

COUNCIL – 4TH JULY 2022

ITEM 10 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

10.1 Councillor Draycott – The Store

Could the Leader set out the strategy upon the opening of The Store?
How has that had to be changed with increased usage now due to the cost-of-living crisis?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

Since its launch, there has been constant development and adjustments made to the model including introducing a robust assessment process to ensure eligibility and identify needs and support.

Your Store continues to see an increase in numbers, and we now have 3 pop up stores in Mountsorrel, Shelthorpe and at Fearon Hall (Vegetarian only) operating alongside the permanent store and currently support 573 households registered with an average of 986 membership shops per month. The main Your Store has two members of staff and 10 volunteers. We are also looking into a Your Store in the South of Charnwood.

With the impact of the cost of living crisis we are reviewing the strategy and have acknowledge that any savings made by shopping at Your Store are now swallowed up by increased bills so the numbers using the shop are unlikely to reduce or move out of debt in the coming months.

Your Store members are being supported in many ways including referral to the Housing Support Fund, CAB have a weekly drop-in session and other offers of support where needed. A volunteer mentor scheme is also being introduced in the coming months to provide more one to one additional support.

10.2 Councillor Draycott – Town Centre Highway Works – Bedford Square/Devonshire Square/Wards End

Could the Leader answer;

- The number of complaints and Insurance claims received and pending?
- What is the total area covered by foot way granite paving sourced from China?
- What is the total area covered by parking bay block paving sourced from Ireland?
- With work still ongoing is the figure given at the last Council meeting of final costs still the same?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

18 issues have been logged since the scheme commenced in February 2021 and 4 insurance claims have been received. Since the road reopened, we have seen the number of incidents reduce significantly.

The third and most recent safety audit completed independently on 21st June does not raise concerns about the kerbs or materials used. The assessors commented verbally that pedestrian safety has been improved.

The total area covered in granite paving from China is 3,000 m² and the total area covered by blocks in parking areas sourced from Ireland is 770 m². As you will recall from the original project procurement these was the most cost-effective way of securing the materials.

At 31 May 2022, expenditure on the scheme totalled £3,095,384.78. Due to problems caused by the utility providers we have suffered significant delays and had to deliver additional works to utilities that had been incorrectly installed in the past. This has included paying for the relaying of a gas main. These delays will add more cost to the project however we are seeking to reclaim these costs from the utility companies. Further updates on this will be provided as it progresses.

10.3 Councillor J Bradshaw– Air Quality in Buildings

The recent report commissioned by the Government's Chief Adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance has called for all buildings in the UK to be equipped with proper ventilation to help reduce the impact of future pandemics.

With one of the recommendations being to give Councils the freedom to update their building regulations so that developers have to take in to account air quality safety and healthy performance over a lifetime, could Charnwood Borough Council Planning Department please tell us how this can be worked into future planning policies by them?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The Council has no remit to act independently on imposing standards for infection control and ventilation measures in buildings above that set out in the Building Regulations. While infection control was considered by Government in setting standards for ventilation in all building types, they stepped back from this and instead concentrated on controlling the filtration of air and its circulation by air conditioning units in commercial buildings only.

The new changes to Part L and F of the Building Regulations and the introduction of the new approved document O relating to the control of

Overheating in June 2021, goes some way to improve ventilation and air circulation within all buildings. However, this is more about temperature control than infection control.

10.4 Councillor Ward – Alcohol Related ASB in Loughborough Town Centre

Despite the Town Centre PSPO having been extended until 2023, no enforcement appears to be being taken in some areas where alcohol related ASB is being regularly reported. If no data can be presented on enforcement action being taken, then the PSPO cannot be extended beyond 2023, and enforcement powers will be lost.

Can we have a breakdown, by street, of alcohol fuelled ASB incidents reported in the Loughborough town centre PSPO designated zone since it was extended in 2020? In addition, can we have a breakdown of how many PSPO Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) have been issued, by street, if any? If no FPNs have been issued, or if there is no data available to evidence positive action under the current town centre PSPO, please can we have an explanation as to why not?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

'Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) were introduced under the 'ASB, Crime & Policing Act 2014' and are intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem, which is deemed to be detrimental to a local community, within a specified locality. The current Loughborough Town Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) came into effect on the 20th October 2017, when the then existing Alcohol Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) automatically transferred into a PSPO, in keeping with the change in legislation.

The Loughborough Town Centre PSPO helps deal with the specific problem of alcohol related anti-social behaviour within a designated public place, the boundaries of which are defined on the Council's web site. See https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/designated_public_place_order.

This Order does not place a total ban on the consumption of alcohol within the designated zone. The offence is only committed when, under section 63 of the Act, a person who is consuming alcohol and engaging in behaviour that is causing, or likely to cause nuisance and annoyance, fails to comply with a request to cease drinking or to surrender the alcohol. Within Charnwood, all powers of enforcement in relation to the Loughborough Town Centre PSPO have been designated to the Police. Therefore, the request to desist in the behaviour and subsequent request to cease drinking / surrender alcohol can only be made by a Police Officer or PCSO operating within the designated zone.

Following public consultation and representations from Leicestershire Police, an extension was sought to extend the current PSPO which was granted by Cabinet on 17th September 2020, thereby allowing the Order to be in situ until the 17th September 2023. Data has been sought from the Charnwood Neighbourhood Policing Commander in respect of positive action taken under the current PSPO. The Police have reported that a total of 32 alcohol seizures have taken place between 17th September 2020 and 24th June 2022 and no Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued. The Police explained that officers in the first instance seek to engage and explain to individuals engaged in behaviour deemed to be of an anti-social nature, how their actions can have a detrimental impact upon the quality of life of local residents and visitors to the town.

The designated zone for the PSPO is extensive and the way incidents are currently recorded precludes being able to provide a detailed street by street breakdown of alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour. The Council are working with the Police to improve the specific recording methodology to enable more effective information for any subsequent review of the PSPO. The Police have stated that the key locations for their enforcement are listed as being Ashby Road and Radmoor Road and all relate to students engaged in act of anti-social behaviour.

10.5 Councillor A Gray– Landlord Services into the Future

Bearing in mind the importance of the best workforce and an efficient system, how are we ensuring that housing services and repairs can be carried out promptly and efficiently in the future and taking into account the following points?

- Regardless of obstacles such as the pandemic
- Without single points of failure in the process
- Ensuring that properties do not continue to remain empty for over a year
- Without depriving Charnwood BC of rents and potential tenants of a home

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The health and safety of our employees and tenants is our number one priority. The Council has fully complied with government guidance and legislation relating to Covid-19 in the delivery of its repairs services. When people were working from home, over the life of the pandemic, our workforce continued to deliver urgent and emergency repairs in our customers' homes.

Performance and transactional satisfaction data for the financial year 2021-22 can be found in the table at Appendix 1. The data shows that despite the very challenging circumstances, our workforce is delivering very high levels of customer service, and we should be proud of that.

As with other housing organisations, planned, non-essential, works were paused at the height of the pandemic, and an opportunity has been taken to move from a planned investment delivery model based on a single managing contractor, to one of multiple contractors. This action is intended to, amongst other things, reduce the risk of supplier failure.

Whilst historically void repairs performance has been very strong, there has been a recent dip. Recent key actions taken / in progress to improve performance are summarised below.

- New energy performance certificate provider appointed and mobilised - to support timely production of certificates needed for re-let.*
- Service Level Agreement entered in to, and service mobilised, with Energy Angels to achieve, free void energy spend, smart metering, debt resets (for all suppliers), all metering / supply issues, and potentially lower energy costs for residents.*
- Recruitment (which has been challenging) in progress for permanent operative positions, and temporary additional operative resources.*
- Additional external contractor resources being procured.*

The position in respect of void works has stabilised, and it is expected that as the level of delivery resource increases, performance will return to the previous high level.

The future approach to asset management generally, will be set out in a strategy which is expected to be brought forward later this year following the completion of a stock condition survey.

Appendix 1 - Repairs Performance / Transactional Satisfaction Data

Description	2021/22 Outturn
<i>% Responsive repairs completed within timescales</i>	91.37% 8862/9699
<i>% Emergency repairs completed within 24 hours</i>	99.71% 3467/3477
<i>% Urgent repairs completed on time</i>	92.26% 2062/2235
<i>% Routine repairs completed on time</i>	87.22% 3300/3987
<i>% Responsive repairs for which appointment are made and kept</i>	99.18% 6080/6130
<i>% Tenants satisfied with responsive repair (overall)</i>	98.12% 833/849
<i>% Tenants satisfied with the time taken to do the repair</i>	98.47%

	836/849
<i>% Tenants satisfied that the operative arrived on time</i>	99.76% 847/849

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO COUNCIL – PROCEDURE

- Councillors are required to submit a question on notice in writing by 12noon on the eight working day prior to Council, the title of the question is published on the Council Agenda.
- Questions and responses will be published at the end of the previous working day (usually the Friday prior to a Council meeting on a Monday) and will be available at the Council meeting for Councillors, the press, and the public.
- After the questions and responses are published **Councillors may indicate that they wish to ask a supplementary question by noon on the day of the Council meeting.**
- The Mayor will invite those Councillors who have indicated that they wish to do so to ask a supplementary question.
- The Leader (or relevant Lead Member on behalf of the Leader) or Chair of the Committee is able to respond.
- The total time each person can speak on a single question is time limited.