

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL HELD AT CIVIC SUITE, BROCKS HILL COUNCIL OFFICES, WASHBROOK LANE, OADBY, LEICESTER, LE2 5JJ ON TUESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.07 PM

PRESENT

R H Adams Mayor
C D Kozlowski Deputy Mayor



Meeting ID: 2541

COUNCILLORS

N Alam
S S Athwal
L A Bentley Deputy Leader of the Council
G A Boulter
L M Broadley
F S Broadley
M H Charlesworth
J K Chohan
H E Darling Deputy Leader of the Opposition
M L Darr
J K Ford
C S Gore
S Z Haq Leader of the Council
G G Hunt
R V Joshi
J Kaufman
K J Loydall
C J R Martin
R E R Morris
I K Ridley
C A M Walter

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

S J Ball Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Deputy Monitoring Officer
B Bull Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer
P Fisher Strategic Director
D M Gill Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer
S Khan Interim Strategic Director
A Thorpe Head of Built Environment

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE (ATTENDING REMOTELY)

P Joshi Leader of the Opposition

24. CALLING TO ORDER OF THE MEETING

The meeting of the Council was called to order to receive Her Worship The Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillors D A Gamble and F S Ghattoraya.

Full Council
Tuesday, 26 September 2023, 7.00 pm

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The Leader of the Opposition attended the meeting remotely, but in accordance with the provisions in the Local Government Act 1972, was not considered present for the purposes of voting.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Upon the Monitoring Officer's advice, all Member who participated in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LPGS) as administered locally by Leicestershire County Council indicated a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 6a of the agenda by a show of hands.

Councillors K J Loydall and C A M Walter declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 6b of the agenda insofar as Members were involved in organisations that facilitated and/or sponsored the festive light switch-on events in Wigston and South Wigston respectively.

27. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 July 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and approved.

28. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There was no Action List arising from the previous meeting.

29. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

29a. PENSION DIVESTMENT

The Council gave consideration to the Motion on Notice (as set out at pages 7 – 8 of the agenda reports pack) regarding pension divestment within Leicestershire's Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) as administered by Leicestershire County Council in relation to the LGPS's investment interests and portfolios in fossil fuels.

It was moved by the Councillor G A Boulter, seconded by Councillor M H Charlesworth and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The Council resolves to commit to:

- (i) Reaffirming its commitment to its Environment Strategy and Action Plan which sets out how the Council will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions both in terms of actions that it can take as an organisation in its own right and in terms of the Council's role in influencing local residents and businesses and encouraging a partnership approach involving a range of stakeholders.**
- (ii) Calculate and publish the scale of that carbon footprint at a borough-wide level associated with pension investments in the Leicestershire scheme.**

- (iii) **Calling on Leicestershire County Council Pension Fund to bring forward a transparent plan to divest from fossil fuels by 2030 through the development and adoption of responsible investment policies that:**
- (a) **Stop investment in energy companies actively exploiting new fossil fuel reserves;**
 - (b) **Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds unless the specific funds are being used exclusively to develop or support renewables, carbon capture, hydrogen or other decarbonisation technology; and**
 - (c) **Instruct its fund managers to pursue an active investment strategy in companies with a verified commitment to, and track record of, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and minimise climate risk.**

29b. FESTIVE LIGHT SWITCH-ON 2023

The Council gave consideration to the Motion on Notice (as set out at page 9 of the agenda reports pack) regarding the making of free parking arrangements with the Borough's town centre car parks during the 2023 festive light switch-on and celebration events.

It was moved by Councillor N Alam, seconded by Councillor J K Ford and

DEFEATED THAT:

The Motion be amended to remove the preamble 'Whilst noting the dire financial situation of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council caused by reduced budgets and a combination of a history of unfair funding of the local authorities in Leicestershire, COVID and Brexit...'

Votes For	5
Votes Against	16
Abstentions	1

It was moved by the Councillor J Kaufman, seconded by Councillor M L Darr and

RESOLVED THAT:

Whilst noting the dire financial situation of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council caused by reduced budgets and a combination of a history of unfair funding of the local authorities in Leicestershire, COVID and Brexit, that Officers make arrangements for free parking from 1:00 pm in the Council's car parks in each of the three town centres on the day of the festive light switch on and celebrations.

Votes For	16
Votes Against	5
Abstentions	1

Councillors K J Loydall and C A M Walter did not participate in the vote on the amendment or substantive motion having declared a non-pecuniary interest.

Councillor C S Gore left the meeting at 7:35 pm.

30. PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

None.

31. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reminded all those in attendance of her Civic Service scheduled for Saturday, 30 September 2023 followed by a 'bring your own' picnic event in the Brocks Hill Country Park between 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm.

31a. LIST OF OFFICIAL MAYORAL / DEPUTY MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS (SEPTEMBER 2023)

By affirmation of the meeting, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The list of Official Engagements attended by The Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor be noted.

32. LEADER'S STATEMENT

The Leader of the Council presented a Statement outlining her recent work, the administration's plans and an overview of recent decisions taken since the previous meeting of the Council, together with fielding questions in relation to her Statement.

The Leader stated there would remain an open dialogue amongst and between both Members of the Administration and the Opposition regarding the ongoing budget setting process, including any suggested initiatives or alternatives, so to inform any final decisions to be considered by the Full Council, which were yet to be made.

33. OFFICE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT BEST VALUE GUIDANCE

The Council gave consideration to the report and appendix (as set out at pages 12 - 57 of the agenda reports pack) which provided Members with an update and summary of the recently developed draft statutory guide for best value authorities.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The content of the report be noted.

34. BUDGET SETTING APPROACH FOR 2024/25 & MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE (URGENT ITEM)

Under section 100B(4)(B) of the Local Government Act 1972, by reason of special circumstance, in that an additional item of business needed to be considered before the next meeting of the Full Council.

The Mayor was of the opinion that this urgent item of business was to be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency insofar as that certain elements of the Budget Setting

Approach for 2024/25 was time-bound, requiring immediate approval and implementation particularly given the prevailing financial circumstances the Council.

The Council gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 3 - 9 of the agenda update reports pack) which provided an update on the MTFP budget gaps and progress on the Sustainability Programme and asked Members to approve the approach to set the annual budget for 2024/25.

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, seconded by Councillor M H Charlesworth and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) The budget approach for 2024/25 be approved; and**
- (ii) The updated MTFP budget gaps and the progress on the Sustainability Programme be noted.**

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.11 pm