to integrate health considerations into all policy areas to improve health outcomes, health equity and reduce health inequalities. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 15', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the adoption of the Health in All Policies approach across the Council be noted and supported; this will include consideration of 'Health Implications' in all reports to the

Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committees and advocacy within every department to champion and embed Health in All Policies across the Council.

REASON FOR DECISION:

Health in All Policies is recognised as an effective, collaborative approach to combine efforts across all departments and functions to tackle the complex social, economic, environmental and commercial circumstances that shape health. Health in All Policies systematically integrates health considerations into all policy areas to improve health outcomes, health equity and reduce health inequalities. Health in All Policies is a preventative intersectoral approach that seeks to reduce the impact of poor population health on Council services, improving health, extending healthy life expectancy and prospects for residents.

256. Items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.

There were no items referred from the Overview and Scrutiny bodies.

257. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 3 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

- East Midlands Development Company Limited
- Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel – Recycling and Household Waste Sites
- Proposals to Develop a new Primary School to serve Market Harborough – Expressions of Interest from Academy Proposers.

258. East Midlands Development Company Limited.

The Cabinet considered an exempt report of the Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance which set out further recommendations in respect of the County Council's membership of the East Midlands Development Company. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 19', is filed with these minutes. The report was not for publication by virtue of Paragraphs 1, 3 and 10 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED:

- a) That in the context of ongoing uncertainties about when legislation and subsequent processes would allow an 'East Midlands' locally-led urban development corporation or a mayoral development corporation to be established, the roles either would seek to adopt and the possible impact on Leicestershire, the County Council remains in membership of the East Midlands Development Company;

- b) That the County Council, however, has not seen any case for it to fund the Company by a £500,000 grant for the current financial year and will not be making such a grant;
- c) That the County Council is concerned that the proposal prepared by consultants for the three sites identified in the Company's Members' Agreement, and one other site, which collectively the Company wishes to promote to investors, have not been the subject of public consultation or adequate consultation with all landowners, which is of increasing concern following discussion between ministers and the local authorities which own the Company;
- d) That the County Council remains concerned that the Company Board has not been properly informed by the Managing Director of all the Council's concerns in respect of the Company's management and governance;
- e) That the County Council renew representations to achieve a change in governance given the concerns referred to in c) and d) above, including the view that Company business decisions should be taken by elected members serving on the Board and not by officers;
- f) That the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the County Council, be authorised to appoint a senior County Council officer to act as a Director of the Company;
- g) That the Company be advised accordingly in response to the letter of 5th April 2023 to the Leader of the County Council from the then Leaders of the other local authorities who own the Company, the officers of those authorities who are members of the Company's Board and the Board Chair and Managing Director;
- h) That the Company also be advised that the County Council does not agree with the Company proceeding to public consultation of its 'prospectus' if that document excludes proposals for development of sites which have been discussed within the Board and do not have the support of all the owners of the Company.

REASON FOR DECISION:

It is necessary to consider the County Council's membership of the Company in light of the circumstances described in previous reports to the Cabinet.

259. Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel - Recycling and Household Waste Sites.

The Cabinet considered an exempt report of the Chief Executive which presented the key findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel on Recycling and Household Waste Sites. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 20', is filed with these minutes. The report was not for publication by virtue of Paragraphs 3 and 10 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Comments from Dr Feltham CC regarding the Report are also filed with these minutes.

Mrs Radford CC wished it to be recorded that she would be voting against the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel on Recycling and Household Waste Sites be accepted;
- b) That the Chief Executive be requested to ensure that the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel are acted upon.

(KEY DECISION)

REASON FOR DECISION:

The Panel has made a number of recommendations to the Cabinet which it considers would enable savings to be made from the Recycling and Household Waste Site (RHWS) service whilst also ensuring that the County Council complies with its legal duties to provide residents in its area with '*reasonably accessible*' sites and the impact on local residents is minimised.

260. Proposals to Develop a new Primary School to Serve Market Harborough - Expressions of Interest from Academy Proposers.

The Cabinet considered an exempt report of the Director of Children and Family Services advising of Expressions of Interest received from academy proposers to operate a new primary school to serve the area of Market Harborough and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for Education to enable a decision to be taken on a preferred sponsor for the new school. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 21', is filed with these minutes. The report was not for publication by virtue of Paragraphs 3 and 10 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED:

- a) The six expressions of interest received from the Community Inclusive Trust, David Ross Education Trust, Discovery Schools Academy Trust, Inspiring Futures Through Learning, The Duston Education Trust and Tudor Grange Academy Trust, to operate the new 210 place primary school to serve the Market Harborough area be noted;
- b) The four academy proposers that have progressed to Stage 2 of the process, and the scoring attached to each as set out in Appendix D to this report, and which defines the County Council's order of preference, be noted;
- c) All four proposers at (b) above be recommended to the Secretary of State for Education (with whom the decision rests), as potential suitable sponsors to operate the new school in Market Harborough;
- d) The Secretary of State be advised that given the strength of the four applications that there is no reason to suggest that it would be necessary to look elsewhere to secure an academy sponsor;
- e) It be noted that further information will be provided to the Cabinet and local members once the decision on a preferred sponsor has been taken and confirmed by the Regional Director, acting on behalf of Secretary of State for Education.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Education Act 1996 places a statutory duty on the County Council to ensure a sufficient supply of school places.

The provision of a new 210 place primary school to predominantly serve the Market Harborough Airfield Farm development is planned to open in September 2024. . On completion, the Airfield Farm development will comprise 924 dwellings and the school will also provide places for pupils living on new neighbouring housing developments in Market Harborough.

Seeking Expressions of Interest from suitable academy proposers (sponsors) is in keeping with the requirements placed upon the County Council by Section 6A (the Free School Presumption) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, as introduced by the Education Act 2011.

By completing the Expressions of Interest process, the County Council has been able to assess the organisations which have applied and confirm their expertise, capacity, experience and other credentials necessary to run the new school.

Ensuring that all organisations recommended to the Secretary of State for consideration are already 'approved' sponsors on the Department for Education (DfE) register will help to demonstrate their capabilities and should enable an early decision to be taken.

11.00am – 12.18pm
23 June 2023

CHAIRMAN