

These minutes are subject to
ratification at the next Council Meeting



**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL
THURSDAY 4 MARCH 2010**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillor P F McGowan - Mayor
Councillor Mrs M M Males – Deputy Mayor

Councillors R A Adair, D G Bell, Mrs D M Boote, S J Boote, B Buschman, R L Butler, J N Clarke, C M Combellack, L B Cooper, J E Cottee, J A Cranswick, B G Dale, G Davidson, C J Evans, Mrs R E J Godkin, M G Hemsley, R Hetherington, T W Holt, Mrs C E M Jeffreys, R M Jones, T L Kerry, K A Khan, I I Korn, N C Lawrence, A MacInnes, G R Mallender, S E Mallender, Mrs J M Marshall, Mrs D J Mason, F J Mason, G S Moore, B A Nicholls, E A Plant, F A Purdue-Horan, Mrs J A Smith, P Smith, P W Smith, J A Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, B Tansley, H Tipton, B Venes, and D G Wheeler

OFFICERS PRESENT:

D Banks	Head of Environment and Waste Management
C Bullett	Deputy Chief Executive (CB)
A Graham	Chief Executive
S Griffiths	Deputy Chief Executive (SG)
N Morton	Head of Financial Services
P Randle	Deputy Chief Executive (PR)
D Swaine	Head of Corporate Services
P Wigginton	Member Services Manager

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors T D S Barlow S Bennett and J E Fearon.

OPENING PRAYER

The Meeting was led in prayer by the Mayor's Chaplain

40. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

41. Petitions

a) Save Gamston Green Belt

Councillor L B Cooper presented a petition to the Mayor on behalf of the Holme Peirrepoint and Gamston Parish Council calling on all appropriate planning authorities, local, regional and central government and, if necessary the Secretary of State, to refuse permission for any

large scale development on the Green Belt in the parish of Holme Pierrepont and Gamston.

He went on to indicate that the reason for the petition was to emphasise that any large scale development would pose a real threat to the environment and would represent a loss of leisure and visual amenity for the residents of Gamston, Bassingfield, Adbolton, Holme Pierrepont plus the surrounding villages and also West Bridgford. Additionally any such development would not be sustainable and the infrastructure was totally inadequate.

The petition contained 2,400 signatures.

b) Save Tollerton Village

Mr Noel Marshall presented a petition to the Mayor opposing proposals to develop a football stadium at Bassingfield and an urban extension in Tollerton village. He went on to indicate that this would pose a real threat to the environment and would result in a loss of leisure, visual amenity and quality of life for the residents of Tollerton and any development would destroy the Green Belt and Tollerton as a community.

He sought support to exclude the proposals from the development framework and to refuse permission for the proposed or any similar developments in Tollerton and Bassingfield.

The petition contained 1120 signatures.

The Mayor accepted the petitions and indicated that the Chief Executive would refer them to the appropriate officer, Committee or Member Group and advise the person presenting the petition accordingly.

42. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17 December 2009 were received as a correct record and signed by the Mayor, subject to the following amendment –

Minute 39 Notice of Motion – In the recorded vote schedule – Remove Councillor Lawrence from the list of members voting against the Motion and insert the name of Councillor Lawrence in the list of members abstaining from voting.

43. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported that this was the last Council before Annual Council. He drew attention to several events he had attended since the last meeting. In particular, he reported that he had been proud to lay a wreath at the grave of the Rushcliffe recipient of the Victoria Cross at the General Cemetery near to Canning Circus in Nottingham.

In addition he had hosted an event in the parlour for Senior Guide Leaders who were celebrating the centenary anniversary of the formation of the Girl Guide movement. He had received a commemorative mug, biscuits and card by way of a thank you from the Guides.

He had particularly enjoyed the annual Civic Dinner which as usual was excellently organised and hosted by the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club. He felt that the theme of Community Safety was extremely well received.

He was particularly pleased to see a report in the press about the equipment provided by Councillor Cooper's mayoral charity being used to save the life of a young patient in hospital. To date, the current Mayor's charity appeal had raised approximately £7,000 and he hoped to allocate the final amount towards a specific piece of equipment as opposed to it being used in a general way.

He hoped that as many Members as possible would support his remaining events and in particular he hoped that there would be very good support for the parachute jump being undertaken by his wife at Langar Airfield. He also referred to the Charity Golf Day at Cotgrave Place Golf Club and a proposed Clay Pigeon Shoot event. In conclusion he noted that the appeal towards funds for a Chain for the Deputy Mayor had not been successful.

44. Urgent Item – Failure to Attend Meetings

The Mayor indicated that he had agreed to the consideration of this urgent item under section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a decision was required on an issue which had only come to light after the agenda had been produced.

Members considered the report of the Head of Corporate Services relating to the attendance of Councillor Barlow at meetings of the authority.

Members were aware that Councillor Barlow had been unwell for some time and unfortunately he remained too ill to attend any meetings at present.

RESOLVED that

- a) the failure of Councillor Barlow to attend a meeting since 24 September 2009 due to ill-health, be approved;
- b) Councillor Barlow be given an extension of time until the end of May 2010 to attend a meeting of the authority, thereby extending the six month period of non attendance; and
- c) the best wishes of Members and officers be passed to Councillor Barlow for a speedy return to good health.

45. Leader's Announcements

The Leader advised Members that on Friday 5 March 2010 he would be attending the final meeting of the Regional Transport Board and also of the East Midlands Regional Assembly.

The Leader indicated that he was aware of concerns that had been expressed by some Members about the Customer Service Centre partnership. In order to address these concerns he had requested officers to prepare an urgent report to be considered by Cabinet on Tuesday 9 March 2010 to set up a cross party Cabinet Member Group. The terms of reference and membership would be considered by Cabinet and he hoped that this Group would enable effective scrutiny of the project and ensure that it progressed in line with the allocated resources and within the agreed capital programme. He anticipated that the Group would submit recommendations to Cabinet prior to finalising the project.

In conclusion the Leader stated that the Customer Services Centre Partnership had highlighted issues regarding the future of the Council's offices and he undertook to ensure that a Cabinet appointed Member Group would be set up in the next year's work programme to assess the future implications in more detail.

46. Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive reported that this would be the last meeting of the Council attended by Mr Phil Wigginton, Member Services Manager, before his retirement on 31 March 2010. He advised Members that Phil had worked for the authority since 1974 and had given excellent, dedicated, loyal and professional service to the Council throughout this time. On a personal level he indicated that Phil's knowledge and high standards had been invaluable to him particularly during his early time at Rushcliffe.

He indicated that to reward Phil's dedication and loyalty a suitable event would be arranged in the future and Members would be advised about this in due course. He wished Phil a long and happy retirement and Members supported these comments.

47. Financial Plans and Strategy 2010/11 to 2014/15

Councillor Clarke presented the report regarding the Council's financial plans and by way of introduction made the following statement –

"Mr Mayor, the budget and financial plans before you this evening represent the culmination of the most extensive budget review and consultation exercise ever undertaken by the Council. This involved Members, Officers and representatives of the public partaking in a series of workshops and seminars and I pay tribute to everyone who contributed to this process. I was especially impressed with the contributions made by members of the public who are, of course, our taxpayers, and the insight gained by all age groups into the Council's expenditure. This has all taken place in the light of the intense financial pressures resulting from the current economic climate and the severe constraints which this deep recession has brought.

You will remember that back in October, a budget shortfall of £1.2m was predicted for next year, plus a further shortfall of £750,000 from 2012 onwards, largely due to a poor outlook for returns on investments and the need to make a pessimistic assumption about the likely future level of Central Government support. Now, through the concerted efforts of Managers, Members and the

valued work of residents' focus groups I am proud to be able to propose a robust budget for next year that commands the overwhelming support of all those involved in the process.

Furthermore, one of the touchstone principles that we have employed throughout the process is to retain the Council's excellence and satisfaction in the eyes of our residents to maintain our position as one of the top District Councils in the Country. I believe the work and consultation we have done will help to ensure that this is achieved, and that we continue to invest for the future improvement of services. This is demonstrated in the capital programme where provision continues to be made for additional affordable housing in the Borough, together with grants for improving residents' homes, provision for play areas, environmental improvements, vehicles and investment in new software.

I think it is worth recording here that achieving all this has not been easy: Managers have taken bold steps to reduce costs and budgets, not least through reducing staff costs. Budgets of direct relevance to Members are also being reduced and - supported by residents - we are planning to raise further income through charges. At this point I would refer to the initiative to seek sponsorship across a variety of the Council's locations and assets. The budget papers include wheeled bins as one of those assets that might be put forward as appropriate for such sponsorship, but this could result in the bins having "stickers" and other notices applied to them, which I feel could, in time, become tatty and detract from the Borough's general clean and tidy environment of which we are so proud. This is something the Council has previously resisted and I propose that this prohibition should continue. I am sure there are adequate alternative facilities to help raise the estimated income.

On the positive side, our savings initiatives will also provide for an optional second green waste bin for those who require them and provide opportunities for apprenticeships with the Council. Nevertheless, both Members and Officers have shown a lead and will experience some of the "pain" necessary to resolve these financial challenges we face due to the recession. I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to thank all Members, Officers and residents for their help over the last few months and also for their support in the coming year. I would also, once again, commend to you the involvement of our Young People in the focus groups as this further demonstrates what great young people we have in this Borough.

However, that does not mean that the Council can rest on its laurels and there will be still more work to do to continue to find efficiencies and savings in order to meet the target of £700,000 for savings in the financial strategy from 2012. I know that Managers are already working on this through the "fit for purpose" and other reviews. Further difficult decisions will no doubt have to be made in the future.

The proposed revenue and capital budgets continue to reflect the Council's priorities, and the savings have been achieved with as little adverse impact on service levels to our residents as possible. Nevertheless, there are still risks, particularly in relation to the potential length and depth of the current recession – we still have strong balances but we must ensure we use these responsibly

in order to safeguard against continued risks and to enable us to take advantage of any opportunities that may arise in the future.

A Borough Council tax of £113.22 is proposed, which means an increase of £1.98. This level of increase received the support of our residents' focus groups, especially when they realised it was not £2 per week, but only about £2 per year. This is less than the price of a pint of beer per year! Indeed the Council Tax at Band D represents a total weekly figure less than £2.20.

This continues to represent excellent value for money for our residents as it remains one of the lowest in the country and pays for excellent, high performing services. It is also testament to the hard work that our officers put in to ensure we remain a prudent Council with robust finances. This Council has a long history of being very efficient financially, which cannot be said of some other Councils around the country. This, therefore, makes it all the more difficult to keep finding savings.

Mr Mayor, combine this with our being aware of the extra pressure that taxpayers are under in these recessionary times, and the need to continue to plan for the future, it all adds up to a balanced and integrated set of financial plans to help the Council meet the current economic challenges and a proposed new Council Tax level for 2010/11 of £113.22 at Band D.

I have pleasure, Mr Mayor in moving the recommendations set out on pages 15,16,17 of the Council agenda”.

Councillor Cranswick seconded the recommendations set out in the report and the three Group Leaders were invited to comment.

Councillor Evans supported the proposal and acknowledged the efforts made by Members and Officers in achieving savings of approximately £1m without any noticeable impact on the high quality of services delivered to residents. He added that the budget workshops had been very well presented by officers and had provided Members with a clear insight into the issues affecting the budget process. In his view the Council Tax was justified and reasonable in the present economic climate. He expressed some concern about the increasing number of Parishes with high precepts and also about the capital expenditure on the proposed Customer Service Centre. In conclusion he believed that the proposed budget was acceptable.

Councillor MacInnes supported the recommendations and felt that the modest increase proposed was affordable for the majority of the residents of the Borough. In view of what was happening in other Authorities he was pleased to see that the Council had not resorted to the compulsory redundancy of staff as part of the cost cutting exercise. The budget was balanced and focused on the priorities and aspirations of residents. He particularly welcomed the capital programme including improvements in Information Technology. He also welcomed the new proposed Customer Service Centre and felt that any perceived initial problems could be overcome with proper consultation and involvement of all interested parties. He also welcomed improvements proposed to central West Bridgford, including the refurbishment of the public toilets in Bridgford Park and the improvements to the Stable Block in the Park. He was also pleased to see proposals for affordable housing. In conclusion he

deplored the action of the County Council in their programme of compulsory staff redundancies fuelled in his view by the need to reduce Council Tax.

Councillor S E Mallender supported the recommendations and complemented the officers for providing clear and understandable reports for Members to consider. She hoped that further initiatives like the Civic Centre energy saving programme would be explored. She also welcomed the improvements to the public toilets in Bridgford Park and other improvements in Central West Bridgford and at the Hook in Lady Bay.

Councillor Jones supported the recommendations but expressed some concern about the proposals for expenditure on the proposed Customer Service Centre and sought clarification about spending proposals and potential 'branding' of the new facility.

Councillor Boote expressed some concern about the proposed voluntary parking scheme at Rushcliffe Country Park and felt that it was unlikely to achieve the suggested income of £15,000. He also noted that the Council Tax of £113.22 had been arrived at by the use of a revised revenue balance of £519,253 to reduce the budget requirement.

Councillor Boote also expressed concern in relation to the fact that the Council had withdrawn funding to Parishes as this meant that they had to precept larger amounts. He gave examples of the average Council Tax per property, including parish precepts, for districts in the County and Rushcliffe was the second highest. He acknowledged that in part this was due to the high property values in Rushcliffe but felt that a greater burden was being placed on Parishes and average Parish Precepts were increasing.

Councillor Davidson supported these comments and indicated that higher precepts were being levied as the Council had withdrawn funding to the Parishes.

In response to the comment from Councillor Jones about the Customer Service Centre, Councillor Cranswick reported that the original programme was for £2m and the draft Financial Strategy for 2010/11 to 2014/15 incorporated a reduction within 2010/11 by £750,000. Therefore the unspent portion of the allocation for the scheme in 2009/10 would be carried forward. The new amount was to fund the work at the proposed Customer Services Centre and improvements to the spokes in the Borough and he confirmed that no decision had been taken about 'branding'.

With regard to the comment from Councillor Boote about the voluntary payment for parking at the Country Park, he indicated that a similar initiative was working successfully at Attenborough Nature Reserve and the Council felt that it was appropriate to introduce the initiative at the Country Park.

In terms of the Parish Precepts, he stressed that the Council Tax for the Borough was £113.22 which could be controlled by the Council. He indicated that Parish Councils were totally independent and they could levy their own precept which provided local accountability and transparency for residents in the Parishes concerned.

In conclusion Councillor Cranswick thanked all Members and officers for their hard work in achieving what he felt was an excellent outcome for the residents of the Borough. Councillor Clarke strongly supported these comments.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the capital programme, as set out in Annex 1 of the Cabinet report, be approved and that officers be authorised to take the necessary steps to implement the first two years of that programme;
- (ii) the prudential indicators, as set out in Annex 2 of the Cabinet report be approved;
- (iii) authority to effect movements between the separately agreed authorised and operational limits for external debt in respect of external borrowing and other long term liabilities, in accordance with option appraisal and best value for money be delegated to the Section 151 Officer;
- (iv) the revised revenue estimates for 2010/11 including contingency provision of £180,000, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report and supported by the detailed budget book, be approved;
- (v) the medium term financial strategy as set out in Annex 3 of the Cabinet report, and the summarised projection based on the options proposed by Cabinet in Appendix 5 of the report, be adopted and the Council Tax for Borough purposes be increased by £1.98;
- (vi) a contribution of £30,000 be made to the Information Technology Reserve;
- (vii) the Council Tax for the Borough be declared at £113.22 and a revised revenue balance of £519,253 be applied to reduce the budget requirement accordingly;
- (viii) for the financial year 2010/11, the Council determine in accordance with Section 35(2) (d) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 that in so far as the Council performs functions which elsewhere in the Council's area are performed by a Parish authority, the amount of £754,040 in the West Bridgford urban area and the amount of £6,570 in the Ruddington Parish area, being expenses incurred by the Council in performing such functions, shall be its special expenses.
- (ix) provision for Parish precepts of £1,769,405 be made, these being chargeable as special items on the respective part of the Borough in accordance with Section 35(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- (x) the following calculation of the Council's budget requirement for 2010/11 be made in accordance with Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

- (a) £39,372,045 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act;
 - (b) £24,942,863 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act;
 - (c) £14,429,182 Being the amount by which the aggregate at x (a) exceeds the aggregate at x (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act as its budget requirement for the year.
- (xi) it be noted that the following tax base for the year 2010/11 has been calculated in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-
- (a) The amount calculated as the tax base for the year 2010/11 for the Rushcliffe Borough area is 41,012
 - (b) The amount calculated as the tax base for the year 2010/11 for each part of the Borough is as listed in Appendix 3 to this report.
- (xii) The following amounts now be calculated in accordance with Section 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-
- (a) **£7,255,788** Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, formula grant, and increased by the amount of sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its Collection Fund to its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Council Tax surplus).
 - (b) **£174.91** Being the amount at x(c) above, less the amount at xii(a) above, all divided by the amount at xi(a) above, calculated in accordance with Section **33(1)** of the Act as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
 - (c) **£2,530,015** Being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
 - (d) **£113.22** Being the amount at xii(b) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at xii(c) above, by the amount at xi(a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.
 - (e) The amount indicated in column 9 of Appendix 3 of the report in respect of each area indicated in column 1 being the amounts given by adding to the amount at xii(d) above

the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area shown in columns 5 and 6 of Appendix 3, divided in each case by the amount indicated at xi(b) above and shown in column 2 of Appendix 3, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- (f) The amounts shown in Appendix 4 of the report for each valuation band in each part of the Council's area listed, being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at xii(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in the valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

48. Council Tax 2010/11 – Tax Rate Calculation

Councillor Clarke presented the report of the Head of Financial Services outlining the rates precepted by the County Council, Police Authority and Fire Authority. He referred to the updated appendix which had been circulated to Members and stated that the report provided the amounts payable by all residents.

In response to previous comments about Parish Precepts, Councillor Moore indicated that insofar as Cropwell Bishop was concerned, a large precept had been levied to enable the purchase of the former Youth Centre building in the village. The initiative had been widely discussed in the village and had received much support. He went on to refer to the transparent way this had been done and was pleased to report that the facility was now widely being used by the community.

RESOLVED that

- a) It be noted that the Nottinghamshire County Council, the Nottinghamshire Fire Authority and the Nottinghamshire Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts for the year 2010/11 to the Council, issued in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories shown below:

	Nottinghamshire County Council £	Nottinghamshire Fire Authority £	Nottinghamshire Police Authority £
Band A	795.45	46.46	106.74
Band B	928.03	54.20	124.53
Band C	1,060.60	61.95	142.32
Band D	1,193.18	69.69	160.11
Band E	1,458.33	85.18	195.69
Band F	1,723.48	100.66	231.27
Band G	1,988.63	116.15	268.85
Band H	2,386.36	139.38	320.22

- b) Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts calculated by the Borough Council as its tax rate applicable in each area of the Borough and the amounts shown in (a) above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown in columns 2 to 9 of Appendix 1 of the report as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2010/11 for each of the categories of dwelling and areas indicated.

49. Designated Public Places Order – Radcliffe on Trent

Councillor Cranswick presented the report of the Head of Community Shaping reminding Members that in December 2009 it was agreed to carry out a consultation exercise with a view to making a Designated Public Places Order in Radcliffe on Trent. The Order would provide the Police with additional powers to deal with the problems being experienced as a result of people drinking in public places.

Commenting further, Councillor Cranswick indicated that extensive consultation had been undertaken involving residents, the Parish Council, the Police, the County Council, Radcliffe pub watch and the Neighbourhood Watch network. In total there had been 101 responses and 98% of respondents were in support of the making of the Order. He added that Cabinet had supported the making of the Order and had referred it to Council for approval.

Councillor Evans supported the initiative and indicated that it would be useful for a report to be presented to the relevant Council committee in the future analysing how successful the making of the order had been.

Councillor Plant supported the initiative and indicated that a similar Order had been made in West Bridgford. She stated that this had helped to reduce associated problems but it had not eliminated them. She indicated that a Police presence was often needed and that initiatives needed to be looked at to try to curb under age drinking and she too hoped that appropriate analysis of the effectiveness of the Order would be undertaken.

Councillor S E Mallender supported the initiative but felt that more action should be taken by Councils to lobby the Government to stop Supermarkets selling cheap alcohol

Councillor Boote supported the making of the Order but queried why the whole of Radcliffe on Trent was included in the Order. He stated that he believed the initiative would help to deal with the problems of anti-social behaviour associated with drinking but not the root cause of the problem, particularly excessive or irresponsible consumption.

In response, Councillor Clarke supported the initiative and indicated that it would not affect people drinking and behaving responsibly, however it would help the appropriate agencies in preventing and deterring alcohol related problems. The reason for the whole of the village being included in the Order was to ensure that incidents did not migrate from one part of the village that was covered to another part that was not.

He went onto explain that problems associated with alcohol and anti-social behaviour occurred in various areas of the Borough and indeed throughout the country. With regard to Radcliffe on Trent he indicated that it was felt that the incidents of anti-social behaviour were fuelled by drinking and that the Order would help to reduce this.

Councillor Mrs Smith supported these comments and indicated that a public house in the village that had previously been associated with alcohol related anti-social behaviour was now under new management and operating extremely well without any incidents.

In supporting the making of the Order, Councillor Hetherington indicated that it would not prevent people who behaved responsibly from enjoying their leisure time.

RESOLVED that

the making of a Designated Public Places Order for that part of Radcliffe-on-Trent shown edged black on the attached plan be approved by Council under section 13 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

50. Food Law Enforcement Plan 2010/11

Councillor Mrs Mason presented the report of the Head of Environment and Waste Management indicating that it was a requirement of the Food Standards Agency that this Plan was considered and approved by Council annually.

She commended the achievements as detailed in the report including the successful Food Safety Week and also that the Council was in the upper quartile of food businesses being broadly complaint, which was excellent. She also drew attention to the main key improvement areas for 2010/11 and commended the programme.

Councillor Evans congratulated the staff in the service area for the improvements made and the excellent service provided. He felt that further

improvement could be made if the star rating scheme was better marketed and publicised. He felt that the scheme was very good but that it needed to be available to a wider audience to view and felt that if residents viewed the information then their choice of restaurants would be better informed. However, he also noted that the proposal to arrange for premises to display certificates showing their star rating would be beneficial. He expressed concern about proposed reductions in budgets and sought reassurances that this would not adversely affect the level of service provided.

Councillor MacInnes congratulated the team on their continued commitment and work. He indicated that the team was small but dedicated but expressed some concern about whether the level of service would be compromised during any periods of sickness or holidays.

Councillor S E Mallender was pleased to see that the residents were being well protected by this excellent service.

Councillor Jones supported these comments but expressed some concern about staffing levels and the ability to continue to improve the service.

In response, Councillor Mrs Mason indicated that officers would react if there was a need to provide cover due to any unforeseen incidents of staff sickness. She felt that the star rating system was excellent and felt some information about the scheme and the ratings themselves could be included in Rushcliffe Reports.

RESOLVED that

the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2010/11 be approved.

51. Questions under Standing Order 11 (2)

Question from Councillor S J Boote to the Leader

What arrangements are in place to enable blind people to vote privately and securely at elections in Rushcliffe?

Answer by the Leader

The Returning Officer is responsible for running the elections process and the question should be addressed to him.

Supplementary (1) By Councillor S J Boote

Does the Leader think that a template should be provided to ensure that blind voters are dealt with on the same basis as other voters.

Answer by the Leader

The Returning Officer is responsible for running the elections process and the question should be addressed to him.

Supplementary (2) By Councillor B Venes

What arrangements are in place to enable partially sighted people to vote privately and securely at elections in Rushcliffe?

Answer by the Leader

The Returning Officer is responsible for running the elections process and the question should be addressed to him.

52. Notices of Motion

The Notices of Motion were withdrawn.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

MAYOR