



CABINET

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To: Councillors Barkley (Deputy Leader), Bokor, Harper-Davies, Mercer, Morgan (Leader), Poland, Rollings, Smidowicz and Taylor (for attention)

All other members of the Council
(for information)

You are requested to attend the meeting of the Cabinet to be held in Virtual Meeting - Zoom on Thursday, 4th June 2020 at 6.00 pm for the following business.



Chief Executive

Southfields
Loughborough

21st May 2020

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT – REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

6. COVID-19 - CHARNWOOD APPROACH TO COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY 2 - 4

A report of the Chief Executive.

Key Decision

CABINET – 4TH JUNE 2020

Report of the Scrutiny Commission

ITEM 6 COVID-19: COUNCIL APPROACH TO COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission in relation to the COVID-19: Council Approach to Community, Economic and Organisational Recovery report.

Recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission

1. that the Cabinet be informed that the Commission supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Chief Executive, subject to the change recommended in resolution 2 below.
2. that it be recommended to Cabinet that the Council's objective to communicate and engage with local businesses be made the first point in the 'Backing Our Businesses' section of the report.
3. that officers be asked to ensure councillors receive advice and guidance on the continuation of routine casework when information is available.

Reasons

1. The Commission, having carefully considered the report, felt the Cabinet should approve the recommendations set out.
2. To emphasize the importance of the continuation of communication and engaging with local businesses.
3. To ensure that Councillors were able to continue with casework in a safe and timely manner where possible.

Meeting Discussion

- i. The Chief Executive expressed satisfaction that the Scrutiny Commission was once again active, despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and acknowledged that scrutiny would have a significant role in the recovery of the Council.
- ii. Councillors expressed thanks to Officers in responding successfully to the crisis and acknowledged the significant amount of work that had been undertaken in ensuring the Council remained efficient and functional. Particular reference was made to ICS who they felt deserved recognition. The Chief Executive put on record his thanks to employees for their commitment and professionalism.

- iii. Members' involvement in the recovery of the Council would be significant, and where possible, Members should do this through the committees they participate in. Council resources had been focussed at responding to crisis and maintaining excellent services during the current pandemic, and Officer time was limited as a result of this. Councillor casework would extend across all themes within the recovery plan; organisational, economic and community. Councillors were advised to concentrate on urgent casework at present and in due course would receive guidance on the routine casework.
- iv. The Council aimed to continue to communicate and engage with local businesses as this had been done successfully so far. It was suggested that 'communication and engagement with local businesses' was the priority in the 'Backing Our Businesses' section of the report, and that this should be made the first objective, as opposed to the final one.
- v. The Council had responded to the crisis in a way that allowed innovative and new ways of working to develop and opportunities presented had been embraced. It was anticipated that positive changes that had derived from the pandemic would be adopted on a long-term basis by the Council.
- vi. Risk Management associated with the Council's approach to recovery was refined and applied to individual risks, as opposed to the overall approach. This would allow for thorough examination of the risk and identification of appropriate solutions.
- vii. Employee sickness levels remained roughly standard for the time of year. There would be an opportunity to measure statistics associated with staff sickness at future Scrutiny Commission meetings, if a temporary revised structure allowed for this.
- viii. It was recognised that the current financial situation of the Council was exceptional, and that income had been compromised as a result of the pandemic. The Council was explicitly monitoring the ongoing implications of the pandemic and was considering the adaptations required to facilitate this. An outturn return will be presented to Cabinet which will indicate the initial impact of the pandemic. Beyond this an interim budget will be developed which will culminate in reports to Cabinet and Council in the autumn.
- ix. Commercialisation remained a significant consideration of the Council's business and where possible, would continue to incorporate the original ideas proposed previously, prior to the pandemic. It was noted that the link to recovery and regeneration would be explored. The approach to commercial property would be revised to take into account changes in the economy, markets, legislation and finances.

- x. The Council had been able to manage cash flow through the treasury in the normal way. There had been some adverse cash flow impact experienced but this was manageable within the context of the Council's cash balances and had also been somewhat mitigated by additional Government funding received.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

Scrutiny Commission Procedure Rule 11.12 sets out the procedure by which a report of a Scrutiny Committee should be considered by Cabinet.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The information in this in the Cabinet report is not affected by the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

There are no further financial implications associated with the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with the recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission.

Key Decision:	Yes
Background Paper:	Scrutiny Commission Minute 8 2020/21, 1st June 2020
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