

**CABINET  
9TH JULY 2020**

PRESENT: The Deputy Leader (Councillor Barkley)  
Councillors Bailey, Bokor, Harper-Davies, Mercer,  
Poland, Rattray, Rollings and Smidowicz

Councillor Seaton  
Councillor Bolton (Item 5 – Questions)  
Mr M. Hunt (Item 5 – Questions)

Chief Executive  
Strategic Director of Corporate Services  
Strategic Director - Commercial Development  
Head of Strategic Support  
Head of Finance and Property Services  
Head of Neighbourhood Services  
Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager  
Democratic Services Manager  
Information Development Manager  
Democratic Services Officer (LS)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Morgan

In the absence of the Leader, this meeting was chaired by the Deputy Leader.

The Deputy Leader stated that this meeting was being livestreamed as a public meeting and would also be recorded and the recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

10. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

The following disclosures were made:

- (i) Councillor Smidowicz – a personal interest as a trustee of The Carpenter's Arms, that organisation was referred to in an item on the agenda.
- (ii) Councillor Poland – an interest in item 12 on the agenda as a member of Leicestershire Fire Authority.

11. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

On behalf of the Leader, the Deputy Leader made the following announcement:

Srebrenica Memorial Day 2020

“This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, in which over 8,000 Muslim men and boys were murdered in the worst atrocity on European soil since the Second World War, simply because of their religious identity. As an organisation we believe that we must ensure that we never forget about the genocide and reaffirm our commitment to standing up against all forms of hatred and prejudice that targets groups based on their religion, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or any type of difference.

The theme of 2020, “Every Action Matters” seeks to encourage every person to reflect upon their own behaviour and choices that they make, and demonstrate that however insignificant it may seem, every action matters, whether positive or negative. It aims to show that those who stand up and unite against hatred can make a difference. It sets out to dispel the notion that one person cannot make a difference and show that the action of one individual does matter and that they can achieve a great deal, however small their action may appear initially.

It is now more important than ever for us to come together, no matter what our background, to celebrate diversity and to stand together in solidarity against hatred and discrimination by mourning the loss of those who died at Srebrenica and reflecting on how we as individuals, groups and communities can come together to build a better future without hatred”.

12. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

13. QUESTIONS UNDER CABINET PROCEDURE 10.7

A. Mr M. Hunt – Garendon Obelisk and Woods Surrounding

“Would the Leader thank officers for the recent attention they have given to the protection and refurbishment of the Garendon Obelisk and their on-going care for the monuments and listed landscape?”

The woods surrounding the Obelisk are within the Garendon Development Site Area, and at one end integral to Booth Wood in a continuous landscape feature. What are the current and future plans for these woods which lie within the development site?

Would the Leader agree that it would be silly not to manage this area of woodland jointly for the protection of wildlife and controlled public access?

When do we expect Booth Wood to become Local Nature Reserves?”

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

*Booth Wood lies within the boundary of the Garendon SUE development area and is part of a wider area of woodland that surrounds the Obelisk.*

*The woodland within the Garendon estate will be managed for conservation and to control access/recreational use as the new housing develops but its characteristics*

*are quite different from Booth Wood. Booth Wood is an established semi natural woodland with a varied structure and canopy composition whilst the woodland elsewhere on the Garendon estate is even aged plantation with a closed canopy and is understood to have fairly limited ground cover. It is therefore appropriate to treat them differently.*

*The Estate woodland is to be managed by a Management Company as set out in the legal agreement to the planning permission. Booth Wood is owned and managed by the Borough Council and that arrangement is expected to continue alongside those of the Management Company.*

*The Council expects Booth Wood to be declared as a Local Nature Reserve later this year.*

Mr Hunt wished to ask the following supplementary question:

“My sincere thanks for this important background information and the welcome prospect of declaring Booth Wood a Local Nature Reserve. I am a little confused by the statement that Booth Wood is “within the boundary of the Garendon SUE development area” and would be grateful for clarification of this because the wood clearly lies outside the red line defined in the latest Master Plan\*.

Whilst I understand that some of the extensive woodland on the estate is different from Booth Wood, would you confirm that the adjoining wood to Booth Wood, extending as far as the Obelisk, is particularly different from Booth Wood in terms of its characteristics and in what way?”

\*Mr Hunt had submitted his supplementary question to officers in advance of the meeting and had included a map to illustrate this point.

In response, the Deputy Leader stated that, in light of the supplementary question, the application details had been checked and it had been confirmed Booth Wood was adjoining but outside the boundary as indicated by Mr Hunt. An apology was given for the oversight. The Deputy Leader added that the Council’s Senior Ecologist advises that woodland within the Garendon estate will be managed for conservation and to control access/recreational use as the new housing develops but its characteristics are quite different from Booth Wood. Booth Wood is an established semi natural woodland with a varied structure and canopy composition while the woodland in question on the Garendon estate is even aged plantation with a closed canopy and fairly limited ground cover. It would be considered not necessarily to make sense therefore to treat them in the same way.

B. Mr M. Hunt - Jubilee Park Outdoor Gym (Loughborough)

“What was the final cost of the Jubilee Park Outdoor Gym, how is use monitored and do we have plans to increase its use?”

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

*The outdoor gym at Jubilee Park was installed at a cost of £20,000, following consultation with local Councillors and feedback received about improvements to open*

spaces in the area. Outdoor gyms provide free access to gym equipment in the outdoor environment for those who wish exercise outside or who may not feel comfortable in a gym.

The Council monitors use and condition of the equipment through its regular programme of inspections for play and outdoor equipment. Users of the equipment can download the Proludic Sports app to monitor and track their exercises on the outdoor gym. We will continue to work with Active Charnwood to encourage healthy lifestyles and access to sports and recreation across all parks in the Borough for local residents.

C. Councillor Bolton – Council Tax Support and Payment

- “(i) How many residents have put in claims for council tax support since 1st April 2020?
- (ii) Of those who have put in a claim, how many have been successful?
- (iii) How many residents have failed to pay their council tax on time in the period April to June 2020?
- (iv) How many residents took up the option of deferring their council tax payments to a later date?”

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

- (i) 902 claims have been received during this time.
- (ii) Identifying the successful and unsuccessful new claims can only be done by a manual check and count which would be extremely labour intensive, estimated to take approx. 1.5 days work. Based on the current workload of the team this would be difficult to provide at present.
- (iii) Approximately 2500 (this figure has been calculated by taking the number of unpaid Direct Debits plus the approximate number of reminders issued last week relating to this financial year).
- (iv) 3063 accounts.

In making a statement, Councillor Bolton referred to her disappointment and surprise that no analysis of successful versus unsuccessful claims was available, although she understood these were very difficult times. She wished to ask the following supplementary question:

“What are Charnwood Borough Council planning to do to further help residents in difficult financial circumstances to pay their Council Tax and any associated arrears?”

In response, the Deputy Leader referred to the availability of a hardship fund for Council Tax to which residents could apply if they so wished. Also, to the option of deferring payment as referenced in the published question and response. Officers would willingly speak to any resident regarding arrears and how those could possibly be extended over a period. The Council was not unreasonable, would consider all circumstances and try to accommodate those as far as it could. In respect of an analysis of successful and unsuccessful claims not being available, that was done on an equitable basis, but the work involved to provide the information would be substantial. Councillor Bolton’s disappointment was recognised, but there was no

intention to be obstructive, rather it was due to pressures, indeed the service concerned had dealt with substantial numbers of grant applications to assist businesses. The Council would do everything it could to help residents.

Both Mr Hunt and Councillor Bolton wished to thank the Cabinet for the responses provided.

14. GENERAL FUND AND HRA REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT 2019/20 AND CARRY FORWARD OF BUDGETS

Considered, a report of the Head of Finance and Property Services setting out the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Outturn position for 2019/20 compared with Original budget and requesting budget carry forwards of £5.6k for the General Fund (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Seaton, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

The Head of Finance and Property Services assisted with consideration of the report.

**RESOLVED**

1. that the Revenue Outturn positions of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account for 2019/20 be noted;
2. that carry forwards of budgets amounting to £5.6k for Unit 4 upgrades, Making Tax Digital/GDPR Financial System upgrades that are still to be finalised in 2020, this is be funded from the General Fund working balance;
3. that the report of the Scrutiny Commission be noted.

Reasons

1. To enable the information to be used when considering future budgets and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
2. To enable the budgets to be carried forward to cover costs of committed services in 2020-21.
3. To acknowledge the work undertaken by and the views of the Scrutiny Commission.

15. CAPITAL PLAN OUTTURN REPORT 2019/20

Considered, a report of the Head of Finance and Property Services setting out total expenditure on the Capital Plan for 2019/20 compared with the current budget and detailing those schemes that required carry forward of budget to 2020/21 and 2021/22 and the provisional arrangements for the financing of the Plan (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Seaton, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented a report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

The Head of Finance and Property Services assisted with consideration of the report.

It was agreed that the Head of Planning and Regeneration would be asked to provide information to Councillor Rattray on the current position with the Shepshed Bull Ring scheme. It was understood that recent progress had been made with the scheme.

## **RESOLVED**

1. that the outturn position for 2019/20 be noted and that slippage of capital budgets totalling £9,292,200 be carried forward into 2020/21 be approved (General Fund £8,404,100 and HRA £886,100) and the slippage will be added to the new 3 Year Capital Plan;
2. that the provisional financing of the Plan set out in Table 2 in Part B of the report of the Head of Finance and Property Services be noted;
3. that the report of the Scrutiny Commission be noted.

## Reasons

1. To enable projects to be completed.
2. To indicate how the Plan is likely to be financed.
3. To acknowledge the work undertaken by and the views of the Scrutiny Commission.

## 16. AMENDMENTS TO ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN

Considered, a report of the Head of Finance and Property Services setting out proposed additions to the Annual Procurement Plan 2020/21 (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Finance and Property Services assisted with consideration of the report.

## **RESOLVED**

1. that the contracts, over £25,000 and up to £75,000, listed in Appendix A to the report of the Head of Finance and Property Services, be let in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules;
2. that the contracts, over £75,001 and up to £500,000, listed in Appendix B to the report of the Head of Finance and Property Services, be let in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.

## Reason

1.& 2. To allow contracts of the Council to be let in accordance with contract procedure rules.

17. CHARNWOOD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT/LOUGHBOROUGH GRANTS REDESIGNATION

Considered, a report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services seeking agreement to proposed amendments to the Charnwood Community Development and Engagement (including environmental) and Loughborough Community Grant Schemes in 2020/21 to ensure the provision of a grants scheme that supports the local voluntary and community sector (VCS) to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (item 9 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager assisted with consideration of the report.

Councillor Mercer referred to question 4 e) on the application form attached at appendix 2 to the report. He considered that it would be useful to ask applicants to give details if they had applied for or received any other emergency funding during the current pandemic as this may affect the decision on the application. In response, the Head of Neighbourhood Services stated that that was implied by the question, but it could be made more explicit that those details were needed.

## **RESOLVED**

1. that approval is given to the amalgamation of the Charnwood Community Development and Engagement (including environmental) and the Loughborough Community Grant Schemes in 2020/21 into a single grants scheme renamed Charnwood VCS COVID-19 Recovery Grants;
2. that the Charnwood VCS COVID-19 Recovery Grants Scheme as outlined in Part B, sections 13 to 29 of the report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services is approved as the way forward for 2020/21;
3. that the draft Application Form and Guidance Notes (containing the criteria) attached at Appendices A and B to the report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services are approved and that the Head of Neighbourhood Services, in agreement with the Cabinet Lead Member, is given delegated authority to finalise these documents;
4. that the Head of Neighbourhood Services, in agreement with the Cabinet Lead Member, is given delegated authority to determine the Charnwood VCS COVID-19 Recovery Grants to be awarded in 2020/21;
5. that the Head of Neighbourhood Services is given delegated authority to finalise the terms and conditions of the awarded Charnwood VCS COVID-19 Recovery grants.

## Reasons

1. To ensure the 2020/21 grants programme is responsive to meeting the needs of the local voluntary and community sector to recover from the impact of the COVID19 pandemic for the period up to 31 March 2021.
2. To enable the delivery of a grants scheme in 2020/21 that is responsive to the impact of COVID-19 on the VCS and assists with its recovery.
3. To enable any further amendments that are required to be made in the required timescales.
4. To ensure that decisions regarding the award of grants, following recommendations from the Grants Panel, can be made in a responsive and timely way to ensure that the required support to the VCS is provided as quickly as possible.
5. To enable the grants awarded to be finalised and appropriate information to be supplied to the Council about the outcomes of the project.

## 18. URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Considered, a report of the Chief Executive setting out actions taken by the Chief Executive and/or Strategic Directors and Heads of Service which were made under urgency provisions due to the COVID-19 pandemic (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Chief Executive and the Democratic Services Manager assisted with consideration of the report. It was acknowledged that the requirements of Section 8.3 of the Council's Constitution had been incorrectly stated in the report in that the requirement was for the action to be reported to the next meeting of the Cabinet and not to a future meeting of the Cabinet as appropriate. On this occasion, the action had been reported as soon as possible, but that had not been to the next meeting of the Cabinet. The Chief Executive added that there remained some further urgent decisions taken by officers that would be reported to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED** that the actions taken by the Chief Executive, and/or Strategic Directors and Heads of Service, which were made under urgency provisions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, be noted.

## Reason

To ensure that the actions have been reported to the Cabinet.

## 19. EXEMPT INFORMATION

**RESOLVED** that members of the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and it is considered that the public

interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

*The Information Development Manager confirmed that the meeting was no longer being livestreamed.*

20. ENTERPRISE ZONE UPDATE

Considered, an exempt report of the Chief Executive to consider the Legal Agreement between the Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership (item 12 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Seaton, Chair of the Scrutiny Commission, presented an exempt report setting out the Commission's pre-decision scrutiny of the matter and recommendation (copy filed with these minutes).

The Scrutiny Commission was thanked for its useful pre-decision scrutiny work, both in respect of this item and items considered earlier in the meeting.

The Chief Executive assisted with consideration of the report.

**RESOLVED**

1. that decisions be made as detailed in the exempt minute (Cabinet Minute 20E 2020/21);
2. that the exempt report of the Scrutiny Commission be noted.

Reasons

1. As set out in the exempt minute (Cabinet Minute 20E 2020/21).
2. To acknowledge the work undertaken by and the views of the Scrutiny Commission.

NOTES:

1. The decisions in these minutes not in the form of recommendations to Council will come into effect at noon on Friday, 17th July 2020 unless called in under Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 11.7. Decisions in the form of recommendations to Council are not subject to call in.
2. No reference may be made to these minutes at the next available Ordinary Council meeting unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on Friday, 17th July 2020.
3. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Cabinet.