Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 16 December 2025.

PRESENT

Mr. D. Harrison CC (in the Chair)

Mr. C. Abbott CC
Mr. K. Crook CC
Mr. H. Fowler CC
Mr. V. Richichi CC
Mr. A. Tilbury CC

Apologies

Mr. C. Pugsley CC
Mr. M. Squires CC

In attendance

Mr. P. King CC (via Microsoft Teams)

75. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025.

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

76. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2025.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

77. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

78. 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.

79. Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30.

Members considered a report and supplementary report of the Director of Corporate Resources which set out the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2026/27 to 2029/30 for consultation and scrutiny. A copy of the report and supplementary report marked ‘Agenda Item 5’ is filed with these minutes.

Mr. H. Fowler CC, the Cabinet Lead Member, welcomed the external Efficiency Review that was currently being undertaken and recognised that this would have an impact on the final proposals for the MTFS. He felt that the proposals in the draft MTFS for Council Tax were balanced between providing value for money for taxpayers and meeting the needs of service users. He encouraged residents to respond to the consultation.

RESOLVED:

a) That the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), including the 2026/27 draft revenue budget and capital programme, be approved for consultation and referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Scrutiny Commission for consideration;

b) That the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Resources, be authorised to -

   i. agree a response to the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement;

   ii. decide on the appropriate course of action with regard to the Leicester and Leicestershire Business Rates Pool in 2026/27 and, subject to agreement by all member authorities, to implement this;

c) That each Chief Officer, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources and following consultation with the relevant Lead Member(s), undertake preparatory work as considered appropriate to develop the savings set out in the draft MTFS and to identify additional savings in light of the financial gap in all four years of the MTFS, to enable the Cabinet and Council to consider further those savings to be taken forward as part of the MTFS and implemented in a timely manner;

d) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet on 3 February 2026.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To enable the County Council to meet its statutory requirements with respect to setting a balanced budget and Council Tax precept for 2026/27 and to provide a basis for the planning of services over the next four years.

To ensure that the County Council's views on the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement are made known to the Government.

To enable the County Council (alongside the pooling partners) to respond to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in respect of the Business Rates Pool within 28 days from the draft Local Government Finance Settlement.

To enable early work to be undertaken on the development of new savings to address the worsening financial position.

To consider feedback from consultation on the draft MTFS and the views of the Overview and Scrutiny bodies and the final recommendations to be made to the County Council.

80. Investing in Leicestershire Programme Rural Estate Strategy 2025-2035.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which sought approval to commence consultation on the draft Rural Estate Strategy, provided an outline of the draft Strategy and set out the planned approach to the proposed consultation with stakeholders. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 6' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Rural Estate Strategy be approved for consultation.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION:

It is a legal requirement for public bodies such as local authorities to consult residents, service users, stakeholders and staff on key strategies which might affect them. Consultation will strengthen the Rural Estate Strategy by enabling stakeholders to contribute to the emerging strategy and ensure that a diverse range of views and ideas are incorporated, thereby reinforcing support for its implementation.

81. Procurement of Community Life Choices (Day Services and Personal Assistants).

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which sought approval to progress with the procurement of a new Community Life Choices (CLC) framework, which included both day centres/services and individual personal assistants provided by organisations. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

a) That the procurement of a new Community Life Choices (CLC) framework for the provision of day centres/services and individual personal assistants provided by organisations be approved;

b) That the Director of Adults and Communities, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, be authorised to enter into any contractual arrangements necessary to bring into effect the new CLC framework with effect from 31 August 2026.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The current CLC framework ends on 30 August 2026. It is proposed that the new CLC framework will be for the period 2026-2029, with the option to extend for a further two years if required.

The proposals for the future recommissioning of the CLC framework aim to promote sustainability, deliver care and support outcomes in line with the Care Act 2014 and the Council's Fair Outcomes Policy, strengthen carer support, enable progression, and ensure cost-effective care.

82. Strategic Spatial and Transport Planning.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which set out the proposals for the preparation of a Spatial Development Strategy and sought approval for the Council to share initial evidence work it has developed as the Local Transport Authority with the district councils and developers and to undertake initial scheme feasibility and development work. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

Comments had been received from Mr. P. King CC and Mrs. R. Page CC (local members for the Gartree and Lutterworth divisions respectively) and a written submission had also been received from Dr. H. Winand on behalf of "Stop the New Town" which welcomed the Council's move towards long term strategic spatial planning but set out some concerns. These were circulated separately, and a copy is attached to these minutes.

With the permission of the Chairman, Mr. P. King CC in his capacity as Local Member spoke in support of his comments. He welcomed the acknowledgement in the report that there was no simple solution to the traffic issues on the A6 South Corridor, indicated his support for the more strategic approach being taken by the County Council but expressed concern that funding was not currently available to deliver a scheme.

Mr. H. Fowler CC agreed with the issues outlined by the Local Member. He hoped that Local Government Reorganisation, and the devolution of transport powers to a Strategic Mayoral Authority, would provide the means for a viable solution to be delivered.

RESOLVED:

a) That the Cabinet notes:

i The current strategic spatial planning and strategic transport planning issues and the concerns raised by local communities about the traffic impacts of new development;

ii That the Local Transport Authority (LTA) supports the principle of a Plan-led approach to development, and that should the LTA consider it cannot support a Local Plan

- there will nonetheless continue to be a demand for new homes and jobs to meet the needs of Leicester and Leicestershire's growing population, and

- in the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan there will be a risk of greater levels of unplanned, speculative growth that will present even more challenges for the provision of infrastructure and services;

iii That it is considered to be in the best overall interests of communities for the County Council to move towards a longer-term approach to strategic spatial and transport planning;

iv That the success of the proposals set out in the report rests on successful collaborative working with the district councils and commitments to that way of working being demonstrated by the district councils through Local Plan policies and narratives as appropriate;

b) That, accordingly, the following actions be undertaken as detailed in the report:

i The preparation of a Spatial Development Strategy;

ii Identification and development of schemes to alleviate the transport impacts of growth, based on initial evidence work undertaken to date;

iii The sharing with the relevant authorities and developers of initial evidence work that has been undertaken by the LTA and, as it emerges, the outcomes of the further scheme identification and development work set out in b) ii above;

c) That the Director of Environment and Transport be requested to explore any opportunities to streamline and align the strategic spatial and transport planning work in order to mitigate the traffic impacts of new development including new ways of working where appropriate.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To respond to increasing concerns expressed by local communities, Members, and MPs about the traffic impacts of new developments that are faced across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area.

A number of new Local Plans are being prepared by district councils in Leicestershire, and the LTA is finding it increasingly difficult to support them. Concerns raised by the County Council about emerging Local Plans in terms of service and infrastructure provision are often not properly addressed, due to pressure on the local planning authorities from the Government to expedite production of their Local Plans and deliver new housing.

Sharing initial evidence work and of the outcomes as they emerge of the proposed scheme identification and development work with district councils will give the LTA the best opportunity to have a constructive influence on the content of Local Plans and establish a sound basis for seeking developer contributions towards the delivery of transport schemes.

The LTA is engaged in confidential pre-application discussions relating to strategic-scale sites proposed to be allocated in the Local Plans and, by sharing evidence with developers, has the opportunity to have a positive/ constructive influence on those developments.

A broader, holistic consideration of strategic spatial planning and transport planning issues on a wider geographical basis is needed in order for the County Council, with limited resources, to address the necessary support for and mitigation of future growth.

83. Response to the Charnwood Borough Council Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule Consultation.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which advised of the County Council's proposed response to Charnwood Borough Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule consultation and sought

approval for comments to be sent to the Borough Council as the views of the County Council. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these notes.

RESOLVED:

a) That the proposed approach set out in paragraphs 25 to 35 of the report be approved as the basis for the County Council's formal response to the Charnwood Borough Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule consultation;

b) That the Director of Environment and Transport, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Lead Member, be authorised to submit the County Council's formal response to the Borough Council by 19 December 2025.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The County Council's response will set out key comments for consideration by Charnwood BC in progressing its CIL Draft Charging Schedule. The expedient adoption of a CIL is considered the best way to mitigate the negative impacts of a lack of strategic transport investment needed to support growth in Charnwood.

84. Items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.

There were no items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.

2.00 - 2.55 pm CHAIRMAN
16 December 2025