

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Full Council** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY on Tuesday, 12 December 2023 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor C Brooks (Chair)
Councillor J Hall (Vice-Chair)

Councillor N Allen, Councillor A Brazier, Councillor L Brazier, Councillor I Brown, Councillor R Cozens, Councillor S Crosby, Councillor A Freeman, Councillor P Harris, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor J Kellas, Councillor J Lee, Councillor K Melton, Councillor S Michael, Councillor D Moore, Councillor E Oldham, Councillor P Peacock, Councillor C Penny, Councillor M Pringle, Councillor P Rainbow, Councillor K Roberts, Councillor S Saddington, Councillor T Smith, Councillor M Shakeshaft, Councillor M Spoor, Councillor P Taylor, Councillor L Tift, Councillor T Thompson, Councillor T Wendels and Councillor T Wildgust

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor A Amer, Councillor L Dales, Councillor D Darby, Councillor P Farmer, Councillor S Forde, Councillor R Holloway and Councillor N Ross

44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor P Harris declared an Other Registerable Interest regarding the Air & Space Institute (ASI) as he was an employer for engineering.

NOTED the interests declared as above and shown in the schedule circulated at the meeting.

45 NOTIFICATION TO THOSE PRESENT THAT THE MEETING WILL BE RECORDED AND STREAMED ONLINE

The Chair advised the Council that the meeting was being recorded and streamed online in accordance with the usual practice.

46 MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2023

AGREED that that minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

47 COMMUNICATIONS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, LEADER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR PORTFOLIO HOLDERS MAY WISH TO LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL

The Chair announced that due to the season of peace and good will a buffet had been provided after the Council meeting for Members and employees. A raffle had also been organised and tickets were on sale, the proceeds would support the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance.

The Leader briefed Members on the significant increase of the Internal Drainage Board Levies. He commented that the Internal Drainage Board played a vital role in our communities and for the economy. They protected land, operated pumping stations and maintained water courses. The Internal Drainage Board were funded by a levy charge through Councils in their geographical boundary. Newark & Sherwood District had two internal drainage boards, Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board and Upper Witham Drainage Board. The levy charge for 2023/24 was reported to be £950,000 an increase of £269,000 from the previous year, this would be added to Council budgets in the absence of support from the Government. The level of the increase was not sustainable and there were a number of Councils nationally that were experiencing similar and worse increases for example East Lindsey District Council, who had been reported as the worse affected Council with a total bill of £4.9m. In 2023/24 the fifteen most affected Councils including Newark & Sherwood would receive a one off funding to cover 90% of the costs which would be approx. £239,069. This amount did not cover the ongoing rising costs to be funded by Council Tax increases. Up until 2013/14 the costs were funded by the Government through the Revenue Support Grant, since 2013/14 the Revenue Support Grant had been reduced each year by the Government to the extent that it was non-existent. With no Revenue Support grant the burden of funding fell on the Council's General Fund. The LGA had set up a special interest group for all Councils affected and had asked them to lobby the Government regarding how the Internal Drainage Boards were funded, either by direct funding through the Government or through a formal grant to the Council. Newark & Sherwood was one of the first fifteen Councils to support this special interest group. The special interest group had so far written to the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, which had to date refused to help Councils in 2024/25. It had now resolved to write to the Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer and all MPs and the Leader was actively involved in lobbying. Councillor Cozens would be attending a meeting with internal Ministers at Westminster in the New Year to put the Council's case forward. Members were urged to ask their MPs to support this work.

On the 20 November 2023 the Council was awarded the Levelling Up grant for £20m for Ollerton and Clipstone, for the levelling up part 3. A number of projects were reported to be undertaken in two of the Council's neglected areas.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing informed Council of the good news story from the Council's ICT Business Unit. ICT employees had joined him in London on 8 December 2023 and had attended an award event for the User Experience Project of the Year award. The Council had not won the award but had enjoyed a good award ceremony evening. Partnership working within ICT had taken place with Lincoln City Council.

48 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCIL

In accordance with Rule No. 3.3.3 one question had been submitted by a Member to the Council. Details of the question put forward and the response given by Councillor P Taylor are attached as Appendix A to the minutes.

49 COMMUNITY PLAN 2023 – 2027

The Council considered the joint report of the Chief Executive and Director – Customer Services & Organisational Development which sought approval for the Community Plan to be implemented for the period 2023 – 2027.

AGREED (with 20 votes For and 12 Abstentions) that the Council approve the Community Plan to be implemented for the period 2023 – 2027.

50 PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2024/25

The Council considered the report of the Assistant Director – Legal & Democratic Services which sought to approve the Schedule of Meetings for the period May 2024 to May 2025.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Council has a full schedule of meetings in place for 2024/25 Municipal Year.

51 LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2024/25

The Council considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive, Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer, which sought to confirm the continuation of the Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 with minor changes in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Department for Works and Pensions.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Council continues to adopt the existing Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for all potential claimants for the financial year 2024/25 and uprates the applicable amounts, premiums, state benefits and disregard criteria in accordance with the annual uprating amounts applied by the Departments for Works & Pensions.

52 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2023/24

The Council considered the report of the Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer, which provided an update on the Council’s treasury activity and prudential indicators for the first half of 2023/24. This was reported to the Audit & Governance Committee on the 22 November 2023.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Full Council note:

(a) the treasury management activity; and

(b) the Prudential Indicators detailed in Section 6 & 7 of the report.

53 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2024 - 2029

The Council considered the report of the Director – Communities & Environment, which sought adoption by Full Council following an amended Statement of Licensing Policy receiving approval from the Licensing Committee after a six-week consultation period.

AGREED (unanimously) that Full Council adopt the revised Statement of Licensing Policy 2024-2029 in order to allow licensing decisions to be made.

54 AMENDED ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT - SUBMISSION

The Council considered the report of the Director – Planning & Growth, which presented the Council with an Overview of the representations received following the publication of the Amended Allocations & Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) and to set before Council modifications which sought to address the issues raised by the representations. Approval was sought from Council to submit to the Secretary of State for examination the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD as amended by proposed modifications. Approval was also sought from the Council to accept the Planning Inspectors recommendations as binding and approval was sought for delegated authority to make any further minor amendments.

The Director – Planning & Growth had provided a Report Addendum, which as noted at paragraph 2.31 of the main report, Officers were currently considering the results of a further noise assessment in relation to Old Stable Yard, Winthorpe Road (site NUA/GRT/12). The addendum report addressed that issue. The revised report recommendations contained in the addendum report took into account the proposals within the additional paper and replaced those in the main report.

Councillor M Spors proposed and Councillor P Peacock seconded and in accordance with Rule 5.4 a recorded vote was requested and taken as follows:

Councillor	Vote
Neil Allen	Abstention
Adrian Amer	Apology
Alice Brazier	For
Lee Brazier	For
Celia Brooks	For
Irene Brown	For
Rowan Cozens	For
Susan Crosby	For
Linda Dales	Apology
Debbie Darby	Apology
Phil Farmer	Apology
Simon Forde	Apology
Andy Freeman	For
Jean Hall	Abstention
Peter Harris	For
Simon Haynes	Abstention
Rhona Holloway	Apology
Roger Jackson	For
Jack Kellas	Abstention
Johno Lee	Against
Keith Melton	For

Sylvia Michael	For
David Moore	For
Emma Oldham	Abstention
Paul Peacock	For
Claire Penny	For
Mike Pringle	For
Penny Rainbow	For
Karen Roberts	For
Neil Ross	Apology
Susan Saddington	Abstention
Maurice Shakeshaft	For
Tom Smith	For
Matthew Spoons	For
Paul Taylor	For
Tina Thompson	
Linda Tift	Had left the meeting
Tim Wendels	For
Tim Wildgust	For

AGREED (with 23 votes For, 1 vote Against and 6 Abstentions) that:

- (a) the contents of the report and the Addendum Report be noted;
- (b) the DPD as amended by the proposals contained within Appendix B of the main report is agreed by Council;
- (c) that following a period to allow the promoters of site NUA/GRT/12 to make representations on the latest evidence in relation to their site that the DPD with the proposed modifications in Appendix B of the main report and at 3.1 of the Addendum Report is submitted for examination.
- (d) when asked the District Council agree to accept a binding report from the Inspector; and
- (e) the Director - Planning & Growth be given delegated authority to propose amendments to the DPD following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Economic Growth and the Planning Policy Board in accordance with paragraph 3.4 of the main report.

55 MINUTES FOR NOTING

56 CABINET - 31 OCTOBER 2023

Minute No. 56 – Revisions to the Community Grant Scheme (Key Decision)

Councillor R Jackson raised concerns regarding comments made regarding transparency in relation to the new rules of the community grant scheme. He commented that by taking away all checks and balances from Members, had put

pressure on Officers to scrutinise the grant applications being submitted. By changing the scheme to allow up to £20,000 of funding for one application, would drain the scheme, with five applications and only large community groups would have the capacity and the schemes of that size and funding to match it. Thirty-two local communities had benefitted from the community grant scheme last year. The community grant scheme was established to allow small precepting Parish Councils and community groups to benefit from low-cost schemes which had long-term benefits to the local community. It was felt that that had been completely taken away, as there was no Member or Parish Council involvement at all. It had been suggested that the Parish Council increased their precept, which was considered a labour policy to tax people. He asked Councillor Taylor to write to the Chief Executive and apologise to the Officers for his comments.

Councillor J Lee commented that he felt that Members had been taken out of the equation and asked the Portfolio Holder to look at the model used by Nottinghamshire County Council.

Councillor P Peacock commented that lots of good courses had been supported over the years through the community grant scheme. The scheme had been changed over many years to see if the Council could achieve better results. The response was that Parish Council could support those schemes and get further down to grass roots and work through community and sports groups. Council staff had embraced the new scheme and the decision had been made and applications had been submitted for this phase and if it was considered that the system was not working the process could be changed.

57 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 9 NOVEMBER 2023

58 PLANNING COMMITTEE - 23 NOVEMBER 2023

59 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 22 NOVEMBER 2023

60 GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE - 30 NOVEMBER 2023

60a LICENSING COMMITTEE - 30 NOVEMBER 2023

60b POLICY & PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE - 4 DECEMBER 2023

Meeting closed at 7.56 pm.

Chair