

SCRUTINY COMMISSION
5TH JULY 2022

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Seaton)
The Vice Chair (Councillor Ranson)
Councillors Hamilton, Murphy and Fryer

Councillors Barkley (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Lead Member for Finance and Property Services), Harper-Davies (Lead Member for Community Support) and Mercer (Cabinet Lead Member for Private Housing)

Strategic Director; Commercial Development, Assets and Leisure
Performance, Policy and Development Manager
Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing
Democratic Services Manager
Democratic Services Officer (SW)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Brookes, Parton and Popley. Councillor Keith Harris attended the meeting virtually (see notes at end of minutes).

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.

15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 6th June 2022 were approved.

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

The following disclosure was made:

- i. Councillor Fryer – a non-registrable interest in item 7b on the agenda (Procurement of Environmental Services), having been involved in the previous procurement process as Lead Member at the time of procurement and did not have an open mind.

17. DECLARATIONS OF THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

18. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 11.16

No questions were submitted.

19. 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.

20. CABINET ITEMS FOR PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

21. AMENDMENTS TO THE ANNUAL PROCUREMENT PLAN

A Cabinet report of the Strategic Director: Commercial Development, Assets and Leisure to set out updates to the Annual Procurement Plan for Charnwood Borough Council for 2022/23 (item 7a on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Lead Member for Finance and Property Services, the Strategic Director: Commercial Development, Assets and Leisure and the Democratic Services Manager assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. It was highlighted that the proposed changes to the current Annual Procurement Plan update process were necessary as updates added little value to the execution of the procurement. The proposed changes would eliminate an additional step that was not required. There were a number of processes in place which would allow the monitoring of contracts, such as regular budget monitoring and bi-weekly officer meetings which would continue to ensure contracts were managed effectively.
- ii. The contract concerning audio visual equipment installation at the Town Hall would be a shared contract between the Democratic Service team and Loughborough Town Hall. The execution of this contract would allow both parties to utilise equipment installed and would mean that the Council would no longer need to pay for external audio visual support on a meeting-by-meeting basis. It was anticipated that the Council would have recuperated the cost of the contract over approximately one to two years, depending on the usage of the equipment by the Town Hall.
- iii. A briefing note containing further detail on the audio visual equipment installation at the Town Hall was offered to members.
- iv. The Council intended to begin exploratory work on a potential new office site in the coming months. If the site was considered appropriate for development, completion of the project would take three to five years as a minimum. Therefore it was not justifiable to wait for the Council to build a new space for meetings to be held with audio visual equipment installed. Therefore it was considered to be most appropriate to undertake the contact to identify a contractor to fulfil the current needs of the Council in providing audio visual support for meetings and events at Loughborough Town Hall.

- v. It was highlighted that the contract concerning audio visual equipment installation at the Town Hall would be utilised by two teams within the Council and so the benefits of the contract procurement would be doubled.
- vi. In relation to the audio visual equipment, once a procurement exercise had been completed, the Council was not obliged to continue with the current supplier as they had been booked on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

RESOLVED

1. That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Strategic Director: Commercial Development, Assets and Leisure.
2. That a briefing note be prepared by the Democratic Services Manager outlining detail on the intended procurement of services for audio visual equipment installation at the Town Hall.

Reasons

1. The Commission, having carefully considered the report, felt the Cabinet should approve the recommendation set out.
2. To ensure members were informed about the contract and services required.

Councillor Keith Harris, attending the meeting virtually, confirmed that he would have supported the recommendations as set out in the report of the Strategic Director: Commercial Development, Assets and Leisure had he been present in the room and able to do so.

22. PROCUREMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Councillor Fryer left the meeting for the consideration of this item.

A Cabinet report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces to review the different commissioning options for the provision of household recycling and waste collections, as well as street cleaning beyond 31st March 2024 (item 7b on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Lead Member for Community Support and the Performance, Policy and Development Manager assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. It was highlighted that following the implementation of the new senior leadership structure of the Council, it was possible to realign officer delegated authority (if required) in order to ensure services were not disrupted.

- ii. Each option outlined within the report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces had positive and negative implications. It was considered that the preferred option (option three – to commission services from a mature and well-developed marketplace) would minimise risk to the Council and maximises private sector expertise.
- iii. There were a number of large national companies which would be invited to enter bids to supply the Council with environmental services. It was considered that there was sufficient competition in the marketplace in order for the Council to appoint an appropriate service provider.
- iv. The contents of the new secondary legislation under the Environment Act 2021 were unknown at this point. It was anticipated that this could impact on service delivery. However, it would be possible for specifications to be changed if this would not materially change the tendering process. In addition, the Government had committed to cover additional service costs following the implementation of additional legislation.
- v. It was highlighted that the Scrutiny Commission would be interested in scrutinising the matter further when more information becomes available to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet be informed that the Commission supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces.

Reason

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

Councillor Keith Harris, attending the meeting virtually, confirmed that he would have supported the recommendations set out in the report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces had he been present in the room and able to do so.

Councillor Fryer returned to the meeting following the consideration of this item.

23. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

A Cabinet report of the Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing to present the proposed Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy. This Policy seeks to ensure that all properties let as residential dwellings and those in private ownership throughout the Borough are of good quality and are well managed (item 7c on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Lead Member for Private Housing, the Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. Members praised the Lead Member and work of the officers involved in the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, specifically the Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing. It was highlighted that the work had been highly valuable to the Council and had been undertaken thoroughly and professionally.
- ii. Members acknowledged the consistent professionalism and hard work of the departing Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing and thanked her for the invaluable support that she had offered to members during her time at the Council.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet be informed that the Commission supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing.

Reason

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

Councillor Keith Harris, attending the meeting virtually, confirmed that he would have supported the recommendations set out in the report of the Head of Strategic and Private Sector Housing had he been present in the room and able to do so.

24. SCRUTINY COMMISSION 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 (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Democratic Services Manager 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.

25. PROGRESS WITH PANEL WORK

A report of the Head of Strategic Support to review the progression of scrutiny panels was submitted (item 9 on the agenda files with these minutes).

The Democratic Services Manager assisted with the consideration of this item.

It was suggested that the Combatting Loneliness Scrutiny Panel and the Promoting Tourism in Charnwood Scrutiny Panel be paused until the new senior leadership structure of the Council had been embedded.

RESOLVED

1. That the Scrutiny Commission reviewed the progression of scrutiny panels.
2. That the Combatting Loneliness Scrutiny Panel and the Promoting Tourism in Charnwood Scrutiny Panel be paused until the new senior leadership structure of the Council had been embedded.

Reasons

1. To ensure timely and effective scrutiny of the matter and subject.
2. To ensure that the most appropriate officers were able to support the work of the panels where required.

26. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION SCRUTINY PANEL FINAL REPORT

A report of the Digital Transformation Scrutiny Panel to consider recommendations and observations of the Digital Transformation Scrutiny Panel (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

- i. It was acknowledged that the panel had produced some valuable work on a topic that was integral to the work of the Council. Members felt that the panel's inquiry had been thorough and in-depth and had produced good recommendations.
- ii. It was highlighted that residents should always come first and that any transformation of services must consider all residents in the community.
- iii. It was also highlighted that future digital transformation of services were progressed with considerations to simplification and ease of use.

RESOLVED

1. That the report of the Digital Transformation Scrutiny Panel be submitted to Cabinet to their meeting on 11th August 2022.
2. That the procurement of the website management contract be added to the Scrutiny Commission Work Programme.

Reasons

1. To enable Cabinet to decide if the recommendations of the Digital Transformation Scrutiny Panel should be implemented.

2. To ensure the Procurement of the Website Management Contract be scrutinised.

Councillor Keith Harris, attending the meeting virtually, confirmed that he would have supported the resolutions had he been present in the room and able to do so.

27. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Strategic Support to enable the Commission to review and agree the Scrutiny Work Programme. This includes reviewing the changes made by the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee and adding items to their work programme (item 11 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Democratic Services Manager 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.

Councillor Keith Harris, attending virtually, confirmed that he would have supported the resolutions had he been present in the room and able to do so.

28. SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was considered, to enable the Commission to consider its work programme and forthcoming Key Decisions and decisions to be taken in private by the Cabinet in order to schedule items for pre-decision scrutiny (item 12 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Democratic Services Manager assisted with the consideration of this item. The following summarises the discussion:

- i. The Scrutiny Commission added the following items to their work programme:
 - (Pre-decision Scrutiny) Procurement of Website Management Contract – TBC

- (Pre-decision Scrutiny) Local Development Scheme – 6th March 2023
- (Pre-decision Scrutiny) Corporate Delivery Plan – 6th March 2023

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. 3. That the following items be added to the Scrutiny Commission's work programme for pre-decision scrutiny:
 - (Pre-decision Scrutiny) Procurement of Website Management Contract – TBC
 - (Pre-decision Scrutiny) Local Development Scheme – 6th March 2023
 - (Pre-decision Scrutiny) Corporate Delivery Plan – 6th March 2023

Reasons

1&3 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.

Councillor Keith Harris, attending the meeting virtually, confirmed that he would have supported the resolutions had he been present in the room and able to do so.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 5th September 2022 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. Councillor Keith Harris attended the meeting virtually. Decisions were taken only from members of the committee physically present in the room.
4. The following Lead Members and Officers attended the meeting virtually:
Councillor Barkley and the Strategic Director: Commercial Development, Assets and Leisure.