

**CABINET
12TH OCTOBER 2023**

PRESENT: The Leader (Councillor Miah)
The Deputy Leader (Councillor Hamilton)
Councillors Ashcroft, Blackshaw, A. Gray, Jadeja,
Jones and Tillotson

Councillor Seaton

Chief Executive
Director Finance, Governance and Contracts
Head of Governance and Human Resources
Director Commercial and Economic Development
Head of Planning and Growth
Team Leader Planning Enforcement
Democratic Services Officer (LS)

APOLOGIES: None

The Leader stated that this meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

31. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS, AND OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

32. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made.

33. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

34. QUESTIONS UNDER CABINET PROCEDURE 10.7

A. Councillor Bokor – Energy Efficiency, Council Owned Buildings

“Can the Leader please update us with where we are in making Council owned buildings, such as Southfields council offices, energy efficient? This was an ambition of the previous administration & as yet, still nothing has happened by the new administration. By that I mean solar panels for renewable energy, not just putting LED

lights bulbs in!! If that idea is no longer viable, how much further is the Conservative's second idea of selling Southfields as is & using the money to build new energy efficient offices on the adjacent council owned car park, in front of Loughborough Police station? I think Labour mentioned this in their recent election manifesto, as just a "vanity project" of the Conservatives. At some point the new administration needs to lead the Borough (by example) in making major energy savings in its own use of energy."

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

Officers instructed consultants to evaluate various options available to the Council regarding office accommodation. These include the potential to build new offices, remain in the current buildings and to purchase and refit new accommodation, including the installation of carbon reduction measures. The report was received by officers on 4 October and will be evaluated. On evaluating the options, officers will have questions that require further clarification in order to gain a more complete view of the options. This will enable more informed options to be prepared and officers will then be able to advise Cabinet on the best course of action to move forward on the shared ambition of net zero and the cost efficient use/operation of space in the coming few months.

B. Councillor Bokor – Solar and Wind Power, Council Owned Land

"Will the Leader please confirm how far his Labour project to invest in new solar and wind power on council owned land has progressed? I ask as when the Conservatives tried to do this on land next to the new cemetery in Loughborough, they found that the receiving nation grid (Western Power) was full. So what other council owned land is available to achieve this Labour/Green ambition & where?"

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

The Council's large landholdings are few, especially those that would be beneficial in the implementation of large-scale renewable energy projects. The site at Little Moor Lane, a former landfill, was the most obvious choice but the Council has been informed by Western Power that the upstream grid capacity required to accept the large scale generation that the site would provide will not be in place until after 2032. At present, the Council owns no other large land parcels that would be practical in the delivery of these types of projects. However, the Council has begun early conversations with another Leicestershire District Council to explore if collaboration is possible should an appropriate project and site be found, subject to financial viability.

C. Councillor Baines – Balancing Council's Budget

"Given Labour's desire not to use reserves but also to deliver a full suite of public services, how does Labour propose to balance the Council's budget?"

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

The development of the draft budget will broadly follow the timetable as used in previous years. Options for changes to both costs and revenues will be considered

and reflected within the draft budget reports due to be presented at the December Cabinet meeting. If approved by Cabinet then proposals, as may be amended, will be circulated for wider consultation in line with historical custom and practice.

35. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Considered, a report of the Director Commercial and Economic Development to consider a Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030 and Climate Change Strategy Action Plan 2023-2030 (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Seaton, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED

1. that the Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030, contained in Appendix A to the report, be approved;
2. that the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan 2023-2030, contained in Appendix B to the report, be approved;
3. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Commercial and Economic Development, in consultation with the Lead Member for Climate Action, Net Zero, Property and Assets, to review and update the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan via the Climate Action Board.

Reasons

1. To enable the approval of a Climate Change Strategy that reflects the overall strategic direction of the Council in relation to its Climate Change commitment.
2. To enable actions for managing the Council's impact on Climate Change to be progressed.
3. To enable the Strategy and Action Plan to be kept up to date and amendments to be made as necessary to reflect changing circumstances, opportunities, and Council priorities.

36. REVIEW OF THE PLANNING ENFORCEMENT PLAN

Considered, a report of the Head of Planning and Growth to consider a revised Planning Enforcement Plan (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Seaton, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED

1. that the Planning Enforcement Plan, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
2. that delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Planning, to make minor amendments to the Planning Enforcement Plan.

Reasons

1. To ensure there is an up to date plan to guide planning enforcement investigations that dovetails with Corporate Policy and complies with the National Planning Policy Framework and encompass the recommendations made by the Planning Officers Society (POSe) during the recent independent review of the service.
2. To ensure if there are any minor amendments required to align the Plan with changes to Government policy these can be undertaken promptly.

37. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

Considered, a report of the Head of Planning and Growth and the Head of Governance and Human Resources to consider changes to the Constitution relating to procedures for dealing with planning applications and other planning matters, and to the composition of the Audit Committee, for recommendation to Council (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Seaton, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED

1. that it **be recommended to Council** that the changes to the Constitution set out in Appendix A to the report be made with effect from 1st December 2023 and that the Monitoring Officer be given delegated authority to make any further consequential changes that arise elsewhere in the Constitution, subject to the following amendment to Appendix A (shown underlined):

II. Delegation of Council Functions to the Head of Planning and Growth

Proposed new paragraph "To determine planning applications with a resolution from the Plans Committee to grant planning permission subject to S106 legal agreement where that legal agreement has not been signed by a date specified in a committee resolution or date otherwise agreed with the applicant, in consultation with the Chair of Plans Committee."

2. that it **be recommended to Council** that the composition of the Audit Committee, set out in section 12.3 of the Constitution, be changed from one independent person to two independent members of the Audit Committee.

Reasons

1. To implement improvements to procedures for dealing with planning applications and other planning matters following an independent service review.
2. To enable the authority to meet the best practice set down by CIPFA the constitution of the authority needs to be amended to enable the committee to appoint two co-opted independent members.

NOTES:

1. The following officers listed as present attended this meeting virtually: Director Commercial and Economic Development, Head of Planning and Growth, Team Leader Planning Enforcement. The remaining officers listed as present attended in person.
2. The decisions in these minutes not in the form of recommendations to Council will come into effect at noon on Friday, 20th October 2023 unless called in under Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 11.7. Decisions in the form of recommendations to Council are not subject to call in.
3. No reference may be made to these minutes at the next available Ordinary Council meeting unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on Friday, 20th October 2023.
4. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Cabinet.