

## CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD IN THE TURING ROOM, HOLYWELL PARK CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOLYWELL WAY, LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY SCIENCE AND ENTERPRISE PARK, LOUGHBOROUGH LE11 3GR ON 8TH NOVEMBER 2021

#### PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Baines)  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Tillotson)

Councillor Bailey	Councillor Mercer
Councillor Barkley	Councillor Miah
Councillor Bentley	Councillor Morgan
Councillor Bokor	Councillor Murphy
Councillor Boldrin	Councillor Needham
Councillor S. Bradshaw	Councillor Paling
Councillor Capleton	Councillor Parsons
Councillor Charles	Councillor Parton
Councillor Draycott	Councillor Popley
Councillor Forrest	Councillor Radford
Councillor Fryer	Councillor Ranson
Councillor Gerrard	Councillor Rollings
Councillor Goddard	Councillor Savage
Councillor Grimley	Councillor Seaton
Councillor Hadji-Nikolaou	Councillor Shepherd
Councillor Hamilton	Councillor Smidowicz
Councillor Harper-Davies	Councillor Snartt
Councillor C. Harris	Councillor Taylor
Councillor K. Harris	Councillor Ward
Councillor Howe	Councillor Williams
Councillor Lowe	

Honorary Aldermen Day and R Shields

#### 69. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors J Bradshaw, Brookes, Campsall, Hunt, Pacey, Poland and Rattray.

Apologies for absence had been received from Honorary Aldermen Bush, Stott and Tormey.

#### 70. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

The following disclosures of pecuniary and personal interests were made:

- i. Councillor Parton – a personal interest in item 10.5 on the agenda (Questions on Notice – Mental Health Reconfiguration in Charnwood) as a member of Leicestershire County Council (Cabinet Support).
- ii. Councillor Parton – a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 10.6 on the agenda (Questions on Notice – Your Store) as an employee of Samworth Brothers Limited (Fresh Food For Now Company).

71. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Council and the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 14th September 2021 were confirmed and signed.

72. ANNOUNCEMENTS

73. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made the following announcements:

“I would first like to welcome Councillor Ian Williams to his first Council meeting since being elected at the Shepshed West By-election on 23 September 2021. Congratulations.”

“I now wish to express my sincere condolences at the sudden passing of our much-valued fellow Council member, Councillor Gill Bolton.

Cllr Bolton represented the Loughborough Shelthorpe ward and had served the Council since being elected in May 2019. Despite serving for only a relatively short period of time, Councillor Bolton had made a substantial impact on the Council and local residents. She was a very active member and sat on a number of committees including the Scrutiny Commission, Audit Committee, the Budget Scrutiny Panel, Loughborough Area Committee, the Housing Management Advisory Board and the Commercialisation Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Bolton regularly addressed the Council with Questions on Notice and always gave quality contributions during committee meetings.

She was a friend to many members and also many officers at the council and she will truly be missed.

I would like to invite members to stay behind following the close of business of the meeting to pay tribute to Councillor Gill Bolton.

The Council then observed one minute’s silence in memory of Councillor Gill Bolton.

“Onto other news it is a great personal honour for me to take part in this year’s Loughborough Remembrance Service on Sunday, 14 November. This is the first time during the Pandemic we have all come together to remember those who served and many who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Please try to come along.”

#### 74. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader made the following announcements:

“Mr Mayor, I would like to echo your welcome to Councillor Williams, and also express my sadness of the passing of Councillor Bolton. I appreciate we have an opportunity to pay our tributes later on this evening.”

#### 75. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chief Executive made no announcements.

#### 76. PETITIONS

No petitions were submitted.

#### 77. BUSINESS RESERVED TO COUNCIL

#### 78. GAMBLING STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES 2022-2025

A report of the Licensing Committee to consider a revised Statement of Principles made under the Gambling Act 2005 following consideration by the Licensing Committee and public consultation was submitted (item 6.1 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

It was proposed by Councillor Lowe, seconded by Councillor Forrest and

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That the Statement of Principles made under the Gambling Act 2005, set out in Annex A to the report, be approved and adopted with effect from 31st January 2022.
2. Subject to Recommendation 1, that the Head of Regulatory Services be given delegated authority to make minor amendments and alterations to the Statement of Principles in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee.

#### Reasons

1. To ensure that, under Section 349 of the Gambling Act 2005, the Council has an up to date Statement of Principles to adhere to which sets the Council's policy in respect of meeting the licensing objectives and responsibilities under the Gambling Act 2005.
2. To ensure the relevant minor changes can be made to the Statement of Principles without the requirement for submission to Full Council.

#### 79. CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY 2022-2025

A report of the Leader to seek approval of an updated Customer Services Strategy for the period 2022-25 (item 6.2 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillor Draycott asked whether additional support or security at the Southfields offices was planned to help manage customers.

Councillor Barkley stated that the Council had a 95% 'excellent' or 'good' customer service rating. He also acknowledged that Council services were accessible by all residents across the Borough through different channels.

It was proposed by Councillor Rollings, seconded by Councillor Barkley and

**RESOLVED** that the Customer Services Strategy 2022- 2025, as set out in the Appendix to the report of the Head of Customer Experience (attached in the Annex to the report), be approved.

#### Reason

To identify the priorities against which the Council will seek to maintain and enhance its Customer Service capabilities over the period 2022-2025.

#### 80. AUTHORISATION OF ABSENCE

A report of the Chief Executive to enable the Council to consider authorising absences from meetings in accordance with section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 ('The 1972 Act'), in the circumstances set out in the report, was submitted (item 6.3 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

It was proposed by Councillor Smidowicz, seconded by Councillor Miah and

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That Councillor Pacey's absence from meetings since the full Council meeting on 17 May 2021 be authorised due to his ill health.
2. That Councillor absences in the following circumstances be approved under the provisions of the 1972 Act (ie. they will not count as absences towards the six month rule for the potential disqualification of Councillors for non-attendance), for the remainder of the 2021/22 Civic Year: (a) Virtual remote attendance via electronic means at non-decision making committees, panels and bodies, and (b) Non-attendance in circumstances where it has been agreed that 'quorum only' meetings will take place to reduce the risks associated with the potential spreading of Covid-19, and a Councillor's attendance is not required to contribute towards the specified quorum.

#### Reasons

1. To enable Councillor Pacey's absence to be authorised by the Council prior to the end of the 6-month period since he was last able to attend a meeting as required by section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To gain the Council's authorisation in designated specific circumstances designed to minimise the risk of the spread of Covid-19 so that Councillors are not put at risk of disqualification for non-attendance in such instances.

81. CALL-IN REFERENCES

There were no call-in references from Scrutiny.

82. POSITION STATEMENTS

No position statements had been requested.

83. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

84. TOWARDS CARBON NEUTRALITY IN CHARNWOOD

In accordance with Full Council Procedure 9.12, Councillor Ward had given notice of a motion on Carbon Neutrality in Charnwood (item 9.1 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

It was advised by the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer that there were elements within the motion on notice that required further advice from officers in order for informed decisions to be made, and therefore the motion was not able to be determined at the meeting. In addition, it was highlighted that there were some parts of the motion that related to executive responsibilities which would need to be referred to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED** that the relevant elements of the motion, as to be determined by the Monitoring Officer, be referred to either the Cabinet or to the next full Council meeting as appropriate, to be accompanied by officer reports.

Reason

To enable for informed decisions to be made at relevant committee meetings.

85. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The questions on notice and the responses of the Leader or his nominee were submitted (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

86. THE FUTURE OF STAFF WORKING FROM HOME

Councillor Draycott asked why the surveys conducted had poor response rates?

Councillor Smidowicz stated that the responses of both surveys had been positive with regards to attitudes towards agile working and that the approach was essential for recruiting and retaining quality staff.

87. RETENTION OF STAFF AND VACANCIES

Councillor Draycott asked whether lessons had been learnt following the most recent budget, in light of the revised Essential Car User Scheme?

Councillor Barkley stated that the revised Essential Car User Scheme was a result of lessons learnt and that the Council was required to work within the budget. He also stated that the Council's budgets were routinely scrutinised by the Budget Scrutiny Panel.

88. BEDFORD SQUARE GATEWAY PROJECT PRELIMINARY WORK

Councillor Draycott asked what lessons had been learnt as a result of the Bedford Square Gateway Project?

The Leader stated that lessons were learnt from each project undertaken by the Council and that the Bedford Square Gateway Project had been complex. He also highlighted that the project had progressed through the pandemic.

89. PRIVATE SECTOR RENTAL NUMBERS

Councillor Parton stated that there were not enough rental properties in the Borough to meet demand.

Councillor Mercer stated that there were around 2,500 rental properties in the Borough, meaning that approximately 1% of properties were being offered to residents on the housing register. He continued to say that a recent survey suggested that 63% of landlords discriminated against individuals on the housing register. He finished by stating that he would like the Council to work on overcoming this issue.

90. MENTAL HEALTH RECONFIGURATION IN CHARNWOOD

Councillor Parton asked for reassurance that the Council would continue the work undertaken as part of the Getting Help in Neighbourhoods Pathway project?

Councillor Harper-Davies thanked Councillor Parton for his question and stated that officers had already confirmed that the work would continue.

*Councillor Parton left the meeting following the consideration of this item.*

91. YOUR STORE

Councillor Parton did not ask a supplementary question.

*Councillor Parton rejoined the meeting following the consideration of this item.*

92. MINUTE REFERENCES

There were no minute references.

93. URGENT COUNCIL FUNCTION DECISION

A report of the Chief Executive to note the action taken by the Chief Executive, in respect of a Council function decision relating to the Bedford Square Gateway Capital project made under urgency provisions was submitted (item 12 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Councillors Miah and Draycott asked questions about increases in the costs of the project. Councillor Morgan responded so say that he believed the questions were based on misunderstandings about the financial situation and history of the project, and that officers would be able to provide further clarification if required.

94. URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS EXEMPTED FROM CALL-IN

A report of the Chief Executive to note decisions which were exempted from call-in in accordance with Scrutiny Committee Procedure 11.9 was submitted (item 13 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

95. DELEGATION OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

A report of the Chief Executive to note delegation of Executive functions to the Heed of Strategic and Private Sector Housing and the Leader was submitted (item 14 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

96. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

It was proposed by the Leader, Seconded by Councillor Barkley and

**RESOLVED**

1. That with immediate effect Councillor Williams be appointed onto the Licensing Committee.
2. That with immediate effect Councillor Brookes be appointed Vice-Chair of the Licensing Committee.

Reasons

1. To fill a Conservative vacancy on the Licensing Committee.
2. To fill a vacancy following Councillor Pacey's withdrawal as Vice-Chair of the Licensing Committee.

Note:

These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Council which is scheduled for Monday 17th January 2022