

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Glenfield on Friday, 24 May 2024.

PRESENT

Mrs D. Taylor CC (in the Chair)

Mrs. C. M. Radford CC

Mr. O. O'Shea JP CC

Mr. L. Breckon JP CC

Mrs H. L. Richardson CC

Mrs. P. Posnett MBE CC

Mr. P. Bedford CC

Apologies

Mr. N. J. Rushton CC and Mr. B. L. Pain CC

In attendance (including via Teams)

Mr. R. Ashman CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Mrs. M. Wright CC

340. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2024 were taken as read, confirmed, and signed.

341. Urgent item.

The Chairman advised that there was one urgent item for consideration, a report of the Chief Executive titled "Variation to Date of Council Meeting". The report was urgent because the need for the variation was due to the General Election taking place on 4 July, the announcement of which had been made after the agenda for the Cabinet meeting had been published.

342. 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.

No declarations were made.

343. Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources setting out the provisional revenue and capital outturn for 2023/24. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 4', is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Breckon CC noted that tight control over spending across the Council had helped achieve a balanced revenue outturn, but the financial outlook remained very difficult.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the 2023/24 provisional revenue and capital outturn be noted;
- b) That the prudential indicators for 2023/24 as shown in Appendix E to the report be noted;
- c) That the transfers to earmarked reserves, as set out in paragraphs 65 and 66 of the report, be approved.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To note the provisional revenue and capital outturn for 2023/24 and agree the transfers to earmarked reserves to fund future commitments.

344. Recycling and Household Waste Sites - Outcome of Public Consultation and Proposed Service Changes

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport regarding the outcome of two consultation exercises on proposals to make savings from the Recycling and Household Waste Sites service and proposing the closure of the Somerby Recycling and Household Waste Site (RHWS) and changes to the opening hours at other RHWSs. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', is filed with these minutes.

Members commented on the high number of responses to the consultation and noted that the savings target had been reduced to enable changes to the original proposals.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Somerby RHWS be closed with effect from October 2024;
- b) That the opening arrangements at the Recycling and Household Waste Sites at Bottesford, Market Harborough, Kibworth, and Shepshed be as follows with effect from October 2024:
 - i. Bottesford - three days per week,
 - ii. Market Harborough - three days per week,
 - iii. Kibworth - four days per week,
 - iv. Shepshed - two days per week;
- c) That the summer opening hours at all the Council's Recycling and Household Waste Sites be reduced with effect from April 2025, to be as follows:
 - i. from 9.00am to 5.00pm on Saturdays, Sundays, or Mondays;
 - ii. from 9.00am to 7.00pm on other days;
- d) That all the Council's Recycling and Household Waste Sites be closed on Christmas Eve with effect from December 2024;
- e) That the Somerby RHWS be considered for disposal.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To note the outcome of the public consultation.

The recommended proposals will enable the savings target set out in the 2024-28 Medium Term Financial Strategy to be achieved.

The Cabinet in June 2023 accepted the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel including that if sites were closed, initially plans to decommission but not sell them be supported. Only the Somerby RHWS is to close, and the site is then likely to be surplus to requirement. If so, its future use or disposal would be a matter for the Director of Corporate Resources using his delegated powers.

345. Development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2026-2040.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport seeking approval for the approach to the development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2026-2040 and to undertake public consultation. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

The Director highlighted an amendment to the recommendations in light of the General Election on 4 July: consultation would take place as soon as was appropriate, but the overall timetable set out in the report might be affected.

Members joined with Mr. O'Shea CC in commending the proposed themes and policies which would guide the LTP4.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the work to date on the development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) be noted;
- b) That the continued development of phases one to three of the LTP4 as set out in paragraph 33 of the report be approved;
- c) That the Director of Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to commence a six-week public consultation exercise on the LTP4 development phasing and the draft LTP4 Core Document at an appropriate time with reference to pre-election guidance.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The current Local Transport Plan (the LTP3) requires updating to ensure the Council meets its legal responsibilities to publish an LTP according with national policy, to provide the strategic case to secure funding opportunities, and to set the narrative for the delivery programmes including the Local Transport Fund (LTF).

The LTP4 Core Document must be in place by September 2024, so that it provides the basis for the LTF delivery programme which needs to be submitted to the Department for Transport in December 2024.

The six-week public consultation will seek the views and perspective of local communities, partners, and stakeholders.

346. Ibstock Community Managed Library.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities concerning the outcome of the Registration of Interest process for Ibstock Community Managed Library (CML) and associated consultation on alternative library provision in the event of the permanent closure of Ibstock CML. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Members noted that a petition titled "Save Ibstock Library" containing 129 signatures had been submitted to the Council. A copy of the petition text and a summary of comments included were circulated at the meeting and are filed with these minutes.

Mrs Radford CC thanked the trustees and volunteers at Ibstock CML for their work over the past few years. Other members agreed with Mrs Radford in reluctantly supporting the recommendations as no viable offer to run the Library had been received.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the petition received by the Council be noted;
- b) That the outcome of the Registration of Interest process for Ibstock CML and the associated consultation on alternative library provision be noted;
- c) That the closure of Ibstock CML be approved;
- d) That the Director of Adults and Communities, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member and the Local Member, be authorised to put in place the alternative library provision for Ibstock.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The existing community management library group has ceased to operate, and the Registration of Interest process has not resulted in a viable new group being identified.

The Library temporarily closed at the end of March 2024, and it is desirable to put in place permanent alternative library provision as soon as possible. The proposals consulted on can be put in place by June 2024 and do not require any additional financial resources.

347. Exception to Contract Procedure Rules: Urgent Action taken by the Chief Executive in relation to the Educational Psychology Service.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services regarding urgent action taken by the Chief Executive to approve an exception to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules to enable the direct award of a contract for the provision of Education Psychologist Locums. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the urgent action taken by the Chief Executive (following consultation with the Leader) to directly award by an exception in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules to enable the Director of Children and Family Services to agree a contract with Liquid Personnel Ltd. to provide 500 assessments for children and young people undergoing Education Health and Care Plan Assessments, up to a maximum value of £801,500, up to 15 May 2025 be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The County Council's Contract Procedure Rules (Part 4G of the Constitution) require that, where the estimated value of a contract exceeds £179,087, formal tenders must be invited.

Where an exception to the Contract Procedure Rules is required for contracts over £179,087, Rule 6 e) provides that Cabinet approval be obtained to the exception where this is justified on its merits and that in urgent cases the Chief Executive (after consultation with the Leader or Deputy Leader save where this is not practicable) may direct that an exception be made subject to it being reported to the Cabinet.

The exception was necessary to enable the Council to fulfil its duties under the relevant legislation to complete Education Health and Care Plan assessments for eligible children and young people. Alongside this the Council will undertake a review of service requirements and, depending on the outcome of the review, a compliant procurement process to award a contract or contracts.

348. Items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.

There were no items referred from Overview and Scrutiny bodies.

349. Urgent item - Variation to Date of Council Meeting.

The Cabinet considered an urgent report of the Chief Executive regarding a variation to the date of the Council meeting in July. The report was urgent as the variation was sought due to the General Election taking place on 4 July, the announcement of which had been made after the Cabinet agenda had been published.

RESOLVED:

That the County Council meeting scheduled for Wednesday 3 July 2024 be rearranged for Wednesday 10 July 2024.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To comply with the Local Government Act 1972 and the County Council's Standing Orders.