

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD ON WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER
2015**

PRESENT

Mr. E. D. Snartt CC (in the Chair)

Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC, Mr. R. Blunt CC, Mr. G. A. Boulter CC, Mr. S. L. Bray CC, Mrs. R. Camamile CC, Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC, Mr. J. G. Coxon CC, Mrs. J. A. Dickinson CC, Dr. T. Eynon CC, Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC, Mr. S. J. Galton CC, Mr. D. A. Gamble CC, Mr. S. J. Hampson CC, Mr. G. A. Hart CC, Dr. S. Hill CC, Mr. Dave Houseman MBE, CC, Mr. D. Jennings CC, Mr. J. Kaufman CC, Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC, Ms. K. J. Knaggs CC, Mr. P. G. Lewis CC, Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC, Mrs. H. E. Loydall CC, Mr. K. W. P. Lynch CC, Mr. J. Miah CC, Ms. Betty Newton CC, Mr. L. J. P. O'Shea CC, Mr. J. T. Orson JP CC, Mr. P. C. Osborne CC, Mr. I. D. Ould CC, Mrs. R. Page CC, Mr. B. L. Pain CC, Mr. A. E. Pearson CC, Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC, Mrs. P. Posnett CC, Mrs. C. M. Radford CC, Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC, Mr. T. J. Richardson CC, Mrs. J. Richards CC, Mr. N. J. Rushton CC, Mr. R. Sharp CC, Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC, Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC, Mr. L. Spence CC, Mr. D. A. Sprason CC, Mr. G. Welsh CC, Mr. E. F. White CC, Miss. H. Worman CC and Mr. M. B. Wyatt CC

23. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Mr Peter Winkless

The Chairman reported the death of former County Councillor Peter Winkless who died on 24th July 2015.

Mr Winkless had served on the County Council from 1985 to 2005 and had represented the Enderby electoral division.

Mr Winkless had served on numerous committees during his 20 years as a County Councillor, including the Social Services Committee, Education Committee and the Environment Committee. He had been spokesman of the latter from 1997 to 1999. He had also been the spokesman of the Special Education and Welfare Subcommittee for 10 years from 1987 to 1997.

Following the move to the Cabinet/Scrutiny system, Mr Winkless had been appointed as the Cabinet Lead Member for Environment. He had stepped down from this role to become Chairman of the County Council in 2004/05.

Mr Ronald Clements

The Chairman reported the death of former County Councillor Mr Ronald Clements who had passed away on 19th July 2015. Mr Clements had been a member of the County Council from 1993 to 2001 and had represented the Manor electoral division in Oadby.

He had served on the Education and Social Services Committee. He had

also served on a number of Social Services Subcommittees, most notably the Social Services Planning Subcommittee for which he had been spokesman from 1993 to 1995 and the Community Care and Adult Services Subcommittee, for which he had been spokesman from 1995 to 1997.

The Chairman invited the Council to stand in silent tribute to the memory of Mr Peter Winkless and Mr Ronal Clements.

HM The Queen

The Chairman advised the Council that on behalf of the Members and Officers of Leicestershire County Council and the people of Leicestershire, he had sent Loyal Greetings to Her Majesty on the occasion of her becoming the longest serving British Monarch on 9th September 2015, which had been acknowledged.

Visitors

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting all visitors and guests of members and anyone who was viewing the meeting via the webcast.

24. MINUTES.

It was moved by the Chairman, seconded by Liquorish and carried:-

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8th July 2015, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed subject to the inclusion of Mr Kershaw in the list of members present.”

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

Dr Eynon declared a personal interest in the requested statement by the Lead Member for Health, as she was a salaried GP.

26. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 7(1)(2) AND (5).

(A) Mr Sheahan asked the following question of the Leader of his nominee:-

“Will the Leader be making good the claims in a County Council press release dated 3rd September 2015 that the Authority is “clamping down on dangerous parkers”, and there has been a “drive to tackle unsafe parking”, by allocating additional resources to deal with persistent problem areas, for example, on Chapel Street, Measham, next to the cash machine and on Ashby Road, Moira, near the Post Office?”

Mr Osborne replied as follows:-

“As Mr Sheahan is aware from correspondence with the Director of

Environment and Transport the press release referred to was aimed at publicising the work that the County Council does to enforce on street parking restrictions to prevent dangerous parking with a view to influencing driver behaviour.

The Council continues to work with our District partners to ensure that patrol routes are dealing with dangerous and unsafe parking. The enforcement team are aware of the issues that have been reported on Ashby Road, Moira and will continue to patrol this location. As the press release made clear, the costs of undertaking this enforcement are closely matched to the fine income received with the Council making a small loss of £792 in 2013/2014. Additional resources are not available for additional patrols at this time.”

(B) Mr Wyatt asked the following question of the Leader or his nominee:-

“The current MTFs includes £87 million of cuts over the next 4 years. Following the Government’s emergency budget, the Cabinet has indicated that it will now need to make significantly more cuts to balance the books.

Can the Leader assure me that any financial review will include the position of the Chief Executive, Senior Management and Cabinet Members?”

Mr Rhodes replied as follows:-

“It is well known that the Council is in an extremely challenging financial position. Savings of over £100m have already been achieved and current plans include a savings requirement of £87m with significantly more to follow. It goes without saying that all elements of the budget will be considered for savings, but Mr Wyatt is missing the point if he thinks further reductions in management costs and the costs of democracy which, of course include scrutiny, will solve the problem.

The profound impact which the required level of savings will have on local services is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that by the time austerity budgets have come to an end the County Council is likely to have saved the sum of all the Leicestershire District Councils’ net budgets three times over.”

(C) Mr Wyatt asked the following question of the Leader or his nominee:-

- “1. Is the Leader aware that the Government has launched a consultation on whether to allow Police and Crime Commissioners to take over the running of fire and rescue authorities?”
2. Can the Leader share his opinion on whether he feels such an arrangement would be suitable for Leicestershire?”

Mr Rushton replied as follows:-

- “1. Yes.
2. I do not believe that putting the governance of the Fire and Rescue

Service under a Police and Crime Commissioner would improve democratic accountability. There is, however, considerable scope for making efficiencies in back office and support services by joint working between the emergency services.”

(D) Mr Welsh asked the following question of the Leader or his nominee:-

“The road lining including the stop lines and yellow keep clear boxes at the traffic light controlled junction of Leicester Road, Little Glen Road and Newbridge Road, Glen Parva have almost worn away completely. A number of traffic collisions have occurred. Despite assurances from officers of the authority for over two years that the work is in hand nothing has been done. Could the Leader advise me when this junction will have the correct road lining and signage reapplied?”

Mr Osborne replied as follows:-

“As Mr Welsh will be aware a site visit took place with representatives of the Glen Parva Parish Council in November 2013 to discuss their concerns over safety at the junction. Following this meeting a safety assessment of the junction was undertaken. This assessment concluded that the accident record at the junction did not warrant the funding of any major improvements and that those minor changes possible within the constraints of the site would not improve safety at the junction.

It was noted at the site meeting that the junction was scheduled for relining in the spring of 2014, when weather conditions for such works would be more favourable. Subsequently, these lining works were put on hold due to the development of the County Arms public house site, adjacent to the junction. The works at the site involved resurfacing works in the highway which would affect the junction, so it was considered appropriate to delay the relining works until the development works were complete. The works at the development site are now nearing completion and lining works will be programmed to be completed shortly. An audit of the signing at the junction will also be undertaken to ensure that all the corrected signs are in place.

I will ask Officers to update Mr Welsh once a date is confirmed for the lining works”.

Mr Welsh asked the following supplementary question:-

“Thank you Chairman, can I thank Mr Osborne for a comprehensive and helpful answer. I do have a supplementary though, I wondered whether Councillor Osborne is willing to use his good offices to put pressure upon the officers to try and undertake this work before the winter sets in as identified in the response clearly trying to do this work in the winter would be very difficult so we haven’t got long to get it done. If we don’t do that we’re going to end up into the Spring which would be three years which is a long time to wait for such important work. Thank you”.

Mr Osborne replied as follows:-

“If there is anything that I can do in talking to officers, and I know that you’ve been in touch with them, that facilitates this, I am more than willing to do so”.

(E) Mrs Loydall asked the following question of the Leader or his nominee:-

“I understand that the auction of Aberglaslyn Hall did not meet the reserve price. Can the Leader inform me how much it has now been sold for?”

Mr Pain replied as follows:-

“Negotiations for the sale of Aberglaslyn Hall have taken place with interested parties after the auction. A sale price has been agreed which is marginally below the reserve and contracts have been exchanged. Mrs Loydall and members will appreciate that until the sale is complete, details regarding price and terms need to remain commercially confidential. I can advise Mrs Loydall of the sale price once completion has taken place and if she wishes.”

(F) Mr Pendleton asked the following question of the Leader or his nominee:-

“In the light of the findings of the recent National Rural Crime Network survey that rural crime costs £800million, could the Leader advise me of the measures this Council is taking to keep our rural communities safe?”

Mr Orson replied as follows:-

“Tackling Anti Social Behaviour and crime in any area of the county is not something that any one organisation can do alone.

Through the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board that I chair we work with our partners in the Police and District Councils to address key areas of concern regarding crime and disorder for people in Leicestershire, including acquisitive crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and hate crime.

In a significantly rural county, we work to ensure that communication and campaign approaches and partnership responses take account of the needs of people living in rural communities. This involves for example linking with Parish Councils on awareness campaigns, developing contacts with local businesses in rural areas to use of varied media channels.

We also work to address some of the acquisitive crime issues that rural areas face, such as thefts of farm machinery and break-ins to rural premises. Our partnership responses include:

- Direct contact with rural businesses offering advice and information to prevent crime and encourage reporting.
- A rural watch focus group has been set up strengthening the existing farm, countryside and rural watch schemes across the County and developing approaches to extend further the reach and impact of

these schemes.

- A rural policing conference is to take place in Leicestershire on 13th October which I will be attending. The conference will bring together some of the officers from across partner organisations with representatives from a number of countryside and rural agencies to further develop our partnership approach to working together with people in rural communities.
- Ensuring we are engaging with rural communities through setting up partnership rural neighbourhood surgeries.”

27. REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE.

(a) Review of Standing Orders (Meeting Procedure Rules).

It was moved by Mr Rushton, seconded by Mr Rhodes and carried:-

"That the changes to Standing Orders (Meeting Procedure Rules), as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Constitution Committee, be approved."

The motion was put and carried, 37 members voting for the motion and 12 against.

28. POSITION STATEMENTS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8.

(A) General Position Statements

The Leader presented a position statement on the following matters:-

Combined Authority;
Syrian Refugees;
Pension Fund;
Leader of the Labour Party;
Brian Roberts;
Sue Goudie.

The Lead Member for Community Safety presented a position statement on the following matters:-

Prevent;
Youth Offending Service;
Domestic Abuse;
Partnership arrangements.

(B) Requested Position Statements:-

The Lead Member for Health presented a position statement in response to a request put forward by Mr Sharp (Lead Questioner), Mr Sheahan and Dr Eynon. The request was in the following terms:-

“The Government’s planned £200m reduction in the Public Health specific

grant paid to local authorities has the potential to affect this Authority's ability to improve the public's health and wellbeing as well as its capacity to reduce demand for hospital, health and social care services.

Could the Lead Member update members by way of a position statement on the following:-

- What are the latest assumptions on the financial impact on this authority?
- What programmes are at risk of cuts?
- What options exist to meet the cuts?
- What risk could this funding reduction pose to the work of the Better Care Fund?"

Arising from the statement a number of questions were put to the Lead Member and responses given.

A copy of each of the position statements is attached to these minutes.

29. REPORT OF THE CABINET.

(a) Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Mr Rhodes, with the consent of the seconder of the motion, sought and obtained the agreement of the Council to move the following altered motion:-

It was moved by Mr Rhodes, seconded by Mr Rushton, and carried:-

"That this Council notes the position on the MTFs as now outlined and calls on the Leader to make representations to local MPs and the Government highlighting in particular the impact of low funding and the introduction of the living wage on services provided, particularly those to the elderly and vulnerable".

The motion was put and carried, 42 members voting for the motion and 8 against.

30. APPOINTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEMS 11 AND 12 OF STANDING ORDER 4.

(a) Appointment of Church representative to serve on the Local Authority Committee dealing with Education - Report of the Chief Executive.

It was moved by Mr Osborne, seconded by Mr Welsh, and carried:-

"That Gerard Hirst be appointed as Roman Catholic representative on the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or other appropriate scrutiny committee dealing with Education) for the period ending with the County Council elections in 2017)."

31. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICE/S OF MOTION:

(a) Adult Social Care Costs.

It was moved by Mr Galton, and seconded by Mr Charlesworth:-

“1. That this Council:-

- (a) Notes the cross-party support for the former Coalition Government’s policy to cap care costs following the Dilnot Commission, and that the Conservative Party was elected to Government with a clear and unambiguous promise in their manifesto to cap care costs from 2016 onwards.
- (b) Notes with concern the government’s announcement to shelve plans for a cap on care costs, which will result in estimated £100m of public money wasted on preparation and continued uncertainty for the future of those who will be needing these care services.
- (c) Supports the LGA’s call that any money saved from delaying the care cap reforms should be put into the mainstream adult social care and support system so as to put it on a more sustainable footing.
- (d) Sees little sense in the Government’s policy of increasing the allowance threshold for inheritance tax while continuing to run a care system where many elderly people are forced to sell their home to pay for their care.

2. This Council therefore calls on the Government to prioritise funding for both the adult social care system and the care cap reforms, before raising the allowance thresholds for inheritance tax and higher rate taxpayers.”

An amendment was moved by Mr Houseman, and seconded by Mr Rhodes:-

“That the motion be amended to read as follows:-

‘1. That this Council:-

- (a) notes the cross party support for the government’s policy to cap care costs following the Dilnot Commission;
- (b) notes the government’s announcement to delay the cap on care costs in order to ensure appropriate time for preparation and implementation as requested by the Local Government Association;
- (c) supports the LGA call that any money saved from delaying the care cap reforms should be put into the mainstream adult social care and support system so as to put it on a more sustainable footing.

2. That this Council therefore calls on the Government to prioritise funding for both the adult social care system and the NHS to ensure a sustainable delivery of health and social care services.’ ”

The amendment was put and carried, 28 members voting for the amendment and 20 against, with 1 abstention.

The substantive motion was put and carried.

(b) Syrian Refugees.

It was moved by Mr Sharp, and seconded by Mr Galton:-

- “1. That this Council welcomes the Government’s Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme and commits to play its full part in accommodating those claiming asylum into Leicestershire.
2. That the County Council will welcome refugees into our communities and provide sanctuary to families fleeing war and violence, recognising that its capacity to assist will inevitably be governed by available resources
3. This Council calls upon the Leader to immediately establish a cross party panel to work with officers to identify how the Council can assist, ensure early and robust plans are put in place and that effective co-ordination with District Councils and other partners is established.”

An amendment was moved by Mr Lewis, and seconded by Mr Pearson:-

“That the motion be amended to read as follows:-

- ‘1. That this Council notes:-
 - (a) that the Prime Minister has specifically stated that the existing Government Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation (VPR) Scheme needs significantly expanding to meet his commitment to resettle up to 20,000 over the life of this Parliament;
 - (b) that the Cabinet at its meeting on 11th September indicated it would respond to any requirements and demands placed upon the Council to assist refugees as helpfully and positively as it can whilst recognising that its capacity will inevitably be governed by available resources.
2. Accordingly this Council resolves that it would be sensible to await details from the Government of the new Scheme and the outcome of its discussions with the LGA regarding the funding to be provided to support Councils participating in the new Scheme before making a formal response to Government.” ’

The amendment was put and carried, 29 members voting for the amendment

and 20 against.

The substantive motion was put and carried.

2.00 pm – 6.50 pm
23 September 2015

CHAIRMAN