

COUNCIL – 4TH SEPTEMBER 2017

ITEM 10 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

10.1 Councillor Snartt – Levels of Policing Within Rural Communities

I am receiving concerns from residents about the level of policing in the rural areas of my ward, Forest Bradgate. In recent years Neighbourhood Policing has been the cornerstone of policing in local rural areas.

Noting the aims of the Police and Crime Plan 2017–2021: “making communities and neighbourhoods safer by concentrating on visible policing”, would the Leader, in his capacity as a member of the Police and Crime Panel, raise this important issue of neighbourhood policing in rural areas at the next available meeting by raising the following?

- Is there an acknowledgement that neighbourhood policing in rural areas is no longer viable with the current level of resources allocated to these areas?
- Request an urgent review on how policing in rural areas is carried out to overcome the real concerns of local people including the farming community.
- Request a review of the communication links with the Police, which should include local Neighbourhood Watch Groups.

Would the Leader report back to this Council with the outcomes after raising this item at the Police and Crime Panel meeting?

The Leader, or his nominee, will respond:

In order to give the matter more immediacy, I will write to the Police and Crime Commissioner straight away raising the issues outlined and asking what can be done to address the issues in both the short term and as part of any future Police and Crime Plan.

10.2 Councillor Smidowicz – Street Furniture

I often come across a great deal of confusion about who owns and is responsible for maintaining which bit of street furniture in Charnwood, whether it be street benches, bus shelters or indeed street lights? Can the Lead Member please tell me if a complete register exists of who owns, or is responsible, for what? If no such register exists, or is not publicly accessible, will they commit to work with other authorities, bodies and groups to set up such a register to allow for greater transparency about our public areas?

The Leader, or his nominee, will respond:

Whilst different authorities are responsible for different street furniture, the Council does maintain asset lists for most of the furniture Charnwood services are responsible for (bins, benches, cycle racks, bollards, bus shelters, tourist information points, way finder monoliths and finger posts). This will also include mapping and signposting to ownership by other authorities. The vast majority of street lights/columns are owned and mapped by Leicestershire County Council Highways. For these, however, staff direct queries to the County Council and never face issues in getting queries addressed. In addition there are some street lights/columns on the Borough Council's land which the Borough Council is responsible for. There is an ongoing project to add these to the Council's GIS records.

10.3 Councillor Parton – Applications for House to Flat Conversions

Please would the Lead Member explain how the Council views and will manage the influx of applications in the Southfields ward for houses to be compartmentalised into flats, with the emphasis on letting to students?

The Leader, or his nominee, will respond:

Any planning application that is received seeking to convert houses into flats will be considered on its individual merits having regard to the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

10.4 Councillor Bradshaw – Adoption and Management of Public Open Space

Would the Lead Member please provide an answer to the following:

- (i) What policy is the Borough Council following with regard to the adoption of public open space by parish/town councils, the Borough Council or private management companies?
- (ii) Where recommendations are made for private management surcharged on residents, is this always made clear prior to planning consent being given?
- (iii) Where are the regulations for privately managed open space published and accessible to the public?
- (iv) What local controls exist on private management of public open space, particularly where private investors may be involved?

The Leader, or his nominee, will respond:

- (i) *Guidance regarding the adoption of public open space is covered in the Council's Open Spaces Strategy.*
(http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/ppg17_open_spaces_sport_and_recreation_study)

- (ii) *This approach is set out in the Open Spaces Strategy. Developers have the choice whether to use a private management company or to seek adoption by the Borough Council or town/parish council. However, there is no statutory obligation to offer sites for adoption. The approach intended by the developer regarding how open space is to be managed is reported to the Plans Committee. If planning permission is granted future residents are informed of any management charges as part of the property conveyance process.*
- (iii) *There is guidance within the Open Spaces Strategy (link above) for privately managed open space; however this is not enforceable under any regulations.*
- (iv) *Again there is good practice guidance on private management of public open space, but this is not enforceable through regulations. The provisions of a section 106 agreement for the maintenance of open space via a management company can be enforced if necessary.*

10.5 Councillor Bradshaw – Housing Waiting List

Can the Lead Member confirm how many people are on the Charnwood Borough Council waiting list for housing, ie both Council and Housing Association?

The Leader, or his nominee, will respond:

There are currently 2,618 active applications on the Housing Register.

The table below details applications per Band in accordance with the type of application:

Application Type and Band	1 - Priority	2 - High	3 - Medium	4 - Low	Total
Registered Provider-Transfers	13	23	142	153	331
Council - Transfers	17	61	182	222	482
Waiting Listing Applications	79	107	723	896	1,805
Total	109	191	1,047	1,271	2,618

10.6 Councillor Forrest – Licensing of Landlords

When can the residents of Loughborough, particularly those living in the "student areas", expect to see their lives made quieter and pleasanter by the introduction of a robust landlord licensing system such as those in force in the City of Nottingham and the London Borough of Newham, for example?

The Leader, or his nominee, will respond:

A report is being prepared to consider the benefits of introducing an Additional or Selective Licensing Scheme in the Borough, taking into consideration the evidence gathered to date, the proposed Government expansion of the Mandatory Licensing of houses in multiple occupation, and the legislative requirements for making a proposal. The report will be submitted to the Cabinet in order for it to decide what action is to be taken with regard to these matters.

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 and/or make a statement 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 and/or make a statement.
- 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.