

**SCRUTINY COMMISSION  
29TH APRIL 2024**

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Rattray)  
The Vice Chair (Councillor Needham)  
Councillors Seaton, B. Gray, N. Taylor, Harper-Davies and Lennie

Councillor Miah (Leader of the Council) and  
Hamilton (Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet  
Lead Member for Public & Private Sector Housing)

Director Housing and Wellbeing  
Head of Transformation, Strategy and  
Performance  
Transformation and Improvement Manager  
Head of Democracy  
Democratic Services Officer (SW)

APOLOGIES: None

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. She also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, 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.

138. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 2nd April 2024 were approved.

139. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS, AND OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

140. DECLARATIONS OF THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

141. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 11.16

No questions were submitted.

142. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF ANY SPECIFIC FINANCIAL MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED BY CABINET

There were no items of this nature on the Cabinet agenda for the Commission to consider.

143. CABINET ITEMS FOR PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

144. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY 2024 - 2028

A Cabinet report of the Head of Transformation, Strategy and Performance to set out, following a period of public consultation, Charnwood Borough Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy (2024-2028) for consideration and approval, was submitted (item 7a on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Leader of the Council, the Head of Transformation, Strategy and Performance and the Transformation and Improvement Manager assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. Members felt that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2028 was informative, useful and well presented. Members valued the data on the work force and felt that the consultation efforts were wide reaching and positive.
- ii. The revised Equality, Diversity Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2028 contained some new ideas, including the inclusion of the intention to treat care experienced people as if they were a protected characteristic. Further new ideas included the intention to raise awareness of the Equality Impact Assessment process, and to monitor compliments and complaints to assess any trends relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- iii. Providing equalities data was optional and the Council could not control the response rate. The Council encouraged the collection of Equalities data from customers as this provided important information for the Council to work with to try to alleviate inequality.
- iv. The Council aimed to increase the diversity of interview panels, as part of the intention of promoting new recruitment processes and evaluation of its efficiency. Interview panels would be made as diverse as possible and other actions would be used to reduce bias in the recruitment process. The Council now accepted CVs as part of the recruitment process and candidates were anonymised at the point of application.
- v. It was suggested that Councillors could support the proposed development to consultation process, which intended to promote engagement from all sections of the community. Ward Councillors were known in the community and would potentially be able to interact with hard to reach communities. The Council's Communications team would use a variety of channels to promote consultations widely. In addition, the Customer Experience team was working to complete the Digital Inclusion Project.
- vi. The Council was committed to improving accessibility for all groups and meeting the needs of residents. Grant funding was provided to Equality Action to provide personalised support to residents where there were accessibility issues.

## RESOLVED

That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Transformation, Strategy and Performance.

### Reason

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

#### 145. PROCUREMENT OF A CONTRACTOR TO DELIVER FLOOD DAMAGE REINSTATEMENT WORKS

A Cabinet report of the Director of Housing and Wellbeing to seek Cabinet approval to procure a contractor to undertake reinstatement works following flood damage, was submitted (item 7b on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Public and Private Sector Housing and the Director of Housing and Wellbeing assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. The Council was engaging with the insurers and loss adjusters to ensure costs were acceptable.
- ii. The Council intended to consider installing flood defence measures into at risk properties. It was understood that Leicestershire County Council was engaged in a study following the flooding incidents and the outcome of this would inform the requirements for flood defence. The intended contract duration for the reinstatement works was 18 months, however it would need to be considered from a procurement perspective whether works of this nature could be factored into the existing contract, should they be required.

## RESOLVED

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

### Reason

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

#### 146. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - CABINET RESPONSE

A report of the Cabinet was considered setting out its responses to the recommendations of the Commission on pre-decision scrutiny items, was submitted (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Democracy assisted with the consideration of this item.

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet's responses to the Commission's recommendations be noted.

Reason

The Commission was satisfied that it added value where appropriate and welcomed the Cabinet's consideration of the Commission's views and recommendations as part of its decision making process.

147. SCRUTINY PANELS

A report of the Head of Democracy to consider updates on the work of scrutiny panels, was submitted (item 9 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Democracy and the Democratic Services Officer assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. The next meeting of the Public Transport Scrutiny Panel would be held on 26th June 2024.
- ii. The Annual Scrutiny Report was in development and would be available at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Commission. This would include information on scrutiny panels over the 2023/24 period.

**RESOLVED** That the Scrutiny Commission reviewed the progression of scrutiny Panels.

Reason

To ensure timely and effective scrutiny of the matter/subject.

148. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Democracy enabling the Commission to review and agree the scrutiny work programme, was submitted (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Democracy and the Democratic Services Officer assisted with the consideration of this item.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Scrutiny Commission review the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Work Programme and make any amendments the Commission feel necessary.
2. That the Scrutiny Commission agree that the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Work Programme be updated in accordance with the decisions taken

during consideration of this item and any further decisions taken during this meeting.

### Reasons

- 1&2. To ensure timely and effective scrutiny of the matter/subject.
2. To ensure that the information contained within the Work Programme is up to date.

## 149. SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Democracy to enable the Scrutiny Commission to review its own work programme, including considering the list of forthcoming Executive Key Decisions in order to schedule items for pre-decision scrutiny, was submitted (item 11 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Democracy and the Democratic Services Officer assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. At the Full Council meeting held on 22nd April 2024, a member briefing session on the Lightbulb Service was requested. This was now scheduled for 28th May 2024, and would include information on Disabled Facilities Grants and delivery models. Following completion of the ongoing review on the subject, a Cabinet paper would be available for the Scrutiny Commission to review through the pre-decision scrutiny process.
- ii. The Waste Management Scrutiny Panel update was due to be submitted to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Commission. It was highlighted that the agenda for this meeting could potentially be substantial in size and it was possible that there would not be an update available for the Scrutiny Commission at their next meeting regarding the Waste Management progress, as this was dependent upon legislation.

### **RESOLVED**

1. That forthcoming Executive Key Decisions or decisions to be taken in private by the Executive, set out in Appendix 2 to the report, and scheduled scrutiny of those matters, be noted.
2. That the Commission's current work programme be noted.

### Reasons

1. To ensure effective and timely scrutiny, either to provide Cabinet with advice prior to it taking a decision or to ensure that the Council and external public service providers and partners were operating effectively for the benefit of the Borough.
2. To ensure effective and timely scrutiny.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 17th June 2024 unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.
3. The following meeting participants attended the meeting virtually; Councillor N Taylor, Councillor B Gray, Councillor Hamilton. All other meeting participants attended in person.