

## HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

25 January 2022 AT 6.30 pm

PRESENT: CLLR E HOLLICK - MAYOR  
CLLR DT GLENVILLE – DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr CM Allen, Cllr RG Allen, Cllr DC Bill MBE, Cllr CW Boothby, Cllr SL Bray, Cllr MB Cartwright, Cllr JMT Collett, Cllr MA Cook, Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr WJ Crooks, Cllr DJ Findlay, Cllr REH Flemming, Cllr A Furlong, Cllr SM Gibbens, Cllr C Ladkin, Cllr MR Lay, Cllr KWP Lynch, Cllr K Morrell, Cllr LJ Mullaney, Cllr MT Mullaney, Cllr K Nichols, Cllr LJP O'Shea, Cllr A Pendlebury, Cllr MC Sheppard-Bools, Cllr BR Walker, Cllr R Webber-Jones, Cllr HG Williams and Cllr P Williams

Officers in attendance: Matthew Bowers, Bill Cullen, Julie Kenny, Kirstie Rea and Sharon Stacey

### 293. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cope, Hodgkins, Roberts and Smith.

### 294. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bill and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

### 295. **Declarations of interest**

No interests were declared.

### 296. **Mayor's Communications**

The Mayor informed members of recent engagements.

### 297. **Questions**

To deal with questions under Council Procedure Rule number 14:

#### 1. Question from Councillor Boothby to the Executive member for Planning

“Will the Executive Member for Planning please confirm the following information regarding the Planning function as at 31 December 2021:-

- a. Spend YTD on Consultants and temporary staff cover

- b. Provide an update on recruitment for all vacant positions within Planning and Enforcement.
- c. Confirm the number of Planning Applications received awaiting verification.
- d. Confirm the number of Planning Applications awaiting Decision split between Minor and Major.
- e. Spend YTD on Planning Appeals.
- f. Confirm the number of Planning Applications approaching, at or pass their target Decision Date (ie at risk of Appeal for Non-Determination).

Will the Member undertake to provide a rolling monthly report on the above to Planning and Scrutiny Committee.”

Response from the Executive member:

“Councillor Boothby, thank you for your question. Local authorities up and down the country are facing the challenge of increasing workload and short supply of professional planners. Hinckley and Bosworth is no different. This leads to longer waiting times for applicants and increased costs for us. In answer to your specific questions, I can confirm as follows:

- a. The spend on consultants and temporary staff cover will be reported to Council and the Scrutiny Commission as part of the budget process
- b. With regards to recruitment for vacant positions, we have successfully recruited a new planning manager who starts on 14 February. We are currently carrying a further seven vacancies in the development management team. The closing date for applications for these roles was 9 January. Shortlisting has taken place and invites for interviews are going out shortly. In the enforcement team we have a new starter this week and have two further vacancies. Unfortunately no suitable candidates applied during the last recruitment process.
- c. The number of planning applications received awaiting verification is 139
- d. The number of major planning applications awaiting decision is 71, and 372 minor
- e. The spend on planning appeals up to the end of December is £155,300
- f. 365 planning applications are approaching, at or passed their target decision date (ie at risk of appeal for non-determination).”

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Boothby reiterated his request for a monthly report to Planning Committee or Scrutiny Commission. Councillor Bill acknowledged the concern of members and agreed to keep them up to date.

## 2. Question from Councillor R Allen to the Executive member for Planning

“Will the Administration please provide an update on the progress of the Hinckley High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), including details of the funding available and its source, a breakdown of the amounts spent to date, confirmation of who authorises payments for this project.

Given that HBBC Officers are involved and the significant sums available to this important project, will the Administration commit to bringing regular updates on plans, progress and expenditure to Council (Scrutiny Committee?)”

## Response from the Executive member

“I thank Councillor Allen for his question.

I am pleased to confirm that progress on the various projects within the Hinckley High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) continues to be made which allows us to give much needed support to the town centre and its businesses. Briefly I will mention some key updates

- On the public realm projects, following the consultation on three design options for the Church Walk car park a decision was taken not to reduce parking spaces on this key town centre carpark. A further design is therefore being finalised to reflect the feedback. This further option aims to maximise parking provision and promote a key route from Argents Mead to Castle Street via Church Walk. Additionally the details of the public realm proposals for the yards and jitties and for Castle Street are also being finalised with the physical works scheduled to commence later this year.
- The council has secured additional funding from Historic England to develop a HAZ Hub which would become a focal point in the town centre for community engagement and give an opportunity for scheme partners and cultural consortium members to use. A number of locations have been considered and we're proposing to utilise a dedicated space within the Atkins building to establish the HSHAZ Hub.
- The Building Improvement Scheme offers grants for works of repair and restoration of significant historic features including shop fronts to targeted properties within the HAZ. The majority of restoration works are based on historic photographs and evidence available for each property. 17 expression of interest forms have been submitted with two schemes being completed and further schemes being drawn up. Officers are intending to continue targeted promotion on high priority properties.
- A programme coordinator for the Cultural Programme is in post for October 21 to March 22 and has been working with English Heritage on developing and coordinating heritage and cultural events. Through a Cultural consortium of members and partners an initial programme of four potential projects is being finalised with the first event scheduled for early spring.
- As part of the Community Engagement Programme, Hinckley Archaeology Society ran Medieval Hinckley Walking Tours with all the walks fully booked and the feedback has been really positive.

Over the life of the HAZ which is until 31 March 2024, the total funding is £1.85m. The budget has already been approved by members through the budget process and is included in current budgets. There have subsequently been opportunities to bid for further funding for a HAZ hub and the Cultural programme which the council have successfully secured and these additional sums are managed separately and not included in the initial allocation. The £1.85m is made up of grants from Historic England and from the LLEP and a contribution from HBBC

Up to the end of Quarter 2 in 2021/22 £140,000 had been spent and officers are currently just updating the spend profile for the last quarter. The authorisation for expenditure is covered under the Council's scheme of delegation with regular quarterly monitoring from Historic England as well as the council's financial oversight through its own budget monitoring.

Officers will circulate regular updates to all Members as the schemes progress and more formal updates will be programmed for Scrutiny Commission on this exciting project over the next two years."

### 3. Question from Councillor O'Shea to the Executive member for Planning

"Can the Executive member please confirm that a detailed survey of brown field sites that are available across the Borough has been undertaken and make that report available to members?"

Utilizing more brown field sites, would protect more of our precious green countryside."

Response from the Executive member

"Thank you Councillor O'Shea for your question. I can confirm that the council has produced a Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) which assesses the deliverability of all land across the borough including brownfield land. This is available on our website. The council also produces a brownfield land register which is also available on our website."

### 4. Question from Councillor C Allen to the Leader of Council

"Will the Leader of the Council please explain why so many Executive Meetings have been cancelled under his Administration and reassure residents that all matters and decisions relating to this Council have been given full and appropriate consideration by the Executive."

Response from the Leader

"As I have sought to do effectively in this and previous Lib Dem run administrations of this council, I aim to ensure decision making is timely, transparent and democratic. As those members who have sat on the Executive will know, any reports coming forward will be presented to the responsible executive member by the relevant senior officer and then to the executive informally. At this point it can either go for decision to Executive or to full council depending on the legal requirements, usually via Scrutiny.

Unlike other authorities, some of which members will be all too familiar with, Hinckley and Bosworth takes a lot of these reports directly to full Council where the law allows, where members of all parties and representatives of all our communities can have their input. We believe this to be more open and democratic."

5. Question from Councillor O'Shea to the Executive member for Streetscene Services

"Last February at full council, I asked for a detailed report on the actual cost of the Brown Bin service. The question was simple - what does it cost the council to break even on this service, compared to the amount of revenue that it brings in from council tax payers?

Please could the executive member provide members with that information."

Response from the Executive member

"Councillor O'Shea, thank you for your question. The garden waste service costs the Council £466,000 to run – that is the net cost and accounts for the income from the subscription".

By way of supplementary question, Councillor O'Shea asked for the figure received from the annual charge for garden waste collections. Councillor Crooks responded by explaining that the stated £466,000 was the cost to the Council of running the service after taking into account the income from subscriptions of £990,000 and that the overall cost of providing the service was £1.4m.

6. Question from Councillor Morrell to the Executive member for Finance

"Would the Executive member as a matter of urgency, commission specialist consultants to examine the problems faced on the crematorium site and report back with mitigation measures and costings to Members as soon as possible? This would assist Members and Officers to make a fully informed decision as to whether to proceed, or scrap the project due to viability concerns?

Waiting and monitoring the site given that the problem is sub-ground conditions is a waste of time.

The solution may be to pile the heavily trafficked areas and the site of the crematorium, as was the solution for the new leisure centre."

Response from the Executive member

"I thank Councillor Morrell for his question and note his comments and suggestions of the solution to the problem. Bearing in mind that more than one proposal for a scheme of works has been proposed by specialists and have failed, I understand and share his frustration.

However, we as a council must rely upon the advice of experts in this field and seek to ensure that responsibility for such advice and any proposals resulting from it rests with those who we retain for that purpose.

A specialist consultant will be employed by the contractor as part of the monitoring works and a report will be issued to HBBC. At the end of this monitoring period, a suitable design solution can be produced to deal with the specific site conditions and at that point the council can decide whether to

progress depending upon costs and whether the scheme is still deemed commercially viable. Whatever the outcome, any further decision for the site will need to be informed by the additional monitoring work.

I can, however, also confirm it is also our intention to directly employ our own specialist to assist us in validating this work and to help inform future options.”

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Morrell asked if it would be possible to receive a timetable for a report on the works to come to Council. In response, Councillor Lynch stated he was unable to give a timetable at this time, but would do so as soon as he was able.

#### 7. Question from Councillor Ladkin to the Executive member for Finance

“At the Council Meeting of February 23rd 2021 it was resolved that MTFS 2.4 that there would be “no recurring supplementary requests for the period of the MTFS”.

Can the Executive Member for Finance please confirm that since that meeting, have there been any “recurring supplementary requests” and If there have been any please list the items and amounts.”

Response from the Executive member

“I would like to thank Councillor Ladkin for the question which gives us the opportunity to demonstrate the minimal amount of recurring supplementary requests. In fact, the only recurring supplementary request is in relation to additional salary costs within the refuse & recycling service. The issues of driver shortages in this area was the subject of a report to Council in November 2021 which was unanimously supported. The ongoing net impact for this recurring supplementary is expected to be £22,000.”

#### 8. Question from Councillor Roberts to the Executive member for Planning

Councillor Roberts had requested that the question be put in his absence.

“Will the Administration please explain what happened to the Council email over the Christmas and New Year period, where residents received bounce back emails from the Planning inbox in particular stating that it was full?

Can the administration also confirm that action has now been taken to rectify the problem, the number of emails in the Planning inbox that resulted in a “Mailbox Full” message and reassure residents that everyone who emails the Council will receive a full and prompt response?”

Response from the Executive member

“Councillor Roberts, thank you for your question. I understand that rather than the generic planning inbox being full, customers received “mailbox full” messages where they had copied in a particular officer. This can happen when large files are received, particularly over time when the council is shut such as

weekends or over Christmas. I can reassure you that any emails sent to the generic inbox will have been received and passed onto the relevant officer.”

**298. Leader of the Council's Position Statement**

In his position statement, the leader referred to:

- Funding challenges and the budget process, thanking officers for their work
- Covid rates which were reducing following a spike in cases
- A new Omicron business support grant that had been launched
- Development of an events programme for 2022 including events to honour the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee
- Discussions that were advancing with health partners in relation to accommodating some health services within Hinckley Hub
- The opening of Ambion Court with the first tenant moving in the previous week, for which officers and the Executive member were congratulated.

**299. Minutes of the Scrutiny Commission**

The chairman of the Scrutiny Commission presented the minutes for information, commending the work of the voluntary and community sector.

**300. Climate Change Strategy**

The updated Climate Change Strategy was presented to Council. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- The 223% increase in usage of the electric car charging points in council car parks in Hinckley over the last two months compared to the previous five months
- The increase in sales of electric vehicles
- The importance of the council leading by example
- The possibility of tracking progress by including target dates and names of those responsible for the actions in the strategy
- The restrictions on considering transferring the council’s fleet of vehicles to electric due to being within existing contract periods.

It was moved by Councillor Cartwright, seconded by Councillor Gibbens and

RESOLVED – the updated Climate Change Strategy be approved.

**301. Levelling Up fund re the National Science & Conservation Centre at Twycross Zoo**

Consideration was given to a report on the successful bid for £19.9m investment to create a new National Science and Conservation Centre at Twycross Zoo. Those involved were thanked for their work and support.

It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED –

- (i) Council notes and welcomes the successful bid by the Council in partnership with Twycross Zoo for £19.9m to deliver a new National Science and Conservation Centre at Twycross Zoo;
- (ii) Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive and S151 Officer in consultation with the Leader and the Executive member for Finance, to sign off the Memorandum of Understanding and contract & programme delivery arrangements in respect of the Levelling Up Bid of £19.9m;
- (iii) Council approves the establishment of a budget of £19.9m for the Levelling Up Project, which will be profiled to be spent over the next three years.

**302. Local Plan**

Members received a report which sought approval to consult on the local plan pre-submission version. During discussion, reference was made to the following:

- The importance of education and other infrastructure provision
- The challenges in delivering the sustainable urban extensions
- The importance of aligning neighbourhood plans and the local plan
- Specific sites that could be discussed further in the consultation period.

It was moved by Councillor Bill and seconded by Councillor Bray that the recommendations within the report be approved.

Councillor Bray along with six further councillors, requested that voting on the motion be recorded. The vote was recorded as follows:

Councillors Bill, Bray, Cartwright, J Crooks, W Crooks, Findlay, Flemming, Gibbens, Glenville, Hollick, Lynch, L Mullaney, M Mullaney, Nichols, Pendlebury, Sheppard-Bools, Walker, Webber-Jones and P Williams voted FOR the motion (19);

Councillors C Allen, R Allen, Boothby, Collett, Cook, Ladkin, Morrell, O'Shea and H Williams voted AGAINST the motion (9);

Councillors Furlong and Lay abstained from voting.

The motion was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) The Council notes with grave concern the “Build Build Build” agenda of the Conservative government who are insisting that Hinckley & Bosworth allocates 9,000 houses in the period up to 2039;
- (ii) The publication of the pre-submission draft of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan and supporting documents be approved for consultation between the period 2 February 2022 to 16 March 2022 in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Regulations (Local Development) (England) 2004 (as amended);
- (iii) The submission of the Local Plan and supporting documents to the Secretary of State be approved for examination in public following analysis of the representations received during the consultation period;
- (iv) Delegated authority to the Director (Environment & Planning) in consultation with the Executive member for Planning be approved for minor drafting errors, factual updates, topographical errors, drafting of proposals map and desktop publishing.

**303. Motions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17**

- (a) Motion proposed by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Webber-Jones

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Bray and seconded by Councillor Webber-Jones:

“Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council recognises the importance of ensuring that elections fair and accessible for all voters.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council notes that the Elections Bill is set to bring in major changes to national elections, including the introduction of compulsory photographic ID to vote.

Council believes that this change will act as a barrier to people voting and increase inequality in the electoral process.

Council notes with concern that currently 3.5 million people in the UK do not have any form of expensive photographic ID.

Council notes that these changes are estimated to cost the taxpayer £180 million and will create unnecessary bureaucracy to Councils.

Council believes that at a time when voter turnout is declining, we should be doing all we can to make it easier not harder for people to vote.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council doesn't want to see people being turned away at the ballot box because of these changes and resolves to support the #HandsOffOurVote campaign by:

1. Writing to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
2. Writing to Hinckley & Bosworth's local MPs asking them to raise these concerns in Parliament."

Councillor Bray along with ten further councillors requested that voting on the motion be recorded. The vote was taken as follows:

Councillors Bill, Bray, Cartwright, J Crooks, W Crooks, Findlay, Flemming, Furlong, Gibbens, Glenville, Hollick, Lay, Lynch, L Mullaney, M Mullaney, Nichols, Pendlebury, Sheppard-Bools, Walker, Webber-Jones and P Williams voted FOR the motion (21);

Councillors C Allen, R Allen, Boothby, Collett, Cook, Ladkin, Morrell, O'Shea and H Williams voted AGAINST the motion (9).

The motion was declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED - the #HandsOffOurVote campaign be supported by:

- (i) Writing to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- (ii) Writing to Hinckley & Bosworth's local MPs asking them to raise these concerns in Parliament.

- (b) Motion proposed by Councillor R Allen, seconded by Councillor Bill

The following motion was proposed by Councillor R Allen and seconded by Councillor Bill:

"This motion proposes that the Chief Executive of this Council writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities requesting that all further consideration and consultation of the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange proposal be suspended until such time as full and comprehensive traffic modelling work has been completed by, and to the full satisfaction of, Leicestershire County Council as the Local Highways Authority and Highways England as the national authority.

Additionally, this motion proposes that the Chief Executive writes to all neighbouring authorities affected by the Interchange proposals highlighting this motion and requesting their consideration and support."

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) The Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities requesting that all further consideration and consultation of the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange proposal be suspended until such time as full and comprehensive traffic modelling work has been completed by, and to the full satisfaction of, Leicestershire County Council as the local highways authority and Highways England as the national authority;
- (ii) The Chief Executive writes to all neighbouring authorities affected by the interchange proposals highlighting this motion and requesting their consideration and support.

- (c) Motion proposed by Councillor Gibbens, seconded by Councillor Cartwright

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Gibbens and seconded by Councillor Cartwright:

“Council notes the ongoing consultation for the proposed National Rail Freight Interchange on open countryside adjacent to Burbage Common.

We believe this development is opportunistic and is not in an appropriate location. It will cause irreparable damage to the wildlife in the area and destroy the peace and quiet people appreciate when visiting Burbage Common.

Council calls on Tritax Symmetry to drop these damaging plans and Council makes clear its opposition to this scheme.”

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) Council calls on Tritax Symmetry to drop these damaging plans;
- (ii) Council makes clear its opposition to this scheme.

Councillor O’Shea abstained from voting on this item.

- (d) Motion proposed by Councillor Ladkin, seconded by Councillor Cartwright

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Ladkin and seconded by Councillor Cartwright:

“Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council appreciates that COP26 took place in Glasgow keeping alive our ambition to restrict global rise in temperature to 1.5C.

'Recognising the Climate Emergency and the impact that Climate Change has upon all the species of the planet'.

The successes of COP26 will only become evident or not by the passage of time. We call upon world leaders, organisations and individuals who made pledges during COP26 to meet and where possible exceed those pledges.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has made a Climate Emergency Declaration, July 2019, adopted a Climate Strategy including setting up a cross party working group. The cross party working group will now look to see if anything in the Council's strategy needs amending or tweaking as a result of COP26."

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED and it was:

RESOLVED – the Climate Change Member Working Group be asked to consider whether the Climate Change Strategy requires updating as a result of COP26.

- (e) Motion proposed by Councillor Roberts, seconded by Councillor H Williams

Councillor R Allen, seconded by Councillor H Williams, proposed the following motion:

This motion proposes that the Council undertakes to identify and retain the leading specialist in cemetery drainage to review and implement the most effective remedial drainage plan to address the flooding issues in the Ashby Road Cemetery (extension) for the long term and to ensure that all relevant legislation relating to burial grounds is fully complied with.

Further proposed that Council will instigate a cross party working group to focus on this crucial and sensitive issue. Said working group will report their progress and recommendations to Council.

An amendment will be proposed by Councillor W Crooks and seconded by Councillor Gibbens:

"Council notes the flooding problems in the Ashby Road Cemetery extension over the past 18 months and apologises and expresses sympathy to any families concerned.

Council further notes the extensive specialist drainage works recently carried out in the area and places on record its thanks to the Green Spaces team for the progress made.

Council once again condemns the decision of the Secretary of State to allow the infilling and building on the Big Pit which many residents feel has exacerbated flooding problems in the area.

Council further commits to continuing to monitor the situation carefully and undertaking any further remedial works necessary to address the flooding issues

in the Ashby Road Cemetery extension and to ensure that all relevant legislation relating to burial grounds is fully complied with.

The Council requests that a regular monitoring and progress report is brought to the Hinckley Area Committee which is responsible for the cemetery.”

Councillor R Allen, as mover of the original motion and Councillor H Williams, was happy to accept the amendment with the further amendment of the final paragraph to read:

“The Council requests that a regular monitoring and progress report is brought to the Hinckley Area Committee and Scrutiny Commission”.

The further amendment was accepted as the substantive motion. It was then moved by Councillor R Allen, seconded by Councillor Gibbens and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The situation be monitored carefully and any further remedial works necessary to address the flooding issues in the Ashby Road Cemetery extension be undertaken, ensuring that all relevant legislation relating to burial grounds is fully complied with;
- (ii) A regular monitoring and progress report be presented to Hinckley Area Committee and the Scrutiny Commission.

At this juncture, it was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Webber-Jones and

RESOLVED – should the meeting still be in progress at 9.30pm, the time allowed be extended to conclude the business on the agenda.

- (f) Motion proposed by Councillor Boothby, seconded by Councillor O'Shea

It was noted that this motion had been withdrawn.

- (g) Urgent motion proposed by Councillor M Mullaney and seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Bools

This motion had been accepted as an urgent motion due to news only becoming apparent following publication of the agenda.

The following motion was moved by Councillor M Mullaney and seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Bools:

“Council notes its severe disappointment in the Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Council further notes that, in the view of the public, the Prime Minister acted unlawfully, misled parliament and lied to the residents of our country.

Council adds that while the Prime Minister attended Downing Street parties, millions of people obeyed the lockdown rules, often at huge personal cost. They missed funerals, cancelled weddings and said goodbye to dying loved ones on video calls – some on the very day that Number Ten illegally hosted a garden party.

Council condemns the Prime Minister who has now become a threat to the health of our nation, and for the sake of the country still gripped by this awful pandemic, he must resign.

Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to write to Boris Johnson stating that the Council has no confidence in his leadership and calls for him to resign.

Council resolves that we no longer have confidence in the Prime Minister.”

Councillors C Allen, R Allen, Boothby, Collett, Cook, Ladkin, Morrell and O’Shea left the meeting at 9.15pm.

Councillor Bray, along with ten further councillors, requested that voting on the motion be recorded. The vote was taken as follows:

Councillors Bill, Bray, Cartwright, J Crooks, W Crooks, Findlay, Flemming, Furlong, Gibbens, Glenville, Hollick, Lay, Lynch, L Mullaney, M Mullaney, Nichols, Pendlebury, Sheppard-Bools, Walker, Webber-Jones and P Williams voted FOR the motion (21);

Councillor H Williams abstained from voting.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) Council no longer has confidence in the Prime Minister;
- (ii) The Leader of Council writes to Boris Johnson stating that the Council has no confidence in his leadership and calling for him to resign.

(The Meeting closed at 9.45 pm)

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MAYOR