

COUNCIL – 18TH JANUARY 2021

ITEM 10 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

10.1 Councillor J Bradshaw – Leisure Centre Usage and Income

Can the Lead Member please provide the last two years (prior to Covid-19) user figures for each of the following centres plus the income received for each of the same two years? Can the number of Users and income for 2020 also be provided please for each of the Leisure Centres?

1. Loughborough Leisure Centre
2. South Charnwood Leisure Centre
3. Soar Valley Leisure Centre

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The Council's Leisure Centres are operated on behalf of the Council by Fusion-Lifestyle Ltd. The following information is taken from Fusion's management reports broken down by Leisure Centre for the three years 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 - the current financial year. In 2018-19 Fusion reported income totalling £4,054,868, with participation totalling 1,045,359.

In 2019-20 income of £4,054,447 was generated with participation of 1,004,356.

2020-21 has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic with centres closed from late March to early August with Loughborough opening again in mid-September. The Centres after operating in Tier 3 and then Tier 4 are now currently closed due to the national lockdown.

The income shown in 2020-21 includes the approved subsidy payments the Council has made to Fusion to support the recovery from August 2020. The figures only cover to the end of November 2020. Currently income totals £627,149 with participation of 65,056.

A table (below) has been provided to summarise the income and participation figures for each Leisure Centre as well as income that has not been attributed to a specific Leisure Centre. In 2018/19 non centre-specific income totalled £22,857, and in 2019-20 £17,806. In 2020/21 the non-centre-specific income totals £226,543 - this includes agreed Council subsidy payment to Fusion to support business recovery.

Table: Leisure Centres Income and Participation 2018-19 to 2020-21

2018-19	Loughborough	Soar Valley	South Charnwood	Non centre specific Income	Total
Income	£1,672,237	£1,478,774	£881,000	£22,857	£4,054,868
Participation	418,306	401,747	225,306	-	1,045,359

2019-20	Loughborough	Soar Valley	South Charnwood	Non centre specific Income	Total
Income	£1,627,656	£1,497,076	£911,909	£17,806	£4,054,447
Participation	379,416	401,566	223,374	-	1,004,356

2020-21 April to Nov*	Loughborough	Soar Valley	South Charnwood	Non centre specific Income	Total
Income	£91,100	£191,095	£118,411	£226,543**	£627,149
Participation	16,516	29,325	19,215	-	65,056

*Covers to November only, SV & SC opened in Aug, LLC in mid-September 2020

**Includes agreed Council subsidy payment to Fusion to support recovery

10.2 Councillor Draycott – Staff Sickness

Could the Leader inform Council of the staff sickness figures for 2020 to date with breakdown of reasons, and the figures and reasons for the previous year (before Covid-19)?

The Leader or his nominee will respond: (Cllr Smidowicz)

Generally, there has been a reduction in the level of staff sickness between March to December 2020 and the same period the previous year.

This is across all illness types but most notably for Cold, influenza, viral infections and stomach ailments which are consistently the most common causes of illness.

Stress and depression is higher in 2020 than in 2019, therefore this is an area to review in more detail. The attached appendix sets out the detailed breakdown.

10.3 Councillor Draycott – Open Spaces

Would the Leader/Cabinet Lead Member inform Council how they see the importance of Open Space in the Borough and how it should be protected?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The Council approved the current Open Spaces Strategy 2018-2036 in January 2019. The strategy sets out how the Borough's Open Spaces will be protected. A copy of the document can be found here: https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/open_spaces_strategy_2019/Open%20Spaces%20Strategy%2C%202019.pdf

This question may have been prompted by the recent tree planting activity at Charnwood Water. Please find my response to this issue below.

550 trees have been planted at Charnwood Water as part of the Council's Corporate Strategy (2020 -2024) pledge to develop and improve its open spaces and to ensure 100,000 trees are planted within the Strategy period. Charnwood Water is a valuable area of designated semi-natural open space and as such its primary purpose is wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. The site is an important area of open space in terms of biodiversity and its potential to have a positive impact on climate mitigation e.g. improved air quality and flood risk mitigation is recognised. I recognise that Charnwood Water is an important amenity area that residents enjoy for recreation and leisure activities. The Council seeks to ensure a balance between these, sometimes conflicting, uses and provide an area that contributes to people's overall health and well-being. This includes benefits to physical and mental health through recreation and social activity, but also the positive impact on health of improved environmental quality associated with tree planting and the role this has in reducing pollution and improving air quality.

The planting extends and enhances existing tree planted areas whilst still leaving large open grassed areas for informal recreation and access for those people who wish to take an alternative route to that of the surfaced track adjacent to the water. All principle routes are fully open and unobstructed.

The new areas of tree planting are a significant distance away from housing and given the existing screen of mature trees to the west and north there will be little to no visual impact on residents on Leicester Road, Naylor Avenue or Hayward Avenue.

Loughborough Hastings Ward is ranked the fourth lowest Loughborough ward for tree canopy cover at 11.08% canopy cover per Km². This is compared to the combined Loughborough total of 14.96%, a Charnwood District combined total of 12.93% and National average

of 16%. The Council is committed to planting trees in areas with lower than average canopy cover. Charnwood Water is a site that can positively contribute towards this objective.

10.4 Councillor Parton – Digital High Street

Please would the Lead member outline what the digital offer, both in terms of online shopping and social media assistance, is in place for Loughborough Town Centre Businesses? In particular:

1. Number of website visitors in December
2. Number of purchases
3. Number of Business signed up to the Shop Local Website.

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The Shop Local in Charnwood site is a new initiative to support local businesses, giving them an opportunity to sell products or be listed as a directory on a digital high street.

Love Loughborough has a similar site (shop.loveloughborough) which was launched on November 24, 2020 but just for businesses in Loughborough. The Charnwood site covers the whole borough and was launched November 19, 2020

It is predominately the role of the BID and individual shops to deliver initiatives of this nature. However, due to the impact of the COVID pandemic and short-term funding being available to support such a scheme, the Council has developed The Shop Local site to provide Charnwood businesses with a similar opportunity to that provided by Loughborough BID.

Residents can continue to shop local and safely by shopping online via the site and using delivery or click & collect options. Some businesses have opted to just be listed on the site at present so it can also be used as a directory, enabling customers to click through to the business's own site, check their opening hours or find them on a map.

Who can sign up?

All Charnwood businesses can sign up the Shop Local in Charnwood site and Loughborough businesses can sign up to shop.loveloughborough and/or the Charnwood site. All they need is an email address and a device to upload their products. There is ongoing support available, including online tutorials and zoom training sessions.

It can benefit businesses whether they are:

- *A small business wanting to take that next step and sell online.*
- *A business with a small online presence but could benefit with more exposure.*
- *Already have a successful online site but would like to be listed*

as a local business on a virtual high street.

Sign up is free and there is great support available through We Are Locals, The Council and Love Loughborough. The Videos and promotional posts have been featured on the CBC and Love Loughborough social pages.

The Council is planning to cover the costs of the Shop Safe Shop Local in Charnwood site using allocated funds in the Reopening the High Streets Safely Fund.

Figures for Shop Local in Charnwood

Number of website visitors in December:

- 361 users

Number of purchases:

- £40 in sales from 4 orders.

Number of business signed up to the Charnwood site:

- 79 businesses in total.
- 39 - Signed up only
- 12 - Page Live - awaiting products
- 16 – Listed as directory
- 12 - Products listed

Figures for shop.loveloughborough

Number of website visitors in December:

- 712 users

Number of purchases:

- £399.50 in sales from 13 orders.

Number of Business signed up to the Shop Local Website:

- 45 business sign-ups

10.5 Councillor Parton – Rough Sleeper Provision

Please would the Lead member state how many people Charnwood has currently registered homeless and therefore living in temporary accommodation? Would the Lead Member please outline what assistance is being provided to these people?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The current position is that the Council have 28 placements, 25 in Bed and Breakfast, (24 are singles and 1 family/pregnant) and 3 singles on the emergency beds the Council procured with Falcon Centre.

The breakdown of the singles:

- 1 Everyone in
- 15 Clinically Extremely Vulnerable/Clinically Vulnerable – following change in guidance and the end of Everyone in
- 8 Severe Weather Emergency Placements (SWEP) (which includes some who have previously lost accommodation from Everyone in and are the Council do not owe a duty)

SWEP has been in operation providing accommodation since the 29th December 2021, 9 placements made and 8 stayed, 1 resident did not take up the accommodation, we will be keeping this provision under review.

The Council led on a collaborative bid for funding across the County and received £329,000. This includes funding for:

- Extended emergency accommodation - £210,908*
- Supported accommodation - £ 53,735*
- Private rented sector/reconnection incentives - £ 45,300*
- Support staff - £ 20,000*

The longer term move on accommodation was a Charnwood only bid. The Council have been allocated £350,000 capital and £236,487 for support for a 3-year period, for the:

- Purchase and repurpose of a 7-bed house to a 5-bed house with ensembles to be used as supported accommodation.*
- Support will be provided by a partner agency to prepare rough sleepers to be tenancy ready before moving onto permanent accommodation.*
- The purchase of 2 x 1-bedroom units to be used for move on accommodation from emergency accommodation for those rough sleepers who are tenancy ready on fixed term tenancies.*

For the capital element of the bid the Council are asked to match fund.

10.6 Councillor Parton – HMO Bin Provision

Please would the Lead Member explain how Charnwood will change its policy, in order to allow all HMOs to have at least two green bins and what steps it will take to ensure that the policing (extra manpower) of such bin management at HMOs can be increased?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The Councils existing Waste Collection Policy (https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/waste_collection_policy/Waste%20Collection%20Policy%202020.pdf) states the following with regard to HMO's: _

3. Multi Occupancy Properties

3.1. Properties that have multiple occupancy (flats or apartments) will be provided with containers that are suitable to the size of the property and the storage area available. These containers can vary in size but will usually be 1100 litre bins or similar however, individual assessments will be made by the Council.

3.2. *All multiple occupancy properties shall receive the same alternate weekly collection service as other single occupancy properties in the Borough including recycling services.”*

Assessments are made on a case by case basis to ensure that each household has enough capacity for the number of residents living in the property. It is not always feasible to issue two wheelie bins for increased recycling capacity due to the amount of outside space available at the address. Regular monitoring of streets with a high proportion of HMO’s takes place to ensure that wheelie bins are being used, and are stored, correctly. Any issues identified are taken up with the occupants and resolved.

10.7 Councillor Miah – Loughborough Town Deal Bid

What is the current situation regarding the Loughborough Town Deal bid?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The initial appraisal of the Loughborough Town Deal Town Investment Plan by MHCLG has led to the Town Deal Board being advised to clarify, strengthen and simplify some aspects of the plan. This is all part of the Town Deal assessment process. The Board will be considering a draft of the amended TIP at its meeting on 22nd January 2021.

The original timetable has been extended as a consequence, but it was not unexpected or unreasonable that Government could ask for some amendments, given that the funding requested is in excess of the £25 million benchmark. We anticipate being able to submit a stronger TIP having now had the benefit of feedback from Government.

The Town Deal Board will submit a refreshed TIP in February 2021 having addressed the feedback from Government and after seeking the views of the Member Reference Group and the Consultation and Community Engagement Group on the revised proposals.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO COUNCIL – PROCEDURE

- Councillors are required to submit a question on notice in writing by 12noon on the sixth 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.