

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held at The Council Chamber, The Symington Building,
Adam & Eve Street, Market Harborough, LE16 7AG

Monday 21st February 2022

commencing at 8.36 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Bannister (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Ackerley, Bateman, Beadle, Dr Bremner, Burrell, Champion, Critchley, Dann, Dunton, Elliott, Fosker, Galton, Golding, Graves, Hallam, Hollick, James, Johnson, King, Knowles, Mahal, Modha, Nunn, Mrs Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Sarfas, Mrs Simpson, Whelband and Mrs Wood

Officers present: D. Atkinson, L. Elliott, J. Evans, S. Green, S. Hamilton, C. Mason and B. Morris

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Bannister announced that he was very proud to be present at the celebrations for the retirement of the Chief Executive, Norman Proudfoot, who provided great services to the community in his 25 years at Harborough District Council, ably led by the Leader.

DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Declarations of interests were made by Councillors Mrs Page, Galton, King, Bannister and Champion as they are also County Councillors.

Councillor Graves declared an interest in the Chief Officers Pay Statement as UNISON is mentioned and he is a member of UNISON.

MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Bannister, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on the 13th December 2021 be received and adopted.

REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader preceded his report by wishing Her Majesty the Queen a safe recovery from Covid.

Covid-19

Earlier today the Government began to indicate that a further removal of restrictions and regulations regarding Covid-19 is being considered and likely to be actioned shortly, the 'Freedom Day' plan. Personally, I will warmly welcome such a development; it's now time to get on with living our lives, albeit living with Covid, as we do with many, many other infectious conditions.

Part of the reason why the Government is able to make this decision, is in part due to the efforts of everyone across places like the Harborough district. Our health services and volunteers, have managed

to ensure one of the highest vaccinated and boosted populations in the country. Over 217,000 shots of vaccine have been injected via the 1st (90%) 2nd (86%) and 3rd/booster (72.9%) Our thanks to everyone who has worked, and continues to work and/or volunteer, to make this happen and those who work in the front line of health care. But the other reason why the Government needs to make this decision is what I touched on at our meeting in December; that is the ever-increasing mountain of routine backlog; the exponential increase in mental health service demand; along with the impact on development and learning in our younger people. The costs of staying with all these restrictions now far outweigh the benefits that they may bring.

Wherever possible Harborough District Council will continue to work with health and other stakeholders, collaboratively, to do what we can to help tackle these growing issues as well as build back better.

The Queen's Jubilee

At Cabinet on the 7th February I was delighted to be able to announce plans to create a Harborough Platinum Jubilee Community Capital Fund. This will enable local organisations to bid for funding to help secure or develop significant capital assets, across the district, as a lasting commemoration of Her Majesty The Queen's historic 70 year milestone. As outlined in the budget papers, the proposed size of this fund is £700,000, and will be administered by the Cabinet – Grants sub-committee. The final details of this scheme will be agreed by Cabinet in April.

In addition to this we have tree planting, community grants, and a schools' art project are just some of the things being planned to mark the Platinum Jubilee of HRH The Queen later this year.

The Council is working with residents, businesses and local organisations across the district to commemorate The Queen's 70 glorious years on the throne, and has been exploring a number of opportunities.

Villages will be able to apply for grants of £250 towards local projects and events, and there will be matched-funded grants of £500 available for commemorative benches, beacons or other community installations, which celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.

People in the Harborough district will be invited to help plant trees across the district – including Queen Elizabeth Acer trees.

The Council is also inviting secondary schools to produce artwork, celebrating each decade of the Queen's reign, that are set to be installed in locations in the town.

Across the UK and Commonwealth, events and activities are being planned to celebrate the Jubilee with a special extended national bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2 to Sunday 5 June 2022.

The Council will also be asking people to share their memories, photos or experiences of seeing or meeting The Queen, or what Her Majesty means to local people using the Twitter hashtag #JubileeHarborough.

Anyone planning street parties should complete a temporary event notice at www.harborough.gov.uk/event-toolkit

Anyone who has ideas they would like to put forward can contact the Council at www.harborough.gov.uk/contact

Economic Growth and Recovery

As I have highlighted previously, there is substantial activity by the Council in developing and continuing to roll out funding to support our local economy and help it recover from the impact of the various shutdowns and restrictions brought about by the pandemic. This support is vital to our thousands of SMEs and micro-businesses, which are the bedrock of the Harborough District economy and prosperity. I am grateful for the team supplying me with the latest update:-

- **HGV / Commercial Drivers support scheme** this was established using the discretionary Government Wider Business Support scheme to encourage local residents to take up

employment to support the national shortage of drivers – we have so far funded 17 local people, a number of whom were either unemployed or in low-paid employment.

- **Harborough District Shop Front Enhancement Scheme** – 40 local retailers across the District have now received grants of up to £3,000 to improve their shop frontages, and we are still considering a further 30 applications. The scheme also includes supporting businesses through the planning process and facilitating meetings between tenants and landlords.
- **Build Back Better themed ARG grants** – over the last 6 months, we were able to use the ARG discretionary grants to promote 3 proactive grant schemes to help our local business grow and diversify in light of the pandemic. 204 businesses have successfully been awarded grants of up to £5,000 to deliver projects in the following three themes; Go Green – 38 grants, Go Digital – 97 grants and Innovation – 69 grants. However, particularly, since the New Year, when there were growing concerns about the Omicron Covid variant, we have also awarded 227 grants Business Survival themed grants, to help safeguard the future viability of these businesses.
- **Harborough Business Centres** – following the significant downturn in occupancy associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, and the increased focus on home-working, work to recruit new tenants at the Harborough Innovation Centre is starting to make an impact, with occupancy having increased to 80%, (40 rooms now in use), which is up from 72% in September 2021. Work is ongoing to attract tenants to the Harborough Grow-on Centre, with 5 of the 16 office suites now leased, which is up from one office in 2020.
- **Harborough Jobs initiatives** – through this work we supports businesses to help fill the skills gap at a local level, we promote the benefits of taking on apprentices, we promote a local jobs listings, run via the Leicestershire Employment Hub and we have recently launched a monthly drop-in Job Club in Lutterworth, where we help co-ordinate support from a range of agencies for local residents who are looking for work or careers advice. These monthly sessions are growing in popularity each time, as publicity and word of mouth increase.
- **Harborough Jobs Week** - building on the experience and success of last year's event, we are starting to plan a second Harborough Jobs Week, during April this year, when we hope to offer a Jobs Fair event, working with local employers and partners, such as Job Centre Plus, the National Careers Service and others.
- **Harborough Go Green Business Convention** – in order to help local businesses understand what they can do become more sustainable and greener, we are organising the Harborough Go Green Business Convention as a one day event on Monday 21 March at the Harborough Grow-on Centre. The event will incorporate a keynote speech from Neil O'Brien OBE MP, on Government policies and support for businesses to become more sustainable and reduce their carbon emissions, and valuable input from a range of partners, and is free and open to all businesses within the Harborough District.
- **Reinstating Major Events** – following the success of the pre-Christmas events and the recent Leicester Comedy Festival, Harborough Big Weekend, in welcoming people back to our town centres, we are working with a range of partners to ensure the reinstatement and delivery of key town centres events, including the Market Harborough Classic Car Show and the Harborough Food and Drink Festival for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic. This involves engagement with local retailers, hospitality businesses, representatives of voluntary groups and churches and specialist event management businesses to maximise the benefit to local businesses, community and the Council.
- **Harborough District Business Awards** - we are supporting the second edition of the Harborough District Business Awards on 11 March 2022, to recognise and showcase the many excellent local businesses within the District.
- **Small business support package with FSB** - Harborough District Council is the first local authority in Leicestershire to offer independent businesses, or those who are self-employed, one-year's free membership of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). Applications are

being offered on a 'first come, first served' basis. Up to 60 businesses will be able to access their free first year of FSB membership. Once businesses become members, they can access the full package of business support to help them plan their recovery, as well as manage HR issues and legal obligations, alongside 300 other FSB members in the district. Interested businesses can email business@harborough.gov.uk with their business name, address and contact details.

As colleagues can see from this update, district council's like Harborough can play a critical role in supporting their local economies; it's a lot more than just shopping centres.

Greener and Cleaner

As part of my regular feature about how we are working to make Harborough a cleaner and greener place:-

- EV Charging Points

There will soon be more places to top up electric vehicles with the installation of more charge-up points in the Harborough district.

Ten more electric vehicle charging points, with associated bays, will be introduced over the coming weeks after Harborough District Council was successful in securing Government funding to assist residents without off-street parking.

The charge points will be installed, in partnership with EB Charging, in Doddridge Road, St Mary's West, and Angel Street car parks in Market Harborough – all chosen as they are a short distance from homes without off-street parking. Overnight parking is free at Council-owned car parks from 6pm to 7am.

75 per cent of the funding for the £73,000 project is from Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), with the rest coming from the Council and partners, including nearly £12,000 from EB Charging.

The Council has previously introduced electric charging points in Orchard Road, Broughton Astley, School Road, Kibworth Beauchamp, Station Road, Lutterworth, the Commons, Market Harborough, as well as Harborough Innovation Centre and the Grow on Centre. There are also other public charge points across the district.

According to the latest government data there are nearly 250 electric cars registered in Harborough District, but that figure is rising significantly, with some estimates predicting an increase to around 6,000 electric cars by 2025. The number of charge-ups at the Council's electric points have also increased by over 10 times in the last three years [from 181 to 2036], with a carbon saving of nearly 9,000kg. Also, more than one in four new cars sold in December was electric.

It will cost around 34p per kilowatt to charge vehicles, approximately £2.38 for an hour from a seven kilowatt charger, dependent on the vehicle. The charge-up points are expected to be ready to use in March.

Find out more about local electric charge-up points at www.harborough.gov.uk/evehicles

Levelling Up, devolution and devo deals

Since we last met in December, the Government has published earlier this month its much awaited Levelling Up White Paper.

There is much in this that I welcome, especially the opportunity that handing the UKSPF to districts like Harborough could mean in the future. We are working with the District Councils Network to help our understanding of what the 12 missions of the White Paper mean, and how as a district Council we can help to deliver on the key levelling up objectives.

In addition, we are aware that Leicestershire County Council has been listed as one of the 9 pathfinder authorities for a Devo deal; but as yet there has been no clarification from the County Council aside from to say dialogue between their officials and dept officials was occurring shortly.

What the White Paper is very clear about is that Districts cannot block or stop any devo deal from happening and it's then ambiguous what our role is in any future governance model of a devo deal, depending on what level of devo is being sought.

Unmet Housing need

Later this week is the next meeting of the MAG committee and I expect to hear more about Leicester's unmet housing need and the proposed way forward. On this issue, before Christmas, I met with our 3 Harborough MPs. The upshot of these discussions, is that I am optimistic that our MPs now get the seriousness of the situation, and the challenge that is fast approaching us and other Leicestershire district council colleagues around the county. I have impressed on them that action needs to be taken very quickly now by the Government to abolish duty to co-operate or put the City planning under special measures.

A5 Strategic Partnership

A week or so ago also marked the successful outcome of work that I have undertaken as the current Chair of the A5 Partnership. Some of you will be aware that major issues cropped up with funding and delays to previously approved schemes last year. So in January, I chaired a round-table meeting of the 16 partner Council reps with a number of the MPs from along the A5 – both the West and East Midlands, Midlands Connect and Leics County Council. The purpose of this meeting was to consider how best to lobby DfT, Treasury and other key government decision makers to ensure that funding for major schemes to the A5 as previously promised in the RIS2 Highways England programme (20-25), plus some extra ones were put in for (25-30) RIS3 and not withdrawn. The result is an agreed communique is being sent to the Minister along with the appointment of Dr Luke MP as the co-ordinating MP in Parliament for the other A5 MPs. As a result of our meeting a bid has been made for a Westminster Hall debate in early March which will really raise this up the agenda and help to get these essential works back in the funding programme. Other lobbying actions are being planned for in the future.

Finally, I'd like to extend my sincere good wishes to our retiring Chief Executive, Norman Proudfoot and thank him for his 25 years of service with Harborough District Council.

Comments on the Leader's report

Councillor Knowles asked a number of questions and commented as follows :-

1. A request for the Leaders report to be sent out to Members much earlier.
2. Covid 19 situation - it is very encouraging to see more of a positive situation in relation to Covid, and expressed his gratitude to everyone involved in the NHS and those involved in the care provided to communities, particularly in relation to the provision of vaccinations. He asked whether the Leader would agree to consider the awarding of the Citizens Cup by the Authority collectively

to the NHS and care workers, who have done so much for the whole community during the Covid period, as a fitting tribute.

3. Harborough Platinum Jubilee Community Capital Fund – where is the £700,000 coming from ? He requested that Officers be encouraged to work closely with businesses across the Harborough District to promote and get involved in special events to celebrate the Jubilee. He also requested that the Council actively promotes ways that the public and communities can get involved in activities and provides all the necessary information such as tree planting for the Queen, and information and costs in relation to road closures for street parties.
4. HGV / Commercial Drivers support scheme – congratulations to the Council on a wonderful job.
5. Harborough Business Centres – requested that a comprehensive report be brought to Council to details what the Centres can provide to the wider community in the Harborough District.
6. Small business support package with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) – what is the cost and where will the money come from for the membership of the FSB for the 60 SME's and can any additional SME's be helped ?
7. Electric Vehicle charging points – are there any plans to commence discussions with the Council's wide range of partners, e.g waste partners to encourage the switching over to electric vehicles ?
8. Levelling Up, devolution and devo deals – when will a report be made available to Councillors ?

In relation to the issue of 'Unmet Housing need', Councillor Galton stated that he was pleased to note that the Leader had met with three MP's and that the seriousness of the situation is now understood, however he asked what the next steps would now be ? He also asked the Leader what would achieved and how it would help by requesting that action needs to be taken very quickly by the Government to abolish duty to co-operate or put the City planning under special measures – and whether there is any likelihood of this taking place ?

Councillor Johnson asked whether the Council is inviting all secondary schools in the District to provide artwork as part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations ? Also in relation to the Greener and Cleaner item, she asked that awareness of the access needs for members of the community to be considered and to ensure that adequate charging points are available and can be accessed by everyone, including those people with mobility and dexterity issues.

Councillor Mrs Page asked whether the Harborough Platinum Jubilee Community Capital Fund of £700,000 is a grant or is it matched-funding ? In relation to the District Shopfront Enhancement scheme, is this grant still available ? She commented that businesses are very pleased with the apprenticeship scheme. In relation to the A5 partnership, she was encouraged by the appointment of Dr Luke and asked whether a copy of the letter could be circulated to Councillors.

Councillor Graves asked whether the charging points are the rapid ones. Also in relation to the proposed relaxation by the government regarding Covid 19, has the Council pre-prepared a procedure for when a staff member tests positive for Covid ?

Councillor James asked whether events for the Queens Jubilee that involve road closures would qualify for funding ?

Leader's response

The Leader responded that road closures are a function of the County Council who have already announced that they are waiving road closure charges, and this information has already been sent out to Members and the public. Funding for schemes is available via the Community Fund as matched funding.

The charging points are the fast charging points.

In relation to the unmet housing need, the Leader has made the point to the MAG that HDC will not just accept a substantial amount of housing from Leicester, due to the government imposed uplift of 35% to the requirements for housing in the city. If Leicester City does not build up, then the only other alternative under the duty to cooperate is for HDC to cooperate to solve the problem, which would mean that all of the seven districts would need to develop a proposed distribution for the potential unmet need, hence the meeting with the MP's.

In relation to the apprenticeship scheme, money is available from the government.

With regards to the A5 partnership, he anticipates that the letter can be circulated and will request this information link from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, as the holding authority.

In response to the query from Cllr Knowles regarding the membership fee of the FSB, officers will provide this information.

Councillor King also asked officers to provide information regarding secondary schools and clarify the points relating to the agility of residents in using and designing charging points raised by Cllr Johnson.

In relation to the suggestion from Cllr Knowles regarding the Citizens Cup, Councillor Knowles advised that it was in the museum and provided details of who recently had received this. The Leader commented that this would be looked into.

In relation to 'Levelling – up' an all Member briefing will take place on the 11th March.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE PUBLIC

The following questions were submitted by Mr David Campbell-Kelly of Yew Tree Close, Willoughby Waterleys :

Question 1

- 1. My name is David Campbell-Kelly, a resident for more than 30 years of Willoughby Waterleys, located in Dunton Ward. I am Chair of the Willoughby Waterleys Residents Association (WWRA) and this question is submitted by WWRA on behalf of its members, who are the vast majority of residents of Willoughby Waterleys.*

The residents of Willoughby have been monitoring the progression of strategic planning in the County since the approval of the Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan and formed the WWRA as a result. In particular, WWRA is concerned that unsustainable development is being progressed by the Authorities in the County and it has positively engaged in all relevant consultations. It has also made substantive and credible suggestions for an alternative solution to the problem of future strategic development in the County.

WWRA's latest concern relates to HDC being a signatory to the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) for Strategic Warehousing. We had hoped to be able to speak on this matter in the previous adjourned meeting, but we were prevented from doing so, by the acting Monitoring Officer sighting 170 years old case law which is apparently at odds with the HDC constitution. We would however like to highlight some points that may not have been picked up in the discussion by members.

WWRA puts on record its acknowledgement that HDC has a “Duty to Cooperate” with adjoining Authorities, but that does not preclude the need for HDC to ensure that any SoCG is based on sound evidence.

Under this Duty to Cooperate, the SoCG is to be approved by all Authorities in the County and as noted in paragraph 3.1 of the SoCG, the “most up to date evidence is set out in the Warehousing and Logistics in Leicester and Leicestershire Managing Growth and change” report prepared in April 2021. This report is 209 pages long and given the potential significant impact on The District, it is important that Members appreciate the details of its contents. WWRA’s concerns, primarily revolve around this report.

- 1. Timing. Firstly, it is noted that the supply and demand details are as at 31st March 2020. Unfortunate timing, with the pandemic about to start. Whilst the report identifies a significantly increased demand during the early stages of the pandemic, the extent of its impact needs to be more fully assessed, before unrealistic extrapolation of increased demand is fed through to future demand requirements. Secondly, the report refers to the possible implications of Brexit. These impacts are also still to be fully understood and properly assessed and its effects are therefore not known. The final concern on timing, is the subsequent announcement of Freeport status to East Midlands Airport. This will likely have an impact on future demand and more particularly LOCATION for Strategic Warehousing, which because of timing has not been considered by the report.*
- 2. Transparency. The Warehousing report has NOT been subject to any opportunity for public scrutiny. Indeed, the stakeholders approached by the report’s authors are Developers, Planning Consultants, Agents and Warehousing Associations. ALL have vested interests to justify as high a need as possible. In addition, there has also been no opportunity for any public consultation into the preparation of another county-wide SoCG.*
- 3. Accuracy. It is troubling to note that a number of mathematical and numerical errors have been identified in the report and the implications of those errors need to be fully assessed and a more detailed interrogation of the report needs to be undertaken to ensure there are not even more. Some of the errors found are in the first two tables in the Executive Summary of the report and worryingly one of these errors has been repeated in the SoCG before Members tonight for approval, in Table 2. Errors were also found in Table 26 (p.100 of the report) in both column 1 and column 3. Questions must therefore be raised about the accuracy of other information within the report and the knock-on impact of those errors into the details of the stated supply and demand.*

WWRA’s concerns also revolve around some of the assumptions made within the report to identify future demand and supply.

- 1. There is an assumption that future Strategic Logistics for the period up to 2041 will be based on 43% rail related and 57% road related. There is NO substantive justification why this split is appropriate other than it is mid-way between two notional positions.*
- 2. Members should be aware that this report only deals with LARGE warehouses, that is over 100,000 sq.ft. Supply of smaller units (if you can call this small!) is on top of the demand outlined.*
- 3. The demand figure proposed is at the higher end of the models tested and assumes that 70% of existing Logistics development is replaced within 30 years, ON OTHER NEW SITES, no doubt Greenfield, and not redeveloped on the existing sites.*

4. *The report suggests that an additional five-year supply is provided over and above the demand required. In fact, it appears that the margin for flexibility is not this, but it is a 25% addition of total requirement, at any given point in time.*

5. *The allocation of demand over time is notional and is no more than an equal demand expected every 5 years. How can this be realistic?*

The SoCG is an important document and whilst neither it, nor the report, identifies specific sites for allocation, the report does identify a significant "Area of Opportunity" to the east of the M1 between Leicester and Lutterworth (within Harborough District) for future strategic logistics development. Given that the report informs the SoCG, once this is approved, the other Authorities through the Members Advisory Group will expect HDC to honour that commitment and strategic warehousing will be expected to be provided by Harborough in those areas. The significance of this point did not appear to be acknowledged by The Cabinet at their meeting in November.

Members should note that based on the assumptions within the report there is already sufficient road reliant Logistics consented and allocated within Leicestershire, for the period up to 2041. The further need reported as being required, is just the questionable margin of flexibility. For rail reliant Logistics, the need up to 2041 can be met by the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange, which is currently the subject of public consultation. Justification for further additional strategic warehousing is therefore very weak.

The report highlights that an additional 2,572,000 sq. metres (that is over 27,000,000 sq.ft) is required by 2041. There are currently 2.3 million sq. metres of Strategic Warehousing in Leicestershire. That is an increase of 111% in 20 years a sobering thought, given the current high levels of supply already evident in the County.

Given the concerns and inaccuracies raised, it would seem sensible that this item be further considered and that the concerns raised, be investigated. We ask therefore in the wake of further information now provided, would members be prepared to revisit the decision made in the adjourned meeting (including the implication of any numerical errors) and the matter brought back to Full Council ?

Supplementary question:

1.a. I take it that it will not be put back to Council to consider my request to reconsider the decision in the adjourned meeting ?

Question 2

2. *My name is David Campbell-Kelly, a resident for more than 30 years of Willoughby Waterleys, located in Dunton Ward. I am Chair of the Willoughby Waterleys Residents Association (WWRA) and this question is submitted by WWRA on behalf of its members, who are the vast majority of residents of Willoughby Waterleys.*

The residents of Willoughby have been monitoring the progression of strategic planning in the County since the approval of the Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan and formed the WWRA as a result. In particular, WWRA is concerned that unsustainable development is being progressed by the Authorities in the County and it has positively engaged in all relevant consultations. It has also made substantive and credible suggestions for an alternative solution to the problem of future strategic development in the County.

In addition to concerns over the Statement of Common Ground for Strategic Warehousing, WWRA has concerns over HDC being a signatory to the South Leicestershire Plan Making Statement of Common Ground (SoCG). WWRA puts on record its acknowledgement that HDC has a "Duty to Cooperate" with adjoining Authorities.

This SoCG is seeking to deal with the provision of strategic infrastructure which will be necessary, across Authority boundaries, to ensure that any future strategic development is supported by the appropriate infrastructure and is therefore sustainable.

Members should recognise that sustainability in the future will not necessarily be achieved by the provision of more strategic transport links.

It is our contention that this SoCG has become necessary following Midland Connect's decision to not progress with an A46 Expressway to the south and east of Leicester. In our view, this questions the whole case for strategic development to the south and east of Leicester as outlined in the Strategic Growth Plan. Our alternative strategy recognises this and provides a more sustainable solution.

Paragraph 7 identifies transport connectivity as a key cross boundary issue and para 8 identifies that a consistent and joint evidence base will provide a more robust solution. Para 10 states that a common approach to transport assessment and infrastructure requirements to understand the interrelationships and appropriate cumulative mitigation

Para 11.5 identifies that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan must be supported (by the appropriate) identified strategic infrastructure. Para 11.8 states that a whole plan viability appraisal will be carried out. This is correct and necessary, but as individual Authorities will approve their own Local Plans and own Planning applications, there is the potential that allocations and planning permissions will be granted, without the certainty of the complete and necessary (transport) infrastructure. IT ALL HAS TO HAPPEN OR NONE OF IT DOES!

Therefore, it is fundamental that before any future strategic development in South Leicestershire is allocated or consented, the WHOLE necessary infrastructure should be proven deliverable, viable and funded in ANY of the south Leicestershire Authorities.

WWRA asks Councillors that a recommendation is made to the Members Advisory Group by HDC to elaborate on the need for FULL delivery of infrastructure within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan before ANY strategic development approvals. Under these circumstances, will Councillors please consider a deferral to a decision on approval of the SoCG ?

Supplementary question:

2.a. Are you saying that you do not consider it important that all infrastructure is proven to be deliverable ?

The Leader responded as follows :

1. Statement of Common Ground for Strategic Warehousing identifies this issue as a matter of regional importance and commits the partner authorities to working together to look to find solutions to this issue: it does not commit any partner Council to any specific decisions. The Strategic Warehousing study will form part of the evidence to inform individual Local Plans. Each Local Plan will be subject to the statutory consultation processes, providing the opportunity to comment on evidence base documents.
- 1a. As we have just made a decision, Council is unable to re-consider this for six months.
2. The Statement of Common Ground on South Leicestershire Local Plan Making commits the authorities to work together to develop a joint evidence base to help inform their new Local Plans. Decisions will be taken as part of each Council's Local Plan making process. Each Local

Plan will be subject to the statutory consultation processes, providing the opportunity to comment on evidence base documents.

- 2a. There is a whole plan viability assessment that gets carried out as part of the Local Plan, and as far as I am aware, so in terms of 'can the full delivery of infrastructure in a delivery plan be undertaken before any strategic development approvals?', currently that is not the requirement of a Local Plan. It could be that the legislation changes, or it could be that in the long awaited White Paper on Planning and Infrastructure from the government, we are given some additional powers or new powers in respect of infrastructure and infrastructure funding. It is incredibly frustrating for everyone, including local residents, that the infrastructure delivery is split between a number of different partners in order to deliver.

As the local Planning Authority, we have the short straw in putting that Plan together, but we are not able to ensure that infrastructure gets delivered as and when it needs to. We are quite often in the hands of other partners, regarding roads, utilities and other types of infrastructure providers. It is immensely frustrating, and at the moment we can't because we don't have those powers and the government hasn't enabled us to do that. For a long period of time, as Leader of this Council, I have been lobbying our MP's to give us the powers to enable us to do that. Maybe through a combination of 'Levelling Up' and the White Paper on Planning we may get nearer to be able to do that, and I sincerely hope that we can.

As set out in the Council report it is proposed that the Climate Emergency Action Plan forms part of the Corporate Plan moving forwards and as such will be embedded as part of the Councils vision for the future and its implementation will be monitored as part of the Council performance management process, which includes quarterly updates to the Cabinet and also reporting to the Scrutiny Commission. In addition an inventory of council emissions will be published annually, including information on gas and electricity use in council buildings (scope 1 and 2) and emissions from contracted services (Scope 3). A report on district wide emissions will also be collated from Government data.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS

- i. The following question was submitted by Councillor James to the Leader :

Energy Crisis Action Required

The UK Energy Supply has structural issues, the present structure is not working for either suppliers or their customers. Families are facing financial hardship to meet the cost of energy bills. With the present structural arrangements and cost increases things can only get worse.

Will the Leader tell us if he supports the Local Energy Bill together with the other measures listed below? The Bill seeks to reduce operating costs. It is making its way through Parliament right now and is already backed by many Local Authorities and has cross-party support from Members of Parliament and together with this Bill will the Leader support additional actions that Government could take to help customers even more namely:

To remove VAT and Environmental Taxes from Energy Bills and allocate to general taxation spreading the cost over several years. This could save an additional £250 per annum for the average customer. In this way it is hoped that rises due in April of this year with more rises to come, will be much smaller and in future years as the wholesale prices of energy fall will buy time to eventually recover costs.

The Leader responded as follows :-

The government is providing both general and specific support in respect currently increasing fuel tax increases. The general support is a £200 reduction for all households in the Autumn and a further

£150 reduction for homes in the Council Tax Bands A to D. In respect of the latter, the Council is still waiting for the guidelines for this scheme on how it will operate.

In respect of the Council, the Council of course would support measures that makes life easier for our residents.

Personally, I will support any measure that does introduce genuine competition into the energy generation & supply market, if this is guaranteed to bring/keep down the costs to end users.

Councillor James then asked a supplementary question, as to what support can the Leader and Council give to the suggestion of the industry as well if, for a temporary period, the VAT is taken off and the green levy is taken off until the base price falls, and then it could be paid back ?

Councillor King responded by saying that he would be delighted if the government was willing to reduce VAT on energy, as the Prime Minister did promise to do that in the Brexit referendum. He personally would also be delighted if the 25% cost was removed that is currently added onto energy bills to pay for all the green energy generation schemes that are subsidising the top six energy companies.

ii. The following question was submitted by Councillor Sarfas to the Leader :

Residents are aware of proposals to allocate up to £1 m in funds to Lutterworth Sports Centre. This to be spent on improvements upgrades etc . Assuming that full details of the upgrade proposals will be made public. Will the Leader confirm for the record that HDC will actively encourage consultation with/input from residents on the proposals ?

Councillor King responded as follows :-

Up to £1 million has been approved to spend on the redevelopment of Lutterworth Leisure Centre. In the recent resident engagement exercise, where we received over 450 residents views, we asked about leisure facilities and health and wellbeing. This information will be used to shape the procurement strategy which will allow potential bidders to bid for the redevelopment work on the Leisure centre.

Councillor Sarfas then asked a supplementary question, - can we see the views of what the 450 people said about the Lutterworth Sports Centre and health facilities ?

The Interim Chief Executive responded that the consultation responses in the Corporate Plan are only in regards to the vision, and there are other questions in the consultation yet to be fully analysed and once completed Members will be shown the consultation responses.

iii. The following question was submitted by Councillor Beadle to the Leader :

On 2nd February 2022, Rupert Matthews, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, cut police numbers by 100 officers by abandoning the fully costed proposals of the previous PCC, Lord Willy Bach. These fully costed proposals were to increase police numbers to 2,242 by April this year, with a further increase planned for 2023 which would have raised the total to 2,342 and would have restored local police strength to pre-austerity levels. Willy Bach's final budget was approved on 29th January 2021 and all political parties represented on the Police and Crime Panel backed his approach. The proposal subsequently received a clean bill of health from the Conservative Police Minister, Kit Malthouse.

In his first budget, Mr Matthews increased the band D Council Tax by £10 - the maximum allowed by central government. However, rather than allocating the cash to additional police resources, he has discarded the plan to increase police numbers and has instead decided to transfer the income to reserves - a move that conflicts with established Treasury advise.

What representations has the Leader or relevant portfolio holder made (or propose to make) to Mr Matthews, to convey the message that this is a retrograde step that is in direct conflict with the interests and concerns of Harborough residents ?

Councillor King responded as follows :-

The information that we understand from the Police and Crime Commissioner and released to the public on 2 February 2022 is that the policing budget for 2022-23 was approved by the Police and Crime Panel of the Leicestershire Police area, in order to deliver the improvements to local policing set out in the Police and Crime Plan. We have not been informed of any deviation to this plan or a reduction to police officers within the area.

Specifically the City Council members of the Police and Crime Panel were absent when the vote took place to approve the police and crime plan, and the vote took place without them being present.

Link to the news release:-

[PCC's Budget to deliver more robust policing across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland](#)

Councillor Beadle then asked a supplementary question, 'As Council Leader do you believe it was a good thing for the residents of Harborough that the number of Leicestershire police should be cut by 100 ?

Councillor King responded by stating that he has made representation to the Police and Crime Commission (PCC) to request a meeting, and he is still waiting for that meeting to be arranged with this office. He has discussed the issue with Councillor Whelband who has assured him that no such decision has been made, and once the meeting with the PCC has taken place he will provide a more detailed response.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET

1. South Leicestershire Local Plan Making – Statement of Common Ground

Councillor King introduced the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting on the 10th January 2022.

It was moved by Councillor Bateman, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that the Council becomes a signatory to the Statement of Common Ground (as set out in Appendix A to the report).

2. Shearsby Conservation Area Appraisal

Councillor Bateman introduced the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting on the 7th February 2022.

It was moved by Councillor Bateman, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that the Local List of Non-Designated Heritage Assets be adopted.

3. Local List of Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Councillor Bateman introduced the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting on the 7th February 2022.

It was moved by Councillor Bateman, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that the Local List of Non-Designated Heritage Assets be adopted.

4. Corporate Plan 2022/23 and Beyond

Councillor Dann introduced the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting on the 7th February 2022.

It was moved by Councillor Dann, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that the Corporate Plan as attached at Appendix A be adopted.

5. Appointment of Statutory Officers

The Interim Chief Executive and Interim Monitoring Officer left the meeting for consideration of this item.

Councillor King introduced the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting on the 7th February 2022, and a comprehensive debate took place.

Councillor Fosker proposed an amendment to delete Recommendation 4 To agree the principle of potentially sharing chief officers including Statutory Officers with other Local Authorities, which was seconded by Councillor Mrs Simpson.

The substantive Motion as detailed in 1 to 3 above was then discussed.

Councillor King proposed a closure motion, seconded by Councillor Hallam that Council proceed to the next item of business. The Chairman felt that the item had been sufficiently discussed.

The closure motion, proposed by Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Hallam was passed.

The substantive motion, proposed by Councillor Fosker, seconded by Councillor Mrs Simpson was lost.

It was moved by Councillor Bateman, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) **The Deputy Chief Executive, Elizabeth Elliott, be appointed into the post of interim Chief Executive from the 1st March 2022, and the roles of Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer be undertaken for an interim period of up to 6 months.**
- (ii) **Option 2 be considered on the permanent recruitment to the vacant Chief Executive post as detailed in the report.**
- (iii) **It be noted that the Deputy Chief Executive, in the new role as Head of Paid service from 1st March 2022, will consider the options for the structure of the remaining chief officer posts including Statutory Officers and commence any recruitment to the current vacancies that may be required.**
- (iv) **The principle of potentially sharing chief officers including Statutory Officers with other Local Authorities be agreed.**
- (v) **The appointment of an interim Monitoring Officer, Barbara Morris, from 1st January 2022 for a period of 3 months be noted.**
- (vi) **Barbara Morris be appointed as the Monitoring Officer for a further 3 months, for the period of 1 April 2022 to 30 June 2022.**

The Interim Chief Executive and Interim Monitoring Officer returned to the meeting.

REPORT FROM THE CABINET

Councillor King introduced the report from the Cabinet, detailing the Decisions taken by the Cabinet from the meetings of the 10th January and 7th February 2022, was NOTED.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING OF 2ND FEBRUARY 2022

1. Internal Audit Provision: Delegation

Councillor Dr Bremner introduced the recommendation of the Cabinet from its meeting on the 7th February 2022.

It was moved by Councillor Dr Bremner, seconded by Councillor Nunn and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) **Council delegates its internal audit service to North Northamptonshire Council from 1st April 2022.**
- (ii) **Authority be delegated to the Director of Finance, ICT & Assets**
 - a. **in consultation with the Legal & Democratic Services Manager, to finalise the delegation agreement with North Northamptonshire Council for the provision of internal audit services,**
 - b. **to agree an initial 5-year term for the delegation agreement; thereby ensuring best value.**
 - c. **to agree a biennial extension of the delegation agreement up to a maximum of 6-years.**
 - d. **make any in-year changes to the delegation agreement as required to reflect any legislative and/or organisational changes.**

Councillor King proposed a closure motion, seconded by Councillor Knowles that the meeting be adjourned to the reserve date of Thursday 24th February.

The closure motion, proposed by Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Knowles was passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 10.55pm, to be re-convened on Thursday 24th February 2022 at 6.30pm.

ADJOURNED MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held at The Council Chamber, The Symington Building,
Adam & Eve Street, Market Harborough, LE16 7AG

Monday 24th February 2022

commencing at 6.30 p.m

Present:

Councillor Bilbie (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Ackerley, Bannister, Bateman, Beadle, Dr Bremner, Burrell, Champion, Critchley, Dann, Dunton, Elliott, Fosker, Galton, Golding, Graves, Hallam, James, Johnson, King, Knowles, Mahal, Nunn, Mrs Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Mrs Simpson, Whelband and Mrs Wood

Officers present: David Atkinson, L. Elliott, J. Evans, S. Green, S. Hamilton, C. Mason and B. Morris

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Bilbie thanked the Vice-Chairman for chairing the Council meetings on Monday 21st February in his absence.

DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Declarations of interests were made by Councillors Mrs Page, Galton, King, Bannister and Champion as they are also County Councillors.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Councillor Mrs Page presented the report as set out below:

Since the last meeting of Council a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Panel took place on 16th December 2021 and a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Panel took place on 27th January 2022.

The minutes from these meetings will be available on-line once approved at the following meeting.

Communities Scrutiny – 16th December 2021

The meeting was due to consider the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, however, as the content of the Strategy was not yet complete, the item was adjourned to a future meeting of the Panel.

Performance Scrutiny Panel – 27th January 2022

The meeting considered the following items:

- Report 1: Draft Budget 2022/23 & Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2023/24 to 2026/27)
- Report 2: Draft Corporate Plan
- Report 3: Performance Management Framework

The Panel received and commented on the reports and the comments were fed into the meeting of the Cabinet on 7th February 2022.

Forthcoming meetings

Looking forward, the following items are due to be considered at the upcoming Scrutiny meetings:

Performance Scrutiny Panel

Meeting Date: 17th March 2022	
Subject	Scope/Purpose
Quarterly Financial Performance: Quarter 3 2021/22	To review the Council's financial performance in the third quarter of the 2021/22 year.
SLM Leisure Contract and Open Book Accounting	<p>To scrutinise the Council's working arrangements with SLM.</p> <p>The report should include performance data against set targets and comparative data against previous year.</p> <p>The report should include customer satisfaction data.</p> <p>At its Meeting on the 27th November 2014, the Scrutiny Commission resolved that this item should be considered by the Resource and Performance Panel at a meeting to be included in the rota for Summer 2015.</p> <p>At its meeting on 16th July 2016, the Resource & Performance Scrutiny Panel RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) that future reports should be based on six Key Performance Indicators;(ii) that details of the 36 Performance Indicators that are available would be circulated to Panel Members so that the six indicators mentioned above could be selected;(iii) that a link would be made with the Council's corporate system of performance management; and(iv) that future reports would contain:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• financial information• information over a full year, separated for the two sports centres• some benchmarking information, where available• detail of complaints received• detail of injuries <p>At its meeting on 25th November 2021, the Scrutiny Commission requested that the following information should be included in the report;</p> <p>SLM to report on the following outcomes:</p> <p>Participation Overall</p> <p>By Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swim• Gym• Group Ex <p>Customer Complaints</p> <p>Energy Consumption and what is being done to reduce the carbon footprint.</p>

	<p>Current figures plotted against previous year's figures as well as annual targets</p> <p>3 x individual case studies based on individual and group work so the Panel can see the detail behind the numbers and the real value that is being delivered.</p> <p>Open book accounting information to include;</p> <p>To review the open-book process and whether the amounts paid are in line with agreed process.</p> <p>At it's meeting on 25th November 2021, the Scrutiny Commission requested that the following information should be included in the report;</p> <p>The Open Book Accounting procedure is what is being followed by HDC and SLM in respect of the SLM leisure contract.</p> <p>Background</p> <p>The Open Book arrangement</p> <p>Objective</p> <p>The process and the amounts paid, to be scrutinised.</p>
Registered Housing Providers	To enable the Panel to receive an update from registered providers of social housing in the District about their provision of accommodation in the District. To receive information on the plans and actions of registered housing providers and their role in meeting housing need in the District.
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	To receive details of instances when RIPA provisions have been invoked.

Communities Scrutiny Panel

Meeting Date: 24th March 2022	
Subject	Scope/Purpose
Market Harborough Town Centre Masterplan	To scrutinize the Masterplan before its consideration by Cabinet.
Voluntary Sector Strategy	To review the draft strategy before consideration by Cabinet
Health & Wellbeing Strategy	To input into the development of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy

NOTICE OF MOTION (1) SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 12.1 OF PART 4(1) OF THE COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

It was moved by Councillor James, seconded by Councillor Knowles:

“Green Motion – Feasibility Study - The Market Harborough – Northampton Rail Link

Reopening this rail link could potentially provide multiple links and serve numerous markets, more goods could be transported by rail as part of a modal shift and people will have a travel choice which is environmentally friendly.

Since this rail link was closed in the early 1980’s, the passenger service was in fact closed in the 1960’s there have been huge population changes together with changing business logistics.

Milton Keynes was far from the development we now see Northampton was half the size it is now and continues to grow Market Harborough and the surrounding area, as we know, continues to grow.

Such a rail link would join up other rail routes forming a north–west route allowing direct running from Felixstowe and anywhere else to the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal (DIRFT) Also the new Northampton Rail Freight Depot.

This rail link would also join up other routes too such as Oxford – Bletchley and create a larger inter-regional market (See tabled Map).

The electrification of the Midland Main Line may well make this link attractive to travel north to Sheffield and fit well with the Governments “Levelling Up” Agenda. It would enable a direct route linking Northampton and Leicester.

A new Rail Link travelling through an attractive countryside should incorporate twin tracks with footpaths and cycleways alongside and will offer real choice and encourage modal shift as part of this Councils Climate Crisis Agenda.

The proposal almost certainly enjoys strong support in Northamptonshire.

We move that Harborough District Council:

1. Officers to work with other organisations including the Rail Companies and North Northamptonshire Council to participate in a Feasibility Study to explore this proposal and where necessary potential options.
2. Following the Feasibility Study, the Chief Executive Officer to write to the Members of Parliament whose constituencies cover the route of the rail link and if applicable to enlist their support.
3. For Officers of the Council to report back to Council through the appropriate channels on developments and progress at appropriate stages.”

On being put to the vote the Motion was lost.

NOTICE OF MOTION (2) SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 12.1 OF PART 4(1) OF THE COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

It was moved by Councillor Beadle, seconded by Councillor Graves:

“Following the recent announcement of the sale of the old allotment site at De Verdon Road, Lutterworth for housing, it is noted that the proceeds that Harborough District Council (HDC) will receive amount to £4.9M.

HDC has announced that the proceeds of the sale will go towards funding projects across the wider district, and some money will be spent in Lutterworth, although there is no commitment as to how much.

HDC's cessation of the lease for the allotments meant that Lutterworth Town Council (LTC) had to source replacement land for the provision of allotment space, at a cost to the town residents of £330,340. At a full council meeting of LTC on November 9th 2021, a resolution was passed to request HDC to remove this burden from Lutterworth residents by using some of the sale proceeds to re-imburse LTC for the capital costs of the new allotments, following which LTC would be able to remove the element from the precept.

The land was originally owned by Lutterworth Rural District Council, with ownership transferring to HDC as a result of the re-organisation of Local Government. It would seem somewhat unfair that this windfall for HDC should benefit areas away from Lutterworth, while leaving Lutterworth residents with increased Council Tax bills. Further, the need for LTC to incur the costs of the new allotments was a direct result of the sale of the land for housing purposes. There is nothing in the published Section 106 agreement relating to this development that recognises the loss of the allotments, nor does anything to mitigate the loss, which LTC deem to be a serious error in the development of the Section 106 agreement. It should be noted that LTC were not consulted at any stage regarding the impact of the development, nor of potential S106 needs.

Lutterworth will take the impact of the new development along with the increased costs of the allotments, and as there is nothing in the S106 agreement to mitigate for the loss, it is only fair that the mitigation is sought from the sale proceeds.

Therefore, it is moved that Harborough District Council will make a payment of £330,340 to Lutterworth Town Council, to mitigate costs incurred by LTC for the provision of allotments."

Councillor Beadle requested a recorded vote which was supported by more than four other Members.

On being put to the vote the Motion was lost.

Recorded vote

For: Cllrs Beadle, Burrell, Dunton, Elliott, Fosker, Galton, Graves, James, Johnson, Knowles and Mrs Simpson (11)

Against: Cllrs Mrs Ackerley, Bannister, Bateman, Bilbie, Dr Bremner, Champion, Critchley, Dann, Golding, Hallam, King, Mahal, Nunn, Mrs Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Whelband and Mrs Wood (18)

Abstention: None

2022/23 BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2023/24 TO 2026/27)

The Council considered a report covering the 2022/23 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2023/24 to 2026/27), which was introduced by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets.

The budget has been considered by the Cabinet and the Performance Scrutiny Panel and the public have been consulted and responses have been received. He thanked the Section 151 Officer, the Finance Services Manager and all relevant colleagues for all their hard work in preparing the reports and appendices in such a short timeframe.

The key highlights of the 2022/23 budget and MTFS are as follows :- A Council Tax increase of £5 (2.89%) for Harborough District Council's element of the overall Council Tax charge; the second for several years. This increase is notionally included for each year of the MTFS.

Service Income and Savings; the most significant being: tranches 2 and 3 savings from the Budget Challenge 2025 process, totalling £1.1m for 2022/23, £3.1m by 2024/25; following a review of the services establishment, a saving of (£130k) ; review of the “target operating model” (the way the Council operates) identified savings of £353k ; shared services savings with another Leicestershire District Council of £94k.

Reductions in Capital Financing i.e. revenue contributions to finance capital expenditure of £400k.

Unavoidable Growth, the most significant being: contractor inflation of £350k; pay inflation of £370k; support of the Councils Leisure offer of £165k, previously approved by Council; reductions in income from car parking due to CV19 of £216k, and increases in partner contributions to the Leicestershire Revenues & Benefits Partnership of £54k.

The inclusion of 1-year only continuation grants totalling £2.5m; including a one-year New Homes Bonus allocation of £1.8m.

The budget includes a net contribution to reserves of £1.4m with a planned application of reserves over the MTFS to meet known collection fund pressures. However, by 2025/26 the Council has to start using reserves to meet unplanned expenditure; the total reserves applied between 2025/26 and 2026/27 is £2.5m.

A capital programme totalling £31.1m over the MTFS period, of which £13.4m are new projects as a consequence of the 2022/23 capital review. This includes four significant projects; New Depot (£5m); the Council will need a new depot come the start of its new Waste Contract in 2024/25. This will be financed by a capital receipt and/or revenue financing (minimum revenue provision); Cemetery, Market Harborough (£1m); the Council has only a couple of years capacity at its Market Harborough cemetery, new capacity is needed. This will be financed by a capital receipt and/or revenue financing (minimum revenue provision); Transformation (£1.5m), the Council is undertaking a significant transformation programme. It will be financed by the use of its new freedoms as a consequence of Council approving the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy in the summer of 2021; Leisure Redevelopment in Market Harborough and Lutterworth, in later summer 2021 Council approved additional redevelopments at both its current leisure centres (£3.9m). Although the Council will have to provide the capital resource, as part of the new contract the contractor will meet the additional capital financing; Platinum Jubilee Community Capital Fund, to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee by providing a fund (£700k) to which local organisations can bid to develop significant capital asset.

It was moved by Councillor Hallam, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that the following items be approved:

General Fund

- i. For 2022/23, the Council's net revenue budget requirement of £13.0m, including the budget allocations to portfolios.
- ii. The schedule of fees and charges for 2022/23.
- iii. The planned contribution to reserves of £1.4m to finance the budget requirement in 2022/23.
- iv. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2023/24 to 2026/27).

Capital programme and Capital Strategy

- i. The proposed capital programme 2022/23 to 2026/27 and its method of funding.
- ii. The Capital Strategy 2022/23; including changes.

Council Reserves

- i. The Reserves Statement, including 2022/23 General Fund (Unallocated) Reserves of £2.3m.

Council Tax

- i. An increase in Harborough District Council's element of the Council Tax of £5 to £177.97 for a Band D equivalent property (including average special expenses but excluding precepts).
- ii. The Special Expenses for 2022/23.
- iii. That the Council Tax resolution for 2022/23, prepared in accordance with Sections 32-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
- iv. That delegated authority be given to the Director; Finance, ICT and Assets (as s.151 officer), in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Deputy Leader of the Council (as Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets) to approve any change to the Council Tax Resolution as a consequence of any change to the Council Tax approved by Leicestershire County Council at their meeting held on the 23rd February 2022.

Treasury Management

- i. The Treasury Management Strategy; including Treasury & Capital Prudential Indicators and Limits, Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, the Annual Investment Strategy, and the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts.
- ii. The inclusion of Market Harborough Building Society on the list of approved counterparties.

RESOLVED that the following be noted :

- (i) The budget consultation process that was followed and the feedback gained.
- (ii) The Director; Finance, ICT & Fixed Assets views on the s.25: "Robustness of Reserves" Statement.

Recorded vote

For: Cllrs Mrs Ackerley, Bannister, Bateman, Bilbie, Dr Bremner, Champion, Critchley, Dann, Golding, Hallam, King, Mahal, Nunn, Mrs Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Whelband and Mrs Wood (18)

Against: None

Abstention: Cllrs Beadle, Burrell, Dunton, Elliott, Fosker, Galton, Graves, James, Johnson, Knowles and Mrs Simpson (11)

Summary of Reasons

The Council must set a balanced budget by the end of February 2022.

PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Council considered a report on the Pay Policy Statement. The Pay Policy Statement must articulate the Council's approach to a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce. Since the Pay Policy was approved by Council in 2020, a pay award for officers on NJC terms and Conditions (T&C's) has not been agreed and therefore salaries have not increased.

On the 15th of February 2021 The NJC unions (UNISON, GMB and Unite) lodged pay and T&Cs claims for local government ('Green Book') staff (which excludes the Chief Executive who is on JNC terms and conditions) for 2021. In response, a one year offer was tabled from the National Employers side in July 2021 which was reaffirmed as the full and final offer in November 2021 in respect of local government services ('Green Book'), Craftworker ('Red Book').

In response, the Unions rejected the Employers national pay offer and have been balloting their members on industrial action. UNISON have concluded they will not be proceeding with industrial action after their turnout failed to reach their minimum threshold. The Council await the outcome of GMB and Unite.

It was moved by Councillor Hallam, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 attached at Appendix A to the report be approved, subject to it returning to the Employment Committee for review, particularly in regards to the terminology being used within the Statement.

Summary of Reasons

The Localism Act 2011 requires all local authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement in relation to transparency which is to be published on the Council website.

AMENDMENT TO THE 2008 APPROVED HARBOROUGH DISTRICT CEMETERY REGULATIONS

The Council considered a report on the Amendment to the 2008 approved Harborough District Cemetery Regulations. The Council operates cemeteries at Market Harborough (Northampton Road), Great Bowden, Great Easton, Foxton, Saddington and Blaston (closed for new burials). The management of the Council's cemeteries is carried out under the provisions of the adopted Harborough District Cemetery Regulations.

It has become apparent that burial space is diminishing within the principal cemetery at Northampton Road Market Harborough, and as a result some amendment to the provisions of the aforementioned Regulations, is desired in order for the Council to effectively manage the remaining space.

As a matter of necessity, operational changes to the Regulations have been instituted by the service responsible for the administration of the cemeteries (Corporate Services.) The decision was taken in order to support the longevity of interment service provision within existing resources until alternative capacity is located and procured.

The Council is currently investigating the best way to extend cemetery facilities within Market Harborough either through and extension of the existing cemetery or provision of a new cemetery in a suitable location.

Although it is the main cemetery at Market Harborough that is currently approaching capacity it is proposed to apply these changes to the Regulations to all of the Council's cemeteries in order to prevent the other smaller cemeteries operated by the Council being used as alternatives for purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial for future use, which would merely transfer the problem elsewhere and reduce their operational life.

It was moved by Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Dann and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) **the amended Regulations as currently operating and specified in section 2.2 of the report be agreed.**
- (ii) **the amended Regulations as currently operating with regards to burial times in section 3.4 of the report be agreed.**

Summary of Reasons

For the current grave space allocation provisions to be reviewed under section 4 of the approved Regulations, and additionally to consider the proposal for amended winter burial times.

URGENT ITEMS

Councillor King reported that following the order by President Putin of Russia to invade Ukraine in the last 24 hours, he has written to the Interim Chief Executive to ask her to ensure that none of the Council's contracts and services that the Council buys with a variety of providers are not linked in any way to any Russian based organisation or company and that there are no banned individuals involved in any of the organisations that the Council currently procures services from.

Councillor King suggested that as a civic gesture, a letter of support be written to the Ukrainian Ambassador in London to offer the Council's support and that the draft letter be shared with Councillor Knowles.

It was moved by Councillor King, seconded by Councillor Knowles and

RESOLVED that a letter of support from the Leader would be written to the Ukrainian Ambassador in London to offer the Council's support.

The Meeting closed at 8.37pm