

**LOUGHBOROUGH AREA COMMITTEE  
18TH SEPTEMBER 2018**

**PRESENT:** The Chair (Councillor Hamilton)  
The Vice Chair (Councillor Campsall)  
Councillors Bradshaw, Draycott, Hayes,  
Huddlestone, Smidowicz, Tillotson, K. Harris,  
Jukes, Mercer, Miah, Morgan, Parton and Smith

Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and  
Community Wellbeing  
Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces  
Head of Leisure and Culture  
Business Relations and Economic Growth Officer  
Democratic Services Manager

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Forrest, Hachem, C. Harris and  
Parsons

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He 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.

**8. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

**9. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS**

The following disclosures were made:

Councillor Miah in respect of item 4.2 declared a personal interest as a County Councillor.

Councillor Parton in respect of item 5 declared a personal interest as a County Councillor.

**10. QUESTIONS UNDER COMMITTEE PROCEDURE 12.8**

The following questions on notice, submitted under Committee Procedure 12.8 were considered by the Committee.

**4.1 Public Toilets in Loughborough Town Centre**

Question submitted by John Barton, resident:

Can we please have free-of-charge public toilets in Loughborough Town Centre, as we used to have before 2010?

Background to this question: At the last committee meeting, you discussed the state of Loughborough markets. You lamented the number of empty stalls, and the number of empty shops around the town. You talked about a decorative 'gateway' to the market, but you failed to talk about the one issue that is stopping people spending more time in Loughborough town centre, and stopping it from being a pleasant shopping venue, namely the exceedingly irritating charges on the public toilets.

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

The Council continues to maintain 10 toilets across the Borough, with three in Loughborough town centre, at a total cost of £78,100. There are also toilets provided in some of our Parks and Open Spaces, the toilet in Queens Park is included within the town centre toilets. With reduced funding from central government, across all services, Councils are being encouraged to achieve full cost recovery of services. The 20p charge commenced in 2010, and has not increased since that point in time. A Council led consultation at the time asked the public whether they should close or charge, the public voted in favour of the nominal charge. With 175,260 users each year, the toilets generate approximately £35,000 income which goes towards the maintenance of the toilets and employment of staff to clean and secure them.

In making the statement, Mr Barton reiterated that he considered the public toilets should be made free again in order to make Loughborough Town Centre a more welcoming place to visit. He also stated that the income only covered approximately half of the cost of providing the facilities.

The Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods and Community Wellbeing reminded Members' that the Committee only has a consultative role in relation to matters of policy and strategic direction which relate to or affect the Loughborough town area.

The Committee thanked Mr Barton for submitting the question, and following discussion it was put forward that the charging policy for the three toilets in Loughborough town centre be considered as part of the 2018/19 budgetary process for the Loughborough Special Expenses.

#### 4.2 Floral Hanging Baskets in Loughborough Town Centre

Question submitted by John Barton, resident:

Why is Loughborough spending so much money on floral hanging baskets if it cannot even afford free public toilets? These hanging baskets are so large and numerous that they are a road safety hazard. When crossing Jubilee Way in a Westerly direction at its junction with Baxter Gate, and at the central reservation looking Southward along the North-bound carriageway, the hanging baskets obscure the view of traffic for pedestrians.

The following response had been published prior to the meeting:

Loughborough in Bloom is important to many residents, visitors and local businesses. It brings colour and vibrancy to the town. There is strong community support for the programme. And the current programme is supported by the Council, Loughborough University, local Businesses and around 35 community groups.

The majority of the hanging baskets in the town are funded by local businesses through their Business Improvement District levy.

The planting boxes around Jubilee Way are funded through sponsorship by Serco. They have been installed with the approval of Leicestershire County Council, acting in their capacity as the Highways Authority, and they are satisfied that the presence of the boxes and plants does not add any additional risks for pedestrians or drivers.

In making the statement, Mr Barton explained that in his opinion the hanging baskets on Jubilee Way were obscuring the view of the traffic, and that an inspection should take place. He also reiterated that the monies spent on floral baskets would be better spent on other services and facilities.

The Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods and Community Wellbeing reminded Members' that the Committee only has a consultative role in relation to matters of policy and strategic direction which relate to or affect the Loughborough town area.

The Committee thanked Mr Barton for his question and highlighting his concerns. The Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods and Community Wellbeing re-stated that the majority of the hanging baskets in the town are funded by local businesses through their Business Improvement District levy.

## 11. LOUGHBOROUGH BURIAL PROVISION

A report of the Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces providing information about further site appraisals undertaken at Council owned land regarding the potential development of a new cemetery site as per the recommendation of Cabinet, was submitted (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

It was noted that the public consultation was due to end on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2018, and a report would be submitted to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018 setting out the responses to the consultation. At the date of the meeting 650 responses had been received.

The following summarises comments and observations made by individual Members of the Committee:

- Cemeteries are traditionally located on the outskirts of towns rather than in the middle of residential developments. Considered inappropriate to place a cemetery in an existing residential area due to the impact on residents and for access reasons. This comment applies to both Allendale Road and Shelthorpe Golf Course options.

- To an extent both Allendale Road and Shelthorpe Golf Course were allocated as recreational use and considered inappropriate to switch to another type of use.
- Capacity of the sites indicates in a generation the Allendale Road site will be at capacity unlike the other two sites
- Preferable that burial provision is near to the crematorium meaning Allendale Road and the Nanapantan sites are the better options.
- Upward trend for cremations as opposed to burials. Nationally there is a 65% cremation rate. This is caveated by the fact that in the UK there is an ageing population so the number of burials is increasing.
- Preference for the Nanpantan site due to the higher capacity of that site and favour a burial site as opposed to a housing development near to the Outwoods woodland and open space.
- The Allendale Road housing development had open space provision as part of the planning process. To re-designate for burial provision will impact householders. The Open Spaces Strategy indicates a deficiency in open spaces in the Borough so the Allendale Road option is not preferable. On talking to residents, the Nanpantan site is the preferred option.
- None of the options are preferable. Cabinet should look at buying land on the edge of town for burial provision. The opportunity to address the shortfall in provision was at the planning stage for the land now known as Trinity Gardens.
- Disappointed that the consultation period commenced in the summer holidays. Preferable that it started in September.

## **RESOLVED**

That the above mentioned comments and observations of the Committee be incorporated into the Loughborough burial provision public consultation to end on 23rd September, 2018.

### Reasons

To ensure that members of the Committee are kept up to date on significant matters relating to the town of Loughborough, and a collective response from the Committee is submitted as part of the public consultation process.

## **12. LOUGHBOROUGH MARKET REVIEW AND THE TENDER FOR THE FESTIVE LIGHTING**

A report of the Head of Leisure and Culture providing information and updates on the Loughborough market review, including branding proposals and the tender for the Loughborough festive lighting, was submitted (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Overall the Committee were very positive about the future proposals for the Loughborough Market, the brand identity and the festive lighting for the town centre.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee notes the report.

### Reason

To ensure that Members of the Committee are kept up to date on significant matters relating to the town of Loughborough.

#### **13. LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN 2018**

A report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration appraising the Committee on progress made in the delivery of the refreshed Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan, was submitted (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Business Relations and Economic Growth Officer assisted with consideration of the item and provided the following responses to issues raised:

- (i) The refreshed Masterplan was approved by Cabinet on 12th April 2018 and is regarded as a 'living' document.
- (ii) Ideas for improving the Nottingham Road area and other initiatives to improve the town centre can be put forward as representations to the stakeholder reference group for consideration. Examples referenced included gateways to the town, air quality, cycle linkages and viability of a bus station.
- (iii) Car parking remains a key concern and was identified in the consultation. Information was sought on the number car spaces lost and it was agreed that this information would be circulated to the Committee.
- (iv) Membership of the Town Team as set out in appendix A, schedule 1 was approved by the Cabinet.
- (v) Information about the spend to date on the Masterplan to be supplied separately to the Committee.

### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

### Reason

To ensure that members of the Committee are kept fully informed of interventions to support the long term vitality and viability of Loughborough Town Centre.

#### **14. FUTURE COMMITTEE DATES**

The Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods and Community Wellbeing advised that future meetings of the Committee were scheduled as following:

- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019
- 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019

It was noted that the January meeting would consider the budget proposals regarding the Loughborough Special Expenses for the 2019/20 financial year along with a report back on the outcomes of the cemetery proposals.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 5th November 2018 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 Loughborough Area Committee.