

COUNCIL – 25TH APRIL 2022

ITEM 10 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

10.1 Councillor Taylor – Lightbulb

Can the Leader advise how many residents are on the waiting list for Lightbulb? How long are residents waiting for a visit?

This question was withdrawn by Councillor Taylor and therefore no response provided.

10.2 Councillor Taylor – Developers and Approved Plans

Can the Leader advise how many times the Planning Department has taken Enforcement action against a developer for not building out to the approved plan?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The Council's Planning Enforcement Policy explains the discretion that planning authorities have in dealing with enforcement matters and the approach that will be taken when allegations of a breach of control are raised. All allegations are carefully investigated, and many prove not to be breaches of control at all. Where breaches of control are found, often they can be regularised by the submission of a planning application, or the perpetrator can be persuaded to cease the use and where necessary remediate the land. In the small minority of cases where breaches remain the planning authority must consider: the harm; if an offence has been committed; and whether it is expedient and proportionate to take action in the public interest. Ward Councillors are consulted on whether to take action or not in accordance with the constitution.

The throughput of work over the last five years is summarised below:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Enforcement cases opened in year:	451	498	792	602	460
Enforcement cases currently under investigation at year end:	230	244	267	302	253
Enforcement cases closed in year:	426	340	712	534	295
Formal Enforcement Action taken	10	45	22	39	20

10.3 Councillor Taylor – Martin Court, Anstey

Can the Leader advise what the plans are for Martin Court, Anstey? Is the Leader able to advise of the current timelines for Martin Court, Anstey to be reviewed?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The aim of the Sheltered Housing Review is to provide high quality housing in self-contained accommodation, addressing tenants' needs and expectations, where residents may live independently with support and arranged care packages when needed. The review will determine the future of the schemes, providing a solutions-based approach and determining where the council wants to invest. The review will consider all 14 schemes which includes Martin Court, Anstey.

A Project Board and PID has been set and agreed. To date a Sheltered Housing Standard has been approved, all schemes have been assessed against the standard and prioritised. The first scheme to be taken forward is St Michaels at Thurmaston, the Council are currently looking at options for the site and once this has been discussed and agreed at the Board a report will be presented to Cabinet.

The sheltered scheme at Anstey will be the third site to be reviewed. The Council will look at the best use of the site to meet housing need which could as an example include the retention of one block maintained at the Charnwood Sheltered Housing Standard and the second block demolished and redeveloped, however until all options are considered I am unable to provide the details of the future use of the Sheltered Scheme or a timeline.

10.4 Councillor Draycott – Bedford Square/Ward's End

With the Bedford Square/Wards End work concluding, what is the final cost expectation for the Council and other bodies, if not available cost to date? How have businesses fared during the delayed works with noticeably quite a few shops closed, even with the help that was available?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The expenditure on the project at 31 March 2022 was £2,585,921.16

Businesses have had a tough trading period over the pandemic given government restrictions but also arising from a succession of wider economic impacts including supply chain issues and cost of living rises. While the ongoing works in this area of Town have presented their own challenges, the Council and the BID have worked hard to put in place measures to assist businesses during the works including: concessionary parking for customers and traders, a voucher scheme and promotion of the area through a variety of channels. When

completed the works will provide a refreshed and attractive trading and entertainment environment that will assist traders in attracting increased footfall and custom.

Prior to the start of the project there were four vacant premises identified within the scheme area. Three of those have been long term vacancies with various issues impacting on their market appeal. Since the project started, three additional premises have become vacant. The Council understands the primary reason for these new vacancies was not related to the ongoing works in the area. In addition, one of the long-term vacant properties has recently been refurbished and a new business has occupied the premises. It is also understood there are provisional proposals to reopen another of the long-term vacancies. Furthermore, recent investment has been made by other existing businesses to take advantage of the improvements being made to the public realm and it is understood other businesses are planning to make improvements to their shops once the current works have been completed.

10.5 Councillor Draycott– Loughborough Town Centre Improvement Projects

What is the next highway improvement project in Loughborough Town Centre and how is that to be funded?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

The Council is using funding from the LLEP to bring forward a feasibility study for the improvement of the public realm along Nottingham Road between the Town Centre and railway Station. This is a project identified in the Loughborough Town Centre Master Plan; however, there is no commitment beyond this feasibility work presently.

10.6 Councillor Forrest– Anti-Social Behaviour in Storer Ward

What is Charnwood Borough Council going to do about the tidal wave of Anti-Social Behaviour now overwhelming parts of Storer ward and, indeed, other parts of the town. In Storer decent, hardworking, law-abiding residents are having their lives made miserable by others who seem intent on causing as much trouble for their neighbours as possible.

I fully appreciate that The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit at Charnwood are doing their absolute best to alleviate these problems and I commend them for their sterling efforts, but they are under-staffed, under resourced and under-funded. When is this situation going to be taken seriously by this administration and effective remedies put in place so that residents can, at last, relax “in the quiet enjoyment of their homes?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

Tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) and improving the outcomes for victims is a key strategic priority for both the Council and the Community Safety Partnership. ASB is tackled robustly within the Borough. All reported incidents of ASB are reviewed by officers in order to ensure an appropriate and proportionate response is put in place. The Council works closely with partners, including the Police, to deal with individuals who are engaged in acts of anti-social behaviour.

Cases of persistent ASB are managed through the Community Safety Partnership at meetings such as the Joint Action Group (JAG), Youth JAG and Loughborough Central Delivery Group (LCDG). Offenders are discussed in a multi-agency setting and positive action is taken in keeping with the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland 'ASB Incremental Approach.' Legal action can be taken where it is supported by evidence. These meetings are also very much focused upon the victim and the support that can be put in place to assist them. For example, all High-Risk victims of ASB receive a referral to Victim First and referrals to other support agencies are considered if there are any safeguarding concerns raised by practitioners undertaking the case management. In addition, repeat victims, locations and perpetrators are also identified and discussed.

In line with the actions within the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan, the Council is currently undertaking an internal review of Anti-Social Behaviour which is looking at improving both internal practices and the customer journey when reporting ASB, along with providing more detailed, easier to navigate information on the Council's website.

We would always encourage residents to report incidents of ASB and the Council's website outlines the process for the management of ASB and how incidents should be reported.

Officers are happy to work with Councillors if there are specific incidents or concerns within their wards.

10.7 Councillor J Bradshaw – Devolution Deals

With Nottingham City, Nottingham County and Derby City, Derby County submitting an initial proposal to negotiate a combined devolution deal for more funding and new local powers to the Government, how does that leave Leicestershire/District Councils

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

This question is perhaps better suited to the County Council as they are one of nine pathfinder sites who are in discussions with Government on a County Deal. Leicestershire County Council has not engaged with District Councils on their plans for a County Deal, particularly when compared with other areas. However, our current understanding is that the County Council has submitted proposals to

the Government for a level two County Deal. This is the level below our Neighbours in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire who are proposing a level three deal which has more funding and devolved powers. District Councils in Leicestershire have written to the County Council asking them to consider joining with D2N2 and working on a level three deal for the whole of the East Midlands. Based on the current proposals there is a risk that Leicestershire will be disadvantaged when compared to D2N2.

10.8 Councillor Draycott – Community Facilities at Aumberry Gap

The landmark student accommodation building Luxurio, Aumberry Gap, Loughborough in the Hastings Ward is all but finished except the S106 requirement for Community facilities.

Can the Leader explain to Council why that is the case and how soon the Community facilities will be available to the public?

The Leader or his nominee will respond:

Officers are having ongoing discussions with the developer about the progress of the Community Space, to ensure that the section 106 conditions are being met and that the community space is fit for purpose. Officers are pressing for the works to be completed as soon as possible to enable the Community Facility Marketing Strategy to be implemented to look for a Community / VCS organisation to occupy the space. Due to changes of personnel this has led to some delays, but we would hope to see progress in the next few months.

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.