

MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 8 JULY 2020 AT 2.00 PM

ORDER PAPER

AGENDA ITEM NO. ITEM 1 – TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN

The Chairman will invite nominations.

MR RUSHTON will move and MR GALTON will second:-

“That Mrs Posnett be re-elected Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

On being re-elected the Chairman will read out and sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which will be witnessed and signed by the Chief Executive.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 – CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will make her announcements.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 – MINUTES (Pages 3 to 14)

MRS POSNETT will move and MR KAUFMAN will second:

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 February 2020, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.”

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman invite members who wish to do so to make declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

It will be assumed that all members who are members of District and Borough Councils will wish to declare a personal interest in the report of the Cabinet on Coronavirus – Item 7 A on the agenda.

Are there any other declarations?

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 7(1) (2) &(5)

Note – The questions and answers appear on the Order Paper and will be taken as read. There is only one supplementary question relating to Question B from Dr Eynon and the response from Mr Rhodes is also set out on Order Paper.

(A) Question by DR EYNON

“On 29th January 2020 the Leicester Mercury reported a spokesperson for the Council as saying: “We are looking into the possibility of working with the National Forest Company to investigate the feasibility of expanding the National Forest’s boundaries.”

An aspiration to plant more trees is mentioned in this Council’s Tree Strategy. The Environment Strategy refers to a need to protect and enhance the National Forest, but boundary changes and expansion are not mentioned.

- What proposals, if any, exist for planting in the area of the Charnwood Forest Regional Park?
- Are there any plans to expand the current National Forest Boundary?
- Have formal discussions taken place with the National Forest Company, DEFRA or any government department?”

Reply by Mr PAIN

“Officers of the council continue to work closely with the National Forest Company (NFC) to promote tree planting within existing boundaries and there are a number of projects that are being planned. This planning is at an early stage and will involve discussions with partners and stakeholders so details are not available at this point in time. The most recent meeting took place on Friday 26th June.

The NFC current position is to maintain the integrity of its current 200 square mile boundary to continue to create the identity of the National Forest, target resources for delivery, and focus effort to achieve its new 25 Year Vision. However, the NFC will also continue to operate outside of the boundary in delivering shared objectives that will buffer, support and strengthen the National Forest environment, economy and communities. In addition, the NFC will share its expertise and learning with partners at a local, national and international level to demonstrate and advocate climate change mitigation and adaptation, with the National Forest as an exemplar of sustainable living.

A specific project worth mentioning is the creation of a Covid-19 commemoration wood at Market Bosworth Country Park. This is outside of the National Forest boundaries but has been supported by the NFC as it is part of the gateway to the forest.

The County Council recently launched its Tree Strategy and looks forward to the appointment of a new Forestry Manager in August. More details around tree planting and partnership working will emerge in due course.”

No Supplementary question from Dr Eynon

(B) Question by DR EYNON

“During discussions with Snibston Stakeholders and Community Group, some months ago, a suggestion was put forward to create an access way between the newly refurbished Snibston Heritage Park and Coalville Town Football Club. This proposal would encourage visitors to the town to park on County Council premises and divert football traffic away from the congested residential town centre streets.

Could the Leader tell me what progress has been made on implementing this suggestion?”

Reply by MR RHODES

“The matter that was raised with Council officers was to create a pedestrian gateway that would enable access from the car park onto the public pathway and into the Football Club. Officers have managed to include this extra provision within the scope of the Snibston development programme.”

Supplementary question from Dr Eynon?

I thank the Lead Member for this response and am pleased to see that officers have managed to include the provision of a pedestrian gateway as part of the Snibston development programme and that this will allow access from the Snibston car park into the Football Club.

Please may I have a copy of a scale drawing of the proposed access to share with partner organisations and the wider community including the Football Club?

Response to the supplementary by Mr Rhodes

‘Yes, I will ask the officer concerned to send this to you.

(C) Question by MRS HACK

“In light of Covid, School Transport is delivered differently across the County and the response from schools and bus operators to refunds varies from school to school, bus company to bus company. A recent article in the Leicester Mercury indicated that some services are offering full refunds and some are offering nothing. <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/local-news/two-school-bus-firms-plan-4233451>.”

Bosworth Academy, a school that provides secondary school places in my patch (among others), normally transports 1,000 children a day. This school has offered a 50% refund on the service.

There also appears to be confusion about the CMA guidance on provision of services and if this applies to school provided bus transport.

In view of this could the Leader let me know

- a) What advice if any can the County Council give to schools and parents related to this guidance?
- b) What representations have the County Council made, or will make, to Government regarding the ongoing viability of school transport?
- c) What work has been done, can be done, to offer support and guidance to school colleagues, who are working with commercial operators to get to the most appropriate way forward?
- d) Given that there is a disparity of approaches regarding refunds, what can be done to get consistent guidance about school transport and refund policy?”

Reply by MR PENDLETON

- “a) The CMA have confirmed that the guidance does apply to school-provided bus services. The position with season ticket arrangements is also the same and so, for the period of lockdown, the general principles apply and the full refund should be provided.

Each commercial bus operator or school provider should have their own terms and conditions in relation to the sale of school travel passes. These should meet the CMA’s standards and it is their responsibility to ensure that consumers get a good deal when buying goods and services. Businesses must operate within the law, which includes protecting consumers from unfair trading practices. Schools and parents should ensure that they understand and agree with the terms and conditions of any commercial school bus provider before signing up to their service.

- b) The Council has made continued representations through bodies such as the Local Government Association (LGA), Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS), County Councils Network (CCN), the Association of

Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT), the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO) and direct to the Department for Transport (DfT) and Department for Education (DfE) regarding the viability of school transport. These representations have increased and become more urgent because, as a result of the pandemic, the costs of providing home to school transport could double for mainstream delivery and triple for the provision of Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport. Representations have also been made alongside the ongoing dialogue around the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) which could affect the viability of commercial school operation.

- c) The County Council purchases school transport on commercial school bus services for pupils eligible for free transport under a Service Level Agreement, which is a contractual agreement between the Council and the commercial school bus service provider. These include terms and conditions in relation to refunds and cancellations. The Council has continually encouraged schools to have a similar agreement with the bus operators to ensure the services provided meet their requirements and the Council has offered to provide copies of its own Service Level Agreement for schools to adapt to meet their own requirements.
- d) Commercial school bus services are provided by a variety of different bus operators who will have their own terms and conditions regarding transport provision and refunds. Whilst bus operators cannot be forced to adopt a particular approach, schools could introduce an approved standard service level agreement to ensure services are managed consistently by schools across the County. This would require all schools to adopt the same service level agreement with their particular commercial school bus provider.”

No Supplementary question from Mrs Hack

(D) Question by MR WYATT

“There is growing anger locally in the village of Ellistown over the failure by the County Highways Department to address the increasing incidents of HGV’s using the village as a through road. This has been reported on numerous occasions to the Highways Customer Services Centre. Many HGVs are getting stuck and causing damage to vehicles of local residents due to the lack of signage and enforcement by the Highways Department and the Police.

Can I ask the Leader if he would instruct the appropriate officers to liaise with me and the local Parish Council to formulate a plan to tackle this growing problem which is blighting the lives of many local residents, particularly those on St Christopher Road which is a no through road?”

Reply by MR PENDLETON

“Contraventions of weight restrictions can only be enforced by the Police, they can be contacted on their non-emergency number 101.

The Police will deal with the complaint by making contact with the haulier concerned, if known, and establishing whether the HGV was driving legitimately through the weight restricted area.

Following previous discussions with Mr Wyatt a review of the signage was undertaken. There is weight restriction signage approximately 200m to the south of this junction on Ellistown Terrace Road indicating the start of the weight restriction zone. Weight restrictions are created through a zonal method, by which we restrict the movement of heavy goods vehicles to mainly A and B class roads, with the addition of some strategically important unclassified roads. St Christopher’s Road falls within a weight restriction zone. Repeater signs are not permitted within a zone.

If the local community would like to discuss how they could start a community lorry watch scheme to assist the Police with enforcement this can be arranged.”

Supplementary question from Mr Wyatt

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 – TO RECEIVE POSITION STATEMENTS
FROM MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

(Note: Standing Order 8 provides as follows:-

- (a) A position statement may give rise to an informal discussion by the Council.
- (b) At the conclusion of the discussion a formal motion may be moved to the effect that a particular issue relevant to the statement be referred to the Cabinet, the Commission, a Board or a Committee for consideration. This shall be moved and seconded formally and put without discussion. No other motion or amendment may be moved.
- (c) The discussion of any position statement shall not exceed 20 minutes but the Chairman may permit an extension to this period.)

LEADER

The Leader will make his statement.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7
REPORTS OF THE CABINET**

Principal Speakers:-
Mover of motion (as appropriate)
Leader of the Opposition (Mr S J Galton)

- (A) Coronavirus Covid-19 – Impact and Response of the County Council – Recovery, Economic and Financial Impact
(Pages 15 to 40)

MR RHODES will move and MR BRECKON will second:

- “a) That the work being undertaken address the on-going impact of and to recover from the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic be noted
- b) That the increasingly serious financial position facing the County Council and the measures in place to monitor and minimise the impact be noted.”

- (B) Revised Strategic Plan 2020-2023
(Pages 41 to 74)

MR PAIN will move and MR RUSHTON will second:

“That the revised Strategic Plan 2018 -2022 be approved, recognising that the Plan will need to be revisited as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.”

(C) Revised Environment Strategy and Action Plan
(Pages 75 to 120)

MR PAIN will move and MR PENDLETON will second:

- “a) That the revised Environment Strategy 2018-2030, the associated revised Environment Strategy Action Plan and Tranche 1 of the Carbon Reduction Roadmap, be approved;
- b) That it be noted that a further report presenting the complete Carbon Reduction Roadmap (incorporating the newly developed Tranche 2) will be submitted to the County Council in the summer of 2021.”

(D) Equalities Strategy 2020=2024 and Equality Action Plan 2020-2021
(Pages 121 to 182)

MRS RICHARDSON will move and MR RUSHTON will second:

“That the Equality Strategy 2020 -2024 and Equality Action Plan 2020- 2021 be approved.”

(E) Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2020-2023
(Pages 183 to 214)

MR OULD will move and MRS TAYLOR will second:

“That the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023 be approved.”

(F) Dates of Council Meetings 2020/21 and 2021/2022
(Page 215)

MR RUSHTON will move and MR SHEPHERD will second:

“That Council meetings in 2020/21 and 2021/22 be held on the following dates:-

- Wednesday 30 September 2020
- Wednesday 2 December 2020
- Wednesday 17 February 2021 (to consider the budget)
- Wednesday 19 May 2021 (Annual Meeting)
- Wednesday 7 July 2021
- Wednesday 29 September 2021
- Wednesday 1 December 2021
- Wednesday 23 February 2022 (to consider the budget)
- Wednesday 18 May 2022 (Annual meeting)”

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 - REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Principal Speakers:-
Leader of the Opposition (Mr S J Galton)
Leader of the Council (Mr N Rushton)

- (A) Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/2020
(Pages 217 to 242)

MR GALTON will move and MRS PAGE will second:

“That the information contained in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20, attached as Appendix A to this report, on its activities, be noted.”

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 - APPOINTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEMS 11 AND 12 OF STANDING ORDER 4

- (A) To appoint the Leader

MR PAIN will move and MR SHEPHERD will second:

“That MR N J RUSHTON be appointed Leader of the Council for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

- (B) To note any changes to the membership of the Cabinet made by the Leader

MR RUSHTON will move and MR SHEPHERD will second:

“That it be noted that the Leader proposes to appoint the members named on list ‘1’ attached to the Order Paper as members of the Cabinet.”

- (C) To appoint Cabinet Support Members as the Council considers appropriate

MR RUSHTON will move and MR SHEPHERD will second:

“That the following members be appointed as Cabinet Support Members until the next Annual Meeting of the County Council, as provided for in Article 7 of the Council’s Constitution: -

Mr O O’Shea
Mrs B Seaton
Mrs C M Radford

- (D) To appoint members of the Scrutiny Commission, Boards and Committees (including the naming of Chairmen elect, Spokesmen/Spokespersons)

MR SHEPHERD will move and MR CHARLESWORTH will second:

“That the membership of the Scrutiny Commission, Boards and Committees as set out in List ‘2’ and the Chairmen Elect and Spokespersons named in List‘3’ attached to the Order Paper, be approved.”