

## CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD IN THE PRESTON ROOM, WOODGATE CHAMBERS, LOUGHBOROUGH ON MONDAY, 26TH JUNE 2017

#### PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor P. Ranson)

Councillor T. Barkley	Councillor J. Morgan
Councillor B. Bebbington	Councillor P. Murphy
Councillor I. Bentley	Councillor K. Pacey
Councillor J. Bokor	Councillor B. Page
Councillor J. Bradshaw	Councillor T. Parton
Councillor M. Brookes	Councillor J. Poland
Councillor R. Campsall	Councillor C. Radford
Councillor J. Capleton	Councillor R. Rollings
Councillor S. Forrest	Councillor J. Savage
Councillor H. Fryer	Councillor B. Seaton
Councillor D. Gaskell	Councillor R. Shepherd
Councillor S. Gerrard	Councillor D. Slater
Councillor D. Grimley	Councillor M. Smidowicz
Councillor L. Hadji-Nikolaou	Councillor L. Smith
Councillor D. Hayes	Councillor D. Snartt
Councillor R. Jones	Councillor J. Sutherland
Councillor R. Jukes	Councillor J. Tassell
Councillor S. Maynard Smith	Councillor D. Taylor
Councillor P. Mercer	Councillor J. Tillotson
Councillor J. Miah	Councillor E. Vardy

#### 14. OPENING THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

The Mayor opened the meeting by welcoming Councillor Rollings to his first meeting and reflecting on the tragedies and atrocities that had beset the country in recent weeks. The Mayor asked the Council to stand for a minute's silence in memory of the victims of those awful events and in a spirit of reaching out to their families and friends.

After the minute's silence the Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend David Owen, said prayers.

#### 15. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Christine Harris), Councillors Hachem, Harper-Davies, Keith Harris, Lowe, Paling, Parsons and Williams and from Honorary Aldermen Bush and Stott.

## 16. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

The following disclosures were made:

- (i) by Councillor Bebbington – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Shepshed Town Council;
- (ii) by Councillor Bentley – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as he lived in a property that was affected by the proposals;
- (iii) by Councillor Brookes – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Thurmaston Parish Council;
- (iv) by Councillor Forrest – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Barrow upon Soar Parish Council;
- (v) by Councillor Jones – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as she had responded to the consultation;
- (vi) by Councillor Morgan – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as he had raised the suggestion regarding Cotes as a member of the Member Reference Group and lived in Cotes;
- (vii) by Councillor Murphy – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Sileby Parish Council;
- (viii) by Councillor Radford – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Shepshed Town Council;
- (ix) by Councillor Ranson – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Barrow upon Soar Parish Council;
- (x) by Councillor Rollings – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Birstall Parish Council, which commented on and was affected by the report;
- (xi) by Councillor Savage – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Shepshed Town Council;
- (xii) by Councillor Seaton – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Thurmaston Parish Council;
- (xiii) by Councillor Sutherland – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Anstey Parish Council and a resident of Anstey;
- (xiv) by Councillor Tassell – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Shepshed Town Council;

- (xv) by Councillor Taylor – disclosure of a personal interest in item 6.2 Community Governance Review, as a member of Anstey Parish Council, which responded during the public consultation, and as she had submitted a personal response during the consultation.

17. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22nd May 2017 were confirmed and signed.

18. ANNOUNCEMENTS

18.1 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made by the Mayor.

18.2 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made by the Leader.

18.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made by the Chief Executive.

19. PETITIONS

Councillor Jones presented a petition submitted on behalf of residents in her ward regarding anti-social behaviour that they were suffering from.

20. BUSINESS RESERVED TO COUNCIL

To consider the following matters reserved to Council in accordance with Part 5 of the Constitution.

20.1 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

A report of the Licensing Committee, seeking approval for a revised Statement of Licensing Policy made under the Licensing Act 2003 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 Pacey, seconded by Councillor Taylor and

**RESOLVED** that the Statement of Licensing Policy made under the Licensing Act 2003, set out in Annex A to the report of the Licensing Committee, be approved and adopted.

### Reason

To ensure that the Council had an up to date Statement of Licensing Policy to adhere to, which sets out the Council's policy in respect of liquor licensing, including confirming proposed changes to the boundary of the Loughborough Cumulative Impact Zone, that meets the licensing objectives and complies with the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003.

## 20.2 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

A report of the Chief Executive, reporting back to Council on the responses submitted during the first consultation phase of the Community Governance Review, and seeking approval for proposals for potential recommendations for further consultation as put forward by the Member Reference Group, was submitted (item 6.2 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

It was proposed by Councillor Poland and seconded by Councillor Page that the 13 recommendations of the Member Reference Group, as set out in the Appendix to the report of the Chief Executive, be endorsed for a further three-month consultation phase.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Miah and seconded by Councillor Maynard Smith to add the creation of a town council for Loughborough as an additional item for the next phase of consultation and, as a consequence, to remove the recommendation of the Member Reference Group for a parish meeting to be created for the area of the West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension.

The amendment was defeated.

**RESOLVED** that the 13 recommendations of the Member Reference Group, as set out in the Appendix to the report of the Chief Executive, be endorsed for a further three-month consultation phase.

### Reason

To allow for a further stage of consultation before Council makes a final decision on any changes to parish council electoral arrangements within the Borough, and for the individual reasons put forward by the Member Reference Group as set out in the Appendix to the report of the Chief Executive.

## 21. CALL-IN REFERENCES

There were no call-in references from Scrutiny.

## 22. POSITION STATEMENTS

To consider the following position statement submitted under Full Council Procedure 9.10.

### A. Fire Safety in Council Properties

The Leader had given notice of the submission of a position statement on fire safety in Council properties (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Leader of the Council introduced the position statement and began by expressing, on behalf of the Council, profound sadness at the events that had happened at the Grenfell Tower and sympathy for the bereaved and injured. The Leader confirmed that the Council did not own any high-rise accommodation and when cladding some of its properties had used different materials to those used at the Grenfell Tower. The Council had checked the properties of the cladding it had used and would be writing to tenants with cladding on their buildings. Copies of the letter sent to tenants would be provided to councillors. The Leader also referred to the low-rise blocks owned by the Council and the fire safety measures that were in place there.

The following issues were raised by councillors:

- (i) The position statement was welcomed as was the promptness with which it had been produced.
- (ii) Clarification was sought regarding the position of low-rise residential blocks owned by registered housing providers, including those for which the Council had nomination rights through the choice-based lettings system. In particular, the Leader was asked whether those registered providers had been consulted and asked to check the fire safety of their blocks.
- (iii) Reference was made to the different types of panels that were available for cladding buildings and their different fire resistance properties. Clarification was sought as to the properties of the panels used by the Council.
- (iv) Reassurance was sought that the Council's emergency plans for dealing with incidents such as major fires were regularly reviewed and up to date.
- (v) There were many aspects of building design that contributed to fire safety. It was likely that there would be a large number of lessons to be learned for the whole of the building industry.

In summing up, the Leader stated that inquiries were still at an early stage. He stated that he would, therefore, wish to see a further report being submitted to the Cabinet that included the issues raised by councillors in the debate. The Leader also referred to high-rise student blocks on the Loughborough University campus and stated that there had been consultation with the University and registered providers regarding fire safety. The Leader also stated that emergency plans were regularly reviewed.

It was proposed by Councillor Parton, seconded by Councillor Grimley and

**RESOLVED** that the subject of the position statement be referred to the Cabinet.

Reason

To enable the Cabinet to consider the matter further, including details of the updated position regarding fire safety in Council properties and the types of cladding that had been fitted to some of those properties, the position with respect to properties owned by registered providers and student accommodation, particularly high-rise accommodation on the Loughborough University campus, and reviewing the emergency planning measures that were in place.

23. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

A. Former Councillor Robert Sharp

In accordance with Full Council Procedure 9.11(a), Councillor Parton had given notice of a motion regarding former councillor Robert Sharp.

It was moved by Councillor Parton, seconded by Councillor Hayes and

**RESOLVED** that this Council formally records its sincerest gratitude for the six years' service that former councillor Robert Sharp gave to the Shelthorpe Ward and the wider Borough of Charnwood.

24. 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).

24.1 Councillor Smidowicz – Certificates of Lawful Use or Development

Councillor Smidowicz thanked the Lead Member for the response and stated that she thought that the incidents referred to in the response

may be the tip of the iceberg. She further stated that it was important that landlords operated within the rules and that it took significant officer resources to identify breaches. She also referred to there still being 12 outstanding breaches and new powers to fine rogue landlords.

In response, Councillor Vardy stated the Council did not have the resources to adopt a proactive approach to enforcement in respect of the lawful planning use of dwellings. Instead the Council relied on reports of possible breaches from the public and all of those reports were investigated.

#### 24.2 Councillor Parton – Southfields Park

Councillor Parton referred to the design work and consultation that had taken place and which had produced a positive response. The work of officers was commended but another brief had been requested before the money allocated for works to the park could be used. Councillor Parton referred to problems experienced in Southfields Park and asked when further progress would be made.

In response, Councillor Fryer stated that the project was due to be delivered in 2018/19. Regarding the incidents referred to by Councillor Parton, she requested that Councillor Parton provide her with more details of them so that she could take up the matter with officers.

#### 24.3 Councillor Parton – Capital Spending on Projects

Councillor Parton referred to the positive outcomes of capital projects. He urged that more consultation with the public on emerging ideas for capital projects was carried out. Councillor Parton also asked to meet with the Lead Member to discuss this issue.

In response, Councillor Barkley stated that the basis for much of the Council's activity, including the Capital Plan, was its Corporate Plan, which had been the subject of extensive public consultation. Councillor Barkley also referred to the fact that £9.8million had been spent on General Fund capital projects and £34.3million on housing projects over the last four years. The Council's processes for delivering capital projects were transparent and subject to scrutiny. Councillor Barkley stated that he was happy to meet with Councillor Parton to discuss the issue.

#### 24.4 Councillor Tillotson – Acceptable Living Standards for Council Tenants

Councillor Tillotson stated that she was very much aware of the shortage of family homes for Council tenants. As a result tenants might have to live in unsuitable accommodation. However, she stated,

the Council could do things to improve the accommodation, for example when family circumstances change. Councillor Tillotson referred to families with small children preferring to have a bath rather than a shower. Many Council tenants would not be able to afford to make this change at their own expense. Councillor Tillotson stated that every family should have a shared living space and not have to use that space as a bedroom.

In response, Councillor Mercer referred to the national and local standards that applied. Choice-based lettings gave people the opportunity to decide where they wanted to live. The policy was currently under review and representations could be made. Baths were converted to showers as part of adaptations for the disabled. Councillor Mercer stated that it would cost about £3,000 to convert a shower to a bath and he would be reluctant to spend money in that way. However, if there were medical reasons for the change that would be looked into. Councillors were encouraged to refer concerns about individual cases to the Head of Landlord Services or the Lead Member.

25. MINUTE REFERENCES

There were no minute references.

26. URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS EXEMPTED FROM CALL-IN

There were no urgent Executive decisions that had been exempted from call-in.

27. CHANGES TO CABINET ROLES

A report of the Chief Executive, informing the Council of changes to the roles of members of the Cabinet, was submitted (item 13 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Two councillors commented that they felt that changing the role of the three Deputy Lead Members to Lead Members, and the associated cost, were unjustified. In response the Leader stated that he was mindful of the Council's responsibilities to ensure that there was equal pay for equal work, and that recommendations regarding allowances were made by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

28. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

It was proposed by Councillor Miah, seconded by Councillor Maynard Smith and

**RESOLVED** that the following changes to committee appointments be made:

- (i) that Councillor Maynard Smith be appointed as a member and Vice-chair of the Policy Scrutiny Group
- (ii) that Councillor Maynard Smith be appointed as a member of the Scrutiny Management Board
- (iii) that Councillor Maynard Smith cease to be a member of the Performance Scrutiny Panel
- (iv) that Councillor Forrest be appointed as a member of the Housing Management Advisory Group.

Note

These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of Council, which is scheduled for Monday, 4th September 2017.