

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD ON WEDNESDAY, 5 JULY 2023**

PRESENT

Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC (in the Chair)

Mr. R. G. Allen CC, Mr. N. D. Bannister CC, Mr. T. Barkley CC, Mr. P. Bedford CC, Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC, Mr. G. A. Boulter CC, Mr. L. Breckon JP CC, Mr. B. Champion CC, Mr. N. Chapman CC, Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC, Mr. J. G. Coxon CC, Mr. M. Frisby CC, Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC, Mr. S. J. Galton CC, Mr. D. A. Gamble CC, Mr. K. Ghattoraya CC, Mr. T. Gillard CC, Mr. D. J. Grimley CC, Mrs. A. J. Hack CC, Mr. B. Harrison-Rushton CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Mr. R. Hills CC, Mr. B. Lovegrove CC, Mr. K. Merrie MBE CC, Mr. J. Morgan CC, Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC, Ms. Betty Newton CC, Mr. O. O'Shea JP CC, Mr. J. T. Orson CC, Mrs. R. Page CC, Mr. B. L. Pain CC, Mr T. Parton CC, Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC, Mr. L. Phillimore CC, Mr J. Poland CC, Mrs. P. Posnett MBE CC, Mrs. C. M. Radford CC, Mrs H. L. Richardson CC, Mr. N. J. Rushton CC, Mrs B. Seaton CC, Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC, Mr. C. A. Smith CC, Mrs D. Taylor CC, Mr. G. Welsh CC, Mrs. A. Wright CC and Mrs. M. Wright CC

11. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Armed Forces Week

On Monday 19th June to mark the start of Armed Forces week Neale Millet, an RAF veteran and Chairman of the local Royal Air Forces Association, raised the Armed Forces Day Flag at a ceremony at Stand Easy.

On Saturday 24th June the Chairman, together with the Lord-Lieutenant and Lord Mayor of Leicester, attended Armed Forces Day in Leicester City. There was a parade through the City Centre which was made up of service personnel, veterans, and cadets. Following the parade there was a 'Drumhead Service' in Green Dragon Square: a very moving occasion.

County Service

The Chairman would be hosting a County Service later in the year and all Members would receive an invitation in due course.

NHS

The Chairman reminded Members that it was the 75th birthday of the NHS and invited them to look at the stand in the Members' Lounge which included photographs of the early days of the NHS and how local people were involved. He wished the NHS a Happy Birthday.

12. MINUTES.

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

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 17th May 2023, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.”

13. 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.

All members declared a non registrable interest in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members’ Allowances (minute 18(a) refers).

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

(A) Mr Mullaney asked the following question of the Leader or his nominee:

“Given the news that the County Council is to get an additional nearly £2 million towards bus service improvements, would the County Council please reconsider the decision to withdraw funding for the 159 bus service from Hinckley to Coalville? The Service was one that was used by people in many rural areas like Newbold Verdon, Market Bosworth and Barlestone as well as Hinckley and Coalville. Restoring the subsidy to get the 159 bus service running again would be welcomed by people in many towns and villages in the County.”

Mr O’Shea replied as follows:

“The County Council has been awarded £1.78m Bus Service Improvement Plan Plus (BSIP+) funding in the current financial year and as a result, the Passenger Transport Policy Strategy (PTPS) review work on the supported bus services has been paused to allow a light touch refresh of the PTPS approach that better reflects the Government’s aspirations for this additional funding.

Following that, the review of the current contracted services against this revised policy approach will restart from late 2023 into early 2024.

The objective is to continue to support services that align to our revised policy approach (reflecting the additional funding) while ensuring we do not continue to pay for the lowest value services. It is not our intention to reinstate any services already withdrawn or to revisit subsidy arrangements for services that have ceased prior to the BSIP+ funding award. The BSIP+ funding will allow us to retain our existing subsidised bus services, the cost of which significantly exceeds the current budget while giving us the opportunity to help reshape our public transport model to a more sustainable one appropriate for a rural county like Leicestershire.

A briefing on this matter was issued to members on 1st June and has been appended to the response to this question.”

Mr Mullaney asked the following supplementary question:

“I’m sorry that the 159 subsidy couldn’t be restored, it was a service that a lot of people used and appreciated in Hinckley and the villages. In the appendix that was part of the response to the question it does mention that there is to be a pause to the review of the 26 subsidised services, including the Hinckley to Nuneaton service that goes through my area. Can the Lead Member offer some specifics to the residents that use those services as to what the term pause actually means? Do we take it that the pause to the review is in effect a permanent pause and those services won’t be reviewed in future; is it a matter of next financial year; is it a matter of a few months? Could the Lead Member give any sort of specifics to residents who might be concerned as to what exactly that time frame mentioned there is?”

Mr O’Shea replied as follows:

“A pause is a pause: it means it’s going to start again. We have been given this money that will temporarily let us pause [the review], but then all services across the County will be reviewed again later on in the year because the money will not last beyond the year. It will be paused for a temporary period but we will be looking at it across the whole piece, so that we can look at what is best for the whole County. We don’t want to cut bus services at all, and you appreciate that, but we are guided by the finances that this Council gets from Government. We want to do the best for our citizens, that’s why we are pausing it, being able to have this money to look at it in more detail.”

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

- “1. Understanding that our school meals service, like others across the country, is under severe cost pressures, is this the opportunity to seize the moment and take another step to meet our Net Zero Carbon target by replacing red meat with alternative proteins?
2. What alternative proteins do we currently use to replace meat?
3. As well as helping to meet Net Zero, and the more healthy diet that climate change will impose on younger generations, do we know what cost savings might be achieved by such a switch?
4. Do these meet Government standards?”

Reply by MR BRECKON

“1.&2. Our current menu only includes red meat three times in the two-week cycle, this is organic beef mix which is used to create bolognaise, as well as pork in sausages and roast pork.

We already use alternative protein sources (lentils) to reduce our red meat content in our bolognaise recipes.

As part of our vegetarian option which is available daily to all schools (should they select it) we use a beef free mince (meat free product

made of soya) in items such as vegetarian bolognaise. However, we also offer a cottage pie which is produced with a creamy white sauce and vegetables.

We currently do not widely use mycoprotein ingredients because they are a more costly alternative.

Each week on our menu we offer a meat free day.

3. At this time, we do not believe there would be any significant cost saving benefit in further reducing our level of red meat – in part this is because of the infrequency of serving it and the comparative expense of certain alternative products.
4. All our menus meet the government standards, including our vegetarian options. As a Local Authority Provider, we will always ensure that this is the case. A meat free alternative would continue to meet these standards if the levels of protein met the standards.”

15. POSITION STATEMENTS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8.

The Leader gave a position statement on the following matters:

- Active Travel England;
- Greener Leicestershire Update;
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy;
- Supporting Veterans;
- Household Support Fund;
- Health in All Policies.

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

- OFSTED Focus Visit;
- Family Hubs;
- Holiday Activity Fund;
- Volunteers.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Resources gave a position statement on the following matters:

- Financial Position;
- Funding Reform;
- Decarbonisation Funding;
- Statement of Accounts;
- Director of Corporate Resources.

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

16. REPORT OF THE CABINET.

(a) Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange.

It was moved by Mrs Richardson, seconded by Mr O'Shea and carried unanimously:

"That the Relevant Representation of the County Council on the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange proposal, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted."

17. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION.

(a) Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23.

It was moved by Mr Mullaney, seconded by Mrs Page and carried unanimously:

"That the information contained in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23, attached as Appendix A to this report, on its activities, be noted."

18. REPORTS OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE.

(a) Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances.

It was moved by Mr Rushton, seconded by Mrs Taylor and carried unanimously:

- (a) That Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances be increased by 3.88%, for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024;
- (b) That the Panel reconvenes in March 2024 to review the indexation of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances from 1st April 2024;
- (c) That further research be carried out during 2023 with regard to the indexing of allowances in other local authorities."

(b) Appointment of Independent Members to the Corporate Governance Committee.

It was moved by Mr Rushton, seconded by Mrs Taylor and carried unanimously:

"That Mr G. Grimes and Mr A. Maxfield be appointed to serve as independent members of the Corporate Governance Committee for a term of two years up to the May annual Council meeting in 2025."

19. REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND REGULATORY BOARD.

(a) Leicestershire County Council Country Parks Byelaws.

It was moved by Mr Phillimore, seconded by Mr Lovegrove and carried unanimously:

“That the Director of Law and Governance be authorised:

- (a) to make and seal Byelaws as appropriate for each of the Country Parks listed in accordance with the details set out in Appendix A to this report and to revoke all previous byelaws on those sites; and
- (b) to advertise the making of and to seek confirmation by the Secretary of State of these Byelaws.”

20. APPOINTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEM 11 OF STANDING ORDER 4:

(a) To appoint such Cabinet Support Members as the Council considers appropriate.

It was moved by Mr Shepherd, seconded by Mrs Fryer and carried:

“That Mr C Smith CC be appointed as Cabinet Support Member until the next Annual Meeting of the County Council, as provided for in Article 7 of the Council’s Constitution.”

38 members voted for the motion and 6 voted against.

2.00 pm – 3.40 pm
05 July 2023

CHAIRMAN