

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET
TUESDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2011**

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

PRESENT:

Councillors D G Bell, J N Clarke, J A Cranswick, J E Fearon, D J Mason, Mrs J A Smith

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors S J Boote, Councillor A MacInnes, Councillor G R Mallender

OFFICERS PRESENT:

C Bullett	Deputy Chief Executive (CB)
A Graham	Chief Executive
S Griffiths	Deputy Chief Executive (SG)
S Harley	Head of Planning & Place Shaping
R Mapletoft	Planning Policy Manager
C McGraw	Head of Community Shaping
D Mitchell	Head of Partnerships & Performance
P Randle	Deputy Chief Executive (PR)
L Reid Jones	Democratic Services Manager
P Sutton	Interim Head of Financial Services
D Swaine	Head of Corporate Services

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

There were no apologies for absence.

11 members of the public were also attendance.

30. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

31. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11 October 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32. Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Proposals

Councillor Bell presented a report on the Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Proposals setting out the recommendations of the Local Development Framework Group (LDF). The report explained how the Core Strategy proposals had progressed since early 2010 and in particular, the influence of the election of the Coalition Government in May 2010. In reference to the report he said that until recently, the Council had been preparing an Aligned Core Strategy with the other local authorities in the Nottingham Housing Market Area. He said it had not been possible to reach

agreement on the distribution of new housing across the housing market area and Rushcliffe was now preparing a separate Core Strategy. The report explained the strategic locations where around 9,900 new homes could be built. This included major sites where planning permission already existed, such as Sharphill and Cotgrave Colliery, other sites under consideration such as Bingham and RAF Newton, and subject to the A453 being improved, land south of Clifton. Councillor Bell stated that the Chancellor's announcement in the Autumn Statement with regards to bringing forward the development of the A453 suggested that the 2,500 proposed dwellings at South Clifton could be brought forward. He said that growth was also proposed around the remaining 4 large settlements of East Leake, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent and Ruddington and this had been largely been considered acceptable by residents.

Councillor Bell reminded Members that this had been an extremely complex and detailed piece of work and recorded his thanks to the officers for their hard work and to the LDF Group for their deliberations over the past five years. He stated that the housing proposals were a contentious issue, but in reality these were only a small part of the Plan. He asked Members to bear in mind the implications of the new National Planning Policy Framework and the obligation to co-operate with neighbouring authorities.

Councillor Bell stated that the Council had no statutory development plan document at present and that it was vital for the protection of the Borough that one was in place as soon as possible. He reminded Members that the Regional Spatial Strategy was about to be abolished and the localism agenda was taking its place, but that the housing requirements needed to be based on evidence. He stressed that the Planning Inspector would have regard to the evidence base when making his judgement on the Plan. He stated that it was not possible for every proposal to meet with 100% public approval but that the inclusion of the land south of Clifton was considered to be necessary for the plan to be sound and to withstand scrutiny at the Examination in Public.

Councillor Bell stated that an amount of green belt land would have to be released to meet the objectives and this was a contentious issue. He said that less than 2% of the whole green belt area around Rushcliffe would be affected and that the proposals had been supported by the LDF Group at its meeting on 12 October 2011. He said that the remaining policies of the Core Strategy had not yet been considered by the LDF Group and it was proposed that this would happen prior to the Council Meeting on 15 December 2011.

Councillor Mason said that the number of homes being planned for were significantly less than the figure being proposed previously and this was to be welcomed. She was pleased with the hard work that the LDF Group had undertaken, and felt that the proposals had been thoroughly researched, with substantial consultation having been carried out. She was of the opinion that the prospect of the Core Strategy being approved by the Planning Inspector would be enhanced with the addition of the land south of Clifton. She felt it strengthened the Council's position. She mentioned the fact that the plan would ensure the unique character of Rushcliffe was preserved and protected.

Councillor Mason drew Cabinet's attention to other documents in the Core Strategy particularly those on the historic environment and transportation and noted that these would be good for the future of Rushcliffe.

Councillor Cranswick reminded Members of the need to have a Local Plan in place as it was a crucial guide to inform development. He asked those who were urging Cabinet not to pass the plan to look carefully at the alternatives and the risk this posed to the Borough as there would be no control over sites, including unpopular sites. However with the plan there was some clear control over what, where and when development took place.

Councillor Mrs Smith said she shared local people's concern regarding the land south of Clifton, however there was no alternative. She said that Bingham, Cotgrave, East Leake and Keyworth had accepted the need for larger housing developments and that other villages needed housing to keep local centres alive. She added that the school in Radcliffe was in danger of closing because of falling pupil numbers and that it was important to have an influx of young people to keep the villages going. Councillor Smith commented that the loss of green belt land was less than 2% and it was for the good of the Borough that the plan was endorsed.

Councillor Clarke stated that a lot of time had been spent by the LDF Group in considering the proposals and that the Council had campaigned hard for a reduction in the housing requirements. He said it was important to minimise the impact on residents as much as possible. With regard to the principal of co-operating with neighbouring local authorities Councillor Clarke said that it was important that housing need was met in Rushcliffe before looking at what could be done to cater for the needs of the Greater Nottingham area. Councillor Clarke continued by saying that if it was necessary to have limited development in the green belt to revitalise villages then the Council would have to allow this.

Commenting further Councillor Clarke reminded Cabinet that the proposals were based on recommendations of a cross-party working group and that they would be debated at Full Council. He said that the projections were in part subject to the A453 improvements, but although the Chancellor's announcement in the Autumn Statement had moved this forward, the reality of the road improvements was yet to be realised. He stated that there was still upward pressure on the Greater Nottingham Housing Market. In response, the Deputy Chief Executive (PR) confirmed that although the Regional Spatial Strategy identified a target of around 50,000 new houses for the Greater Nottingham area, the latest government projections based on 2008 figures suggested around 71,000 could be needed. Councillor Clarke stated that with 9,900 houses the Council had demonstrated it was playing its part in meeting the needs of the wider area and the work of the LDF Group had recognised this. He re-iterated the need for the local plan to be sustainable at public examination, with sound and robust evidence of sustainable development in Rushcliffe.

Councillor Fearon concurred with the remarks made and stated that the most important fact was an evidence based approach to protect the unique character and nature of the Borough.

Councillor Clarke concluded by stating that it was vital that Cabinet recommended the Core Strategy to Council and it was essential that policies were in place to protect against unwanted development.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- i. endorses the recommendations of the Local Development Framework Group in respect of housing growth as set out at **appendix A** and refers Core Strategy Policy 2 – the Spatial Strategy to Council on 15 December 2011 for approval and;
- ii. supports the remaining Core Strategy policies, attached as **appendix B**, but refers these to the Local Development Framework Group for consideration, prior to submission to Council on 15 December 2011 for approval.

33. **Electoral Review – Proposed Council Size Submission**

Councillor Clarke introduced a report detailing the Proposed Council Size Submission which was part of the electoral review being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. By referring to the report he reminded Cabinet that in March 2011 Council had agreed to ask the Commission to undertake a further electoral review of Rushcliffe. In May 2011 the Commission had confirmed they would undertake a review with a view to this commencing in January 2012. The decision was based on the fact that 32% of the Council wards had a variance of 10% above or below the average electoral per councillor. The review process required the Council to make a submission setting out its proposals for Council size evidencing the reasoning and rationale for this. Councillor Clarke reminded Cabinet that they were being asked to consider the proposed size and recommend it to Council for approval.

Councillor Cranswick informed Cabinet that the submission identified a Council size of 45 Members, and that based on the information set out in the submission a reduction in Council size of this nature would not affect the ability of Councillors to carry out an effective representation role. Furthermore he said that it would not be detrimental to the management of the Council, but such a reduction would require adjustment of the existing governance structure to evaluate the appropriate number and composition of the Council's committees.

Councillor Cranswick explained that if accepted by Cabinet, the submission would be sent to the Commission as the Council's provisional one, but would be subject to Full Council approval. He outlined the process following this, whereby the Commission would consider the submission and recommend a Council size which would be subject to consultation. Following this the Commission would look at how the new number could be achieved in terms of ward boundaries and Council structure. He anticipated that the Commission would be looking for as little disruption as possible to existing boundaries and relationships between communities. He continued by saying that any proposals would be finalised and in place in time for the next Borough elections in 2015.

Councillor Mason said that it was important for electoral representation to be fair and equitable, as the variance in some wards was over 10% in terms of the Councillor to electorate ratio. She felt that the submission was interesting and gave a good indication to what difference the reduction in Council size would make in terms of workload of Councillors. She stated that in her opinion the Council would be just as successful with 45 Councillors and she hoped that residents would think it a fair and clear way forward.

Councillor Mrs Smith had read the submission with great interest stating that she did not realise how much went on in the Council and what a good job Member Services staff do to service all of the meetings.

Councillor Cranswick reminded Members that the purpose of the review was to equate the number of Councillors per ward and that at present the average electorate per Councillor ratio was 1,700 but that with a proposed Council size of 45 this would be somewhere in the region of 1,975 and if this was achievable it would be a fair and satisfactory figure.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Cabinet endorses the proposed Council size and recommends it to Council for approval and;
- ii. In order to meet the timetable set by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, the Chief Executive make arrangements for the submission to be sent to the Commission as the Council's provisional submission prior to its consideration by Council on 15 December.

34. Revenue and Capital Monitoring – September 2011

Councillor Cranswick presented the Revenue and Capital Monitoring report as at September 2011. He reminded Members that in April 2011 the Council had implemented a new Finance system, however due to some unforeseen complexities there had been a delay in formal budget reporting to Cabinet. By referring to the report Councillor Cranswick pointed out that the format and content of the report had been reviewed to incorporate outturn projections and make the report more understandable.

With regard to the Revenue Budget Councillor Cranswick pointed out that monitoring for September 2011 reflected some significant underspends, which were unsurprising given the Council's drive for savings and efficiency. He drew Cabinet's attention to the significant success of the Green Waste scheme whereby £260,000 had been received above the original projections.

Commenting further Councillor Cranswick stated that the Revenues and Benefits Service review had delivered significant savings a year earlier than expected and the Council was bucking the national trend by maintaining income levels from search fees, car parking and industrial units. He continued, saying that the impact of this performance was that there was no longer a requirement to use general fund balances to support the budget this year.

In relation to the Capital Budget Councillor Cranswick informed Members that the projected outturn for the capital programme was currently significantly lower than budgeted. This, he said, was due to the timing of individual projects rather than real underspends.

Councillor Mason welcomed the new format for the report which she found to be understandable. She thanked officers for their hard work.

The Chief Executive re-iterated the progress made and congratulated the Finance Team, in particular Paul Sutton, the Interim Head of Finance for his input in achieving the objective to make the format more understandable for Members. He took the opportunity to thank staff and stated that they had done a good job, under considerable pressure.

Councillors Clarke and Cranswick endorsed the comments of the Chief Executive.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Members note the current projections for Revenue and Capital outturn as at September 2011;
- ii. Part of the budget for the IS Strategy scheme (£347,000) be re-phased to 2012/13 to reflect spending plans.
- iii. The budget for Community Contact Centre Spokes scheme (£450,000) be removed from the current programme but will remain earmarked for this purpose;
- iv. Part of the budget for Support for Registered Housing (£365,000) be removed from the current programme and be earmarked for the Cotgrave Masterplan Scheme;
- v. Part of the budget for Vehicle Replacement (£164,000) be re-phased into 2012/13 to reflect spending plans;
- vi. Part of the Alford Road Pavilion Redevelopment scheme (£384,000) be re-phased into 2012/13 to reflect spending plans.

35. Environmental Improvement Schemes Capital Programme Review

Councillor Bell presented a report outlining the future of the Environmental Improvement Schemes Capital Programme. He explained that the programme had been introduced in the nineties, with the aim of funding community initiated schemes to enhance the public realm. This had helped to protect and improve the environment but the five year rolling programme was about to end. Councillor Bell informed Members that the scheme had been considered by the Community Development Scrutiny Group in October 2010. The Group had queried the on-going value of the scheme and had considered that the future of the programme should be reviewed having particular regard to budget discussions. In referring to the report Councillor Bell pointed out that due to works already taken place there was not the same level of demand for quality

schemes that would deliver significant improvements and it would appear that the programme had run its course.

Councillor Cranswick stated that the scheme had been in operation for some time and had been successful. He continued, saying that in the present climate there was no option but to discontinue the scheme.

Councillor Mason stated that the scheme had made improvements, but there were other grants available which could make a difference to the Borough.

Councillor Clarke concurred with the comments concluding that it was right and proper for the scheme to end.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the Small Environmental Improvements Programme be discontinued and;
- ii. the Budget be amended to reflect this.

36. Bingham Health Centre – Potential Customer Services Access Point

Councillor Cranswick presented a report seeking a decision regarding the opportunity to provide a full time remote customer service access point within the proposed health centre in Newgate Street, Bingham. He acknowledged the success of the Customer Contact Centre in West Bridgford, stating that this was the next step in the Council's Hub and Spoke customer service model. He informed Cabinet that the Spoke would operate on a full time basis and that officers based in the Spoke would be able to answer phones on the customer services phone line when not dealing with customers in person. Councillor Cranswick stated that the Health Authority had approached the Council regarding a strip of land around the proposed health centre and he suggested that the land should be disposed of to the Health Authority at the current market value to allow them to continue with the scheme.

In terms of financial implications the report outlined that an arrangement had been negotiated to off-set part of the capital receipt against the on-going occupation and ten year running costs. Taking account of the running costs of £47,500 this option would still provide the Council with a capital receipt of £45,000.

Councillor Cranswick informed Members that paragraph 8 in the report referred to a lease arrangement but stated that this should be a licence agreement.

Councillor Mrs Smith said that the new health centre was very much needed and the people of Bingham had waited a long time for it. She said that it was good to have the bonus of the 10 year agreement and welcomed the proposal regarding financing.

Councillor Clarke said the financial arrangements presented a fair valuation of the land for both sides and it was a positive way of progressing the project and working in partnership.

Councillor Bell re-iterated that the proposal built on the success of the Customer Contact Centre in West Bridgford and was sure it too would be successful.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve:

- i. the creation of a Customer Contact Point within the new Bingham Health Centre, based on a ten year licence arrangement with the benefit of additional monies associated with the land sale being paid to the Council;
- ii. the sale of the land marked in red on the plan circulated at the meeting on the terms set out in the report.

37. Olympics 2012 – Rushcliffe Borough Council’s Preparations

Councillor Mrs Smith presented a report detailing the Council’s preparations for the Olympics 2012. She said that it was a delight to announce that the Olympic Torch would travel through Rushcliffe, passing specifically through Radcliffe on Trent in Torch Bearer mode. She continued, saying that the Council would play a leading role in the celebrations and that it would provide a great opportunity for the whole community to become involved in the build up to this event. She explained that LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) had required each key partner involved in the Torch Relay, including the Council, to sign a confidentiality agreement to facilitate the torch on the respective part of the journey.

Councillor Mrs Smith informed Cabinet that there would be celebratory events in Rushcliffe on 28 June 2012, including mini Olympics for school children. In terms of a legacy Councillor Mrs Smith outlined the proposed Rushcliffe Young Ambassadors Group with the objective of establishing a Rushcliffe Social Network to engage with young people.

Councillor Clarke stressed that this was a Borough event, and although the torch was coming through Radcliffe it was a real opportunity to showcase the unique nature of the Borough.

Councillor Mason said she was happy that the Olympic torch was coming to Rushcliffe as there were great sporting traditions in the Borough. She said it was the most wonderful thing to happen, not just in terms of businesses but also the young ambassadors for whom it was aspirational. Furthermore it was important to be part of the Olympics as it was not just in London.

Councillor Cranswick supported the comments made.

In response to a question from Councillor Clarke, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Council had responsibility for the torch coming through the Borough. He explained that because of the confidentiality agreement he was not able to divulge any further detail. He could however confirm that the torch

would come through West Bridgford and would be in torch bearer mode part of this time.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the proposed Olympics 2012 celebratory events, the aspiration to create a Rushcliffe Young People's Social Network and the associated governance arrangements.

38. **Review of Scheme of Delegation**

Councillor Clarke presented a report setting out the findings of the review of the Scheme of Delegation and Article 12 – Officers, in the Council's Constitution which were considered by the Corporate Governance Group at its meeting on 22 November.

The Scheme of Delegation had last been reviewed in March 2008. The report indicated that the review process had not resulted in any significant changes to the Scheme of Delegation as its main focus was to ensure the Scheme accurately reflected existing roles and responsibilities.

With regard to Article 12 – Officers the revisions took into account the revised Officer Employment Procedure Rules within Part 4 of the Constitution. This ensured they accurately reflected the process for the approval of appointments to the roles of the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer.

RESOLVED that Cabinet, having considered the recommendations of the Corporate Governance Group:

- i. endorses the revisions to the Scheme of Delegation - Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions and Article 12 – Officers within the Council's Constitution and
- ii. recommends these to Council for approval.

39. **Vote of Thanks - Deputy Chief Executive (SG)**

The Chief Executive informed Cabinet that this was the last meeting of Cabinet before the retirement of Sue Griffiths, Deputy Chief Executive. Councillor Clarke passed on his thanks for all the work Sue had done for Cabinet and Council and wished her well on behalf of the Cabinet.

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

CHAIRMAN