



**CABINET**

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To: Councillors Miah (Leader), Hamilton (Deputy Leader), Ashcroft, Blackshaw, A. Gray, Jadeja, Jones and Tillotson (for attention)

All other members of the Council  
(for information)

You are requested to attend the meeting of the Cabinet to be held in Committee Room 1, at the Council Offices, Southfields, Loughborough on Thursday, 11th January 2024 at 6.00 pm for the following business.

Chief Executive

Southfields  
Loughborough

21st December 2023

**AGENDA SUPPLEMENT – SCRUTINY COMMISSION REPORTS**

- |    |   |       |
|----|---|-------|
| 6. | <u>CORPORATE STRATEGY 2024-2028</u>                             | 3 - 4 |
|    | A report of the Chief Executive, for recommendation to Council. |       |
|    | <i>Key Decision</i>   |       |
| 8. | <u>CHARNWOOD GRANTS – STRATEGIC PARTNERS (2024/25-2025/26)</u>  | 5 - 6 |

A report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing.

*Key Decision*

9. DECLASSIFICATION OF PROPERTIES DESIGNATED FOR ALLOCATION TO PEOPLE AGED OVER 45 YEARS

7 - 9

A report of the Director Housing and Wellbeing.

*Key Decision*

## **CABINET – 11TH JANUARY 2024**

### **Report of the Scrutiny Commission**

#### CORPORATE STRATEGY 2024 - 2028

##### Purpose of Report

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission in relation to the Corporate Strategy 2024 – 2028.

##### Recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission

That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission welcomes and supports the recommendations set out in the report of the Chief Executive.

##### Reason

The Commission, having carefully considered and asked questions on the report felt the Cabinet should approve the recommendations set out.

##### Meeting Discussion

- i. The Council had previously experienced some staff shortages in Customer Services which had meant that there were longer wait times for calls to be answered at times. These issues had been resolved and call waiting times had been reduced significantly, to around six minutes on average (this was during the busy period). The Council was always aiming to improve wait times for customers.
- ii. Public service organisations experienced staff retention issues due to higher rates of pay in the private sector. The Council did undertake exit interviews with staff and there were no clear patterns indicated. Staff leaving the organisation were doing so for a variety of personal reasons and therefore, it was difficult to put measures in place to increase staff retention. The Council was looking at initiatives involving interns and apprentices, which would enable recruits to develop through the organisation.
- iii. The Corporate Delivery Plan 2024/25 would include further operational detail on how the Corporate Strategy would be delivered. This was due to be submitted to Cabinet in March 2024 and identified as a pre-decision scrutiny item.

##### 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 on 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 87 2023/24, 8th January 2024.
Officer to Contact:	Sally Watson Democratic Services Officer (01509) 634969 Sally.watson@charnwood.gov.uk

## **CABINET – 11TH JANUARY 2024**

### **Report of the Scrutiny Commission**

#### CHARNWOOD GRANTS STRATEGIC PARTNERS 2024/25 – 2025/26

##### Purpose of Report

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission in relation to the Charnwood Grants Strategic Partners 2024/25 – 2025/26.

##### Recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission

That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission welcomes and supports the recommendations set out in the report of the Director of Housing and Wellbeing.

##### Reason

The Commission, having carefully considered and asked questions on the report felt the Cabinet should approve the recommendations set out.

##### Meeting Discussion

- i. The allocation of £9,537 to be confirmed in the recommendations to Cabinet would be awarded to Living Without Abuse.
- ii. The Falcon Centre had a Service Level Agreement with the Housing service at the Council. Allocating further funding to the Falcon Centre would mean removing funding from another organisation. Organisations in receipt of a Strategic Partner Grant were not able to apply for Community Grant funding.
- iii. The transport service provided by Syston Volunteer Centre did not align with the requirements of the Strategic Partner Grant funding allocations. It would be possible for the Syston Volunteer Centre to apply for Communities Grant funding.

##### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

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##### Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

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##### 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 89 2023/24, 8th January 2024.
Officer to Contact:	Sally Watson Democratic Services Officer (01509) 634969 Sally.watson@charnwood.gov.uk

## **CABINET – 11TH JANUARY 2024**

### **Report of the Scrutiny Commission**

#### DECLASSIFICATION OF PROPERTIES DESIGNATED FOR ALLOCATION TO PEOPLE AGES OVER 45 YEARS

##### Purpose of Report

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission in relation to the Declassification of Properties Designed for Allocation to People Aged Over 45 Years report.

##### Recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission

That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission welcomes and supports the recommendations set out in the report of the Director of Housing and Wellbeing.

##### Reason

The Commission, having carefully considered and asked questions on the report felt the Cabinet should approve the recommendations set out.

##### Meeting Discussion

- i. Without actioning the recommendations, the Council could be challenged by individuals on the Housing Register who did not qualify for a property assigned to those aged 45+. The Council's Equalities Officer had been consulted and it was confirmed that there was a requirement for proportionate justification for continuation of a 45+ category in order for the Council to avoid risk of challenge. There did not appear to be a proportionate justification given that the properties in question did not have features which made them particularly suitable for people aged 45+.
- ii. The Council was in an anomalous position, with significantly more properties with age restrictions of 45+ than other local authorities.
- iii. There was no proposed change to the Council's stock of properties assigned for residents aged 60+, which were designed for residents of that age range.
- iv. There was a void property backlog, which the Council was working to resolve. The Scrutiny Commission had received updates on this issue and were due to receive a further update on this in February 2024. Voids from each classification were handled in the same way.
- v. There were mechanisms built into the housing allocations policies and procedures to support suitable allocations. Applicants who were unsuitable to be a tenant, for example where they had been responsible for anti-social behaviour or were unable to adhere to the terms of a tenancy agreement, would

not be accepted onto the housing register or considered for an offer of accommodation until they had demonstrated a significant change in their behaviour. Suitability assessments were completed for all allocations by the housing needs team, in consultation with the landlord services team, taking into account the suitability of the accommodation for the applicant and the suitability of the applicant for the accommodation. These processes would help to minimise the risk of a clash in lifestyles in areas where properties were to be declassified.

- vi. The declassification process would take effect in Summer 2024, following an appropriate communications process and the recruitment of an additional ASB Officer and an additional Tenancy and Estate Management Officer to support the changes. The declassification would be carefully managed and would take effect gradually in a phased approach, and as properties became vacant.
- vii. It was recognised that some residents may be concerned about the declassification of properties and it was suggested that the declassification of properties be discussed at the Charnwood Housing Resident's Forum. It was intended that calls to the Council in relation to the declassification of properties be filtered into a dedicated queue, to be addressed by officers. The Council had a well-resourced Tenancy Support team which would help to minimise issues.
- viii. Members felt that the report was very clear and easy to understand.

#### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

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#### Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

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#### 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 88 2023/24, 8th January  
2024

Officer to Contact:

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Democratic Services Officer  
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