

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD ON WEDNESDAY, 21 MARCH 2018**

PRESENT

Mrs. J. Richards CC (in the Chair)

Mr. P. Bedford CC, Mr. I. E. G. Bentley CC, Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC, Mr. R. Blunt CC, Mr. G. A. Boulter CC, Mr. S. L. Bray CC, Mr. L. Breckon JP CC, Dr. P. Bremner CC, Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC, Mr. J. G. Coxon CC, Mr. B. Crooks CC, Dr. T. Eynon CC, Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC, Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC, Mr. S. J. Galton CC, Mr. T. Gillard CC, Mrs. A. J. Hack CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Dr. S. Hill CC, Mr. Max Hunt CC, Mr. D. Jennings CC, Mr. J. Kaufman CC, Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC, Mr. J. Miah CC, Mr. J. Morgan CC, Mr. M. T. Mullaney 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 T. Parton CC, Mr. A. E. Pearson CC, Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC, Mr J. Poland CC, Mrs. P. Posnett CC, Mrs. C. M. Radford CC, Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC, Mr. T. J. Richardson CC, Mrs H. L. Richardson CC, Mr. N. J. Rushton CC, Mrs B. Seaton CC, Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC, Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC, Mrs D. Taylor CC and Mr. G. Welsh CC

42. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Brian Roberts

The Chairman reported that Brian Roberts would be retiring from the County Council at the end of this month after more than 12 years as Director of Corporate Resources. He had previously worked as the Deputy Corporate Director (Finance) at Staffordshire County Council. Prior to that, he had worked in Merseyside and Hampshire.

Brian had led and overseen significant changes during the last 12 years and had made a major contribution to modernising and transforming the shape of the Council. The County Council had reaped the benefit of Brian's considerable energy and drive and he had led on a number of really successful major change programmes such as the implementation of the Council's accommodation strategy, and the creation of East Midlands Shared Services.

He had always ensured that robust financial management arrangements had been in place, and that the Council maintained a focus on medium term financial planning. This had placed the Council in a far more secure position that would otherwise have been the case and Brian deserved huge credit for this.

He had also ably led the Corporate Resources Department, reshaping key support services, and had been instrumental in creating and driving the Council's ambitious transformation programme. Brian had acted as Deputy to the Chief Executive. Overall and in every way he had made a significant corporate contribution to the leadership and reputation of the Council and was well respected by members and officers.

In 2016/17, Brian was President of CIPFA, which not only provided him with national and international platforms to discuss key public sector issues, but also helped to raise the profile of the County Council.

Members joined the Chairman in wishing Brian a long and happy retirement.

Record Office Accreditation

The Chairman reported with pleasure that the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Records Office officially received its Accreditation award.

Accreditation was the standard awarded by the National Archives to services which demonstrated competence and excellence in core areas such as collections management, access and outreach. Less than 5% of archive services in the country had met the standard so this was an achievement to be proud of.

Members joined the Chairman in congratulating the staff at the Records Office

Visitors

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

43. MINUTES.

It was moved by the Chairman, seconded by Mr O'Shea and carried:-

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 21 February 2018, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.”

44. 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.

No such declarations were made.

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

(A) Question by MR HUNT

“1. Could the Leader advise:-

- a) Whether the conversion of Loughborough's pedestrianised shopping area into a Pedestrian and Cycle Zone is supported by a county wide policy, Manual for Streets or equivalent, and if so where can it be accessed?
- b) Has Leicestershire Police been consulted and, if so, what view

of the change has the Force reflected to the County Council?

- c) Is Charnwood Borough Council a partner or a consultee in the project and what do we know about its view?
2. Is the Leader aware of the significant concern in the town concerning the conflict between cycles and pedestrians and does he consider this the best way to resolve this conflict?
 3. Does the Leader consider that the County Council is sufficiently in touch with shoppers in Loughborough and understand their needs?"

Reply by Mr Pain

- "1. a) A pedestrian and cycle zone is an option available under the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, the legislation that regulates traffic restrictions across the country.
- b) Leicestershire Police has been consulted – no comment has been received. Prior to consultation the Police raised concerns over the existing ambiguities with the various orders currently in place with regard to cyclists through the pedestrian areas.
- c) Charnwood Borough Council is both. Borough Council officers have worked with the County Council over the past year to develop a single pedestrian and cycle zone. They approached the County Council in the first place wanting to resolve the ambiguities with the current orders and with a view to expanding the market place. Charnwood Borough Council is also a statutory consultee. At the time of the proposals going to consultation Borough Council officers were supportive.

Once the consultation period began, Charnwood Borough Council objected to the proposals.

- 2.&3. To reiterate, this work was initially instigated by Charnwood Borough Council. It also provided the County Council with the opportunity to review and consolidate the existing confusing traffic regulation orders along with addressing concerns raised by the Police and a recommendation of the Loughborough Pedestrianisation Public Inquiry. After over a year's worth of work with both Charnwood Borough Council and Loughborough BID a proposal was agreed by all parties and put out to consultation which closed on 14 March. Officers have now considered the responses to that consultation and in view of the U-turn by Charnwood Borough Council on this matter, along with the comments raised, I have decided in consultation with the Leader that the County Council will no longer be pursuing any changes to the current situation in central Loughborough. I have now requested that the costs the County Council has incurred to date in pursuing this abortive initiative are discussed with Charnwood Borough Council with a view to seeking appropriate recompense."

Mr Hunt asked the following supplementary question:-

“Can I thank the Lead Member for this most illuminating answer indicating that, after over a year’s work with Charnwood Borough Council, proposals which have come forward, which all parties agreed to, are now withdrawn by Charnwood Borough Council. I would simply ask the Lead Member:

1. Can we in future give more credit to proposals from members as opposed to Borough Councils who are going to let us down?
2. Doesn’t this speak volumes for unitary authorities when one authority is instructing another authority and then withdrawing those instructions?”

Mr Pain replied as follows:-

“Can I thank Max for his supplementary question?

1. In terms of member involvement, consultations exist for all parties to communicate and submit their thoughts on all proposals and I think that is a satisfactory process.
2. In terms of the unitary authority comment, that is not for me to answer and so I make no comment.”

(B) Question by MR HUNT

“Could the Leader explain what he knows about discussions which may result in East Midlands Trains to the capital being slowed down to allow another train operator to speed up its own service for commuters?”

Reply by Mr Pain

“The County Council is aware of the publication of the new East Midlands Trains timetable that will come into effect in May 2018 and run until December 2018. This is part of a normal process of timetable review conducted by the train operator and the Department for Transport. It is important to note that the review process includes no element of consultation with service users or stakeholders.

These timetable reviews normally result in little or no change to train service operations to stations in Leicestershire (or elsewhere). In the case of this particular review, however, my understanding is that it has been affected by the Thameslink programme and track availability on the Midland Main Line south of Bedford. It appears that there was a choice to be made between Midland Main Line trains continuing to stop at Bedford Station, which would have had a potentially dramatic impact for services to Leicestershire stations through time penalties on services and potentially loss of some services, or to remove stops at Bedford, with a very much more limited impact for train services in Leicestershire.

I am pleased to note that the review has adopted the latter position, i.e. to remove Bedford stops. Whilst I understand that this will still result in some Midland Main Line trains to and from London being slower than the current

timetable, some services will be quicker as a result of not stopping at Bedford and overall the impacts are broadly neutral. I understand too that there will be capacity improvements as a result of the new timetable, meaning that there should be more seats available for rail customers to and from Leicestershire.

Whilst I understand that those whose rail journeys may become slightly slower will feel frustrated, rest assured that officers will continue to engage with the current operator, East Midlands Trains, and through the refranchising process for Midland Main Line services, to lobby for improved rail service provision for Leicestershire residents.”

Mr Hunt asked the following supplementary question:-

“Again this is a very useful response which tells us a lot about how the contracts are running between London St Pancras to the benefit of Leicestershire. It strikes me from reading from this that this is not a problem which is going to end this year, it is a problem which is going to continue, and so the question is: Are we adding commuter trains and through trains to the list of concerns we have and the investment we want to see in the Midlands Mainline?”

Mr Pain replied as follows:-

“Once again, thank you for the supplementary question. I am not an expert in these matters; officers are far more learned than I. However, I will refer members and Max to the response which says that the process and the timetable review involves no element of consultation with service users or stakeholders. We will do what we can as a Department to influence these proposals where we can but the actual process does not involve consultation.”

46. POSITION STATEMENTS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8.

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

- Fair Funding;
- Local Industrial Strategy;
- Midlands Engine/Connect;
- Housing Infrastructure Fund.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Children and Family Services gave a position statement on the following matters:-

- Child Sexual Exploitation;
- Foster Carer Recruitment;
- Improved Placement Stability;
- The “Ask for Angela” Community Safety Campaign;
- New Toolkits for Schools;
- Annual Achievements of Children in Care Awards Evening.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Environment and Transport gave a position statement on severe winter weather.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing gave a position statement on the following matters:-

- Leicestershire Food Plan;
- Pensions for Women Born in the 1950s.

Under Standing Order 8(3) it was moved by Mr Charlesworth, seconded and carried unanimously that matters relating to the pensions for women born in the 1950s be referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

A copy of the position statements is filed with these minutes.

47. REPORT OF THE CABINET:-

(a) Acceptance of Delegation from Rutland County Council - Functions under the Care and Mental Health Acts.

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

“That the County Council accepts the delegation of certain statutory functions under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014 and Section 13 of the Mental Health Act 1983 on the basis outlined in the report.”

48. REPORT OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.

(a) Pay Policy Statement.

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

“That the County Council’s Pay Policy Statement 2018/19, as referred to in the report of the Employment Committee, be approved.”

2.00 pm – 3.36 pm
21 March 2018

CHAIRMAN