



**NOTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP  
TUESDAY 6 MAY 2014**

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

**PRESENT:**

Councillors R L Butler (Chairman), S J Boote, N K Boughton-Smith,  
T Combellack, L B Cooper, J E Greenwood, Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

D Banks	Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods
C Evans	Transformation Project Officer
K Marriott	Executive Manager - Transformation
V Nightingale	Senior Member Support Officer

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

There were no apologies for absence

**23. Declarations of Interest**

There were none declared.

**24. Notes of the Previous Meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 March 2014 were accepted as a true record following the correction of two typographical errors.

With regard to the recent parish forum Councillor Boote stated that this had been well attended as it was devoted to planning matters. He wished to thank the Service Manager - Communities for a very useful and informative event. Councillor Butler supported these comments.

Following a request for clarification regarding wind power and how the new planning rules would affect the work being undertaken with Melton Borough Council, the Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods explained that officers would take into account any new Government guidance or recommendations.

The Group was informed that officers were meeting with representatives from the British Geological Survey to discuss dates for a meeting in respect of further discussions regarding fracking. Councillor Boote confirmed that Mr Riley could also be contacted to provide the Group with more information on fracking.

**25. Economic Development**

The Executive Manager - Transformation and Transformation Project Officer gave a presentation which updated Members on the Council's work to promote economic development. The Group were informed that a cross Council team

had been set up to take a holistic approach to this topic as it cut across many of the Council's services.

Officers explained that in respect of businesses there had been 470 created and 520 had ceased trading in 2012. In comparison to other areas in Nottinghamshire Rushcliffe had seen the highest number of new starters. Members were informed that the number of active businesses was 4,580 which was a slight decrease from 2009. Officers stated that although there had been a decline it was conceivable that the businesses had grown. Members queried if employment would be increased due to the work being undertaken to widen the A453. The Executive Manager - Transformation explained that as part of the funding bid for infrastructure the economic impact would have to have been identified.

In the area there were less people claiming benefits, 74% of the working age population were economically active and a higher number of people educated to degree level and above. With regard to young people there had been a year on year increase in the take up of apprenticeships with 700 having been started in 2012/13. Members were advised that the Leader had stated at the Civic Dinner that he would like to see 100 apprenticeships taken up this year. To assist this officers were working to engage with young people and businesses to promote the scheme.

In respect of the Council's assets the Group was informed that there was a high occupancy of the industrial units and The Point had only 1 vacant unit. Following a question, Members were informed that the Council could support businesses by being flexible with the terms and conditions for the leasing of the industrial units and by putting people in touch with either the private sector or other neighbouring authorities. At the Civic Centre vacant floors were being converted into serviced offices which would offer 'follow on' businesses short term leases to allow their businesses the opportunity to grow without having to take on board lengthy financial restrictions. This was also beneficial for the Council as it offered flexibility for the Authority as Members would be considering the future uses for the building at a later date. Future reports would be presented to Cabinet on the use of Bridgford Hall, Rushcliffe Lodge and other non operational assets. It was noted that the Council had other assets that were either owned by the Council or tied into leases. Following a question, Members were informed that dilapidation work was being carried out at Bridgford Hall which had meant that the wedding room was temporarily not in use. Members were also informed that there was no revenue stream from Rushcliffe Lodge as there had only been one family housed there in the last twelve months. Members were assured that the Property Team assessed the Council's assets; operational assets such as leisure centres, community halls, parks and playing fields were only considered if the services area or a Member Group requested further information on its usefulness.

The Executive Manager - Transformation informed the Group of the work that was being undertaken to regenerate Cotgrave; this included the former colliery site, the town centre and the designated employment land. It was anticipated that work would commence in May on the 455 proposed houses. Members were told that events had been held in the town to update, and engage with, residents on the proposals. Within the town centre development it was proposed to have all the public sector partners together in one building and to

bring on board another food store. Members queried if the Council was working with the Co-op store and if it would remain on site. Officers explained how the Co-op organisation was involved in the site and confirmed that following discussions they welcomed the addition of another food operator and the potential to include their pharmacy within the public sector building.

Members were reminded of the progress of the Local Plan and how this impacted on the economic viability of the Borough. It was recognised that the Council had allocated land for employment in order to make the Local Plan sound and further work was needed to enable developers to liaise with other Partners to identify what was required to enable businesses to move into the area. With regard to employment land Members recognised that developers would not build speculatively and therefore the Council was considering how it could assist up and coming businesses and minimise the barriers to developing the sites. One barrier that had been identified was infrastructure costs and officers had investigated government investment loans such as the Local Infrastructure Fund and had approached the D2N2 to see if these barriers could be mitigated. Members queried the use of Section 106 contributions or the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy. Officers stated that existing sites already had Section 106 agreement, and that the Council was not yet considering implementing a Community Infrastructure Levy, which had not been universally adopted.

Officers had also discussed Rushcliffe's potential business opportunities with 'Invest in Nottingham', which was funded by Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City Councils, and 'UK Trading and Investment' to ensure that the area was marketed to employers. Officers produced a brochure which was used to promote the Borough to future employers. As part of the Government's growth fund an application had been put forward and Rushcliffe's project was ranked 15th out of 90. Officers agreed to inform Members regarding the results of the funding, which would be announced later in the year. Another perceived barrier could be the broadband speeds in the Borough, however this was scheduled to be discussed at the Group's meeting in October.

As part of the Council's support for businesses the Rushcliffe Business Partnership held many events including monthly networking meetings for small businesses, specific meetings for big businesses and an annual event for the larger businesses. There would be a Food Fair held on 5 July 2014 to promote the Borough's food suppliers. Members were informed that Bingham Market was fully let every week and the Council would be assisting with the commemoration of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Charter. Other support included Shop Front Improvement Grants, business rate relief and help from Environmental Health and Licensing. Officers were pleased to announce that the Council had entered into an agreement to be the Primary Authority for Boots national food safety requirements. Officers were also able to signpost businesses to funding circles. Members were informed that this was when companies invested in projects together thus sharing the risk and the return. Nottinghamshire County Council was involved and the Executive Manager – Finance and Commercial was considering if this was something that the Authority could do.

The Council also supported the Cotgrave Employment Partnership, work clubs in Cotgrave and West Bridgford in order to help people into employment. Partner agencies held sessions at the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre and the Council worked with JobCentre Plus and the Nottingham Evening Post in respect of an annual jobs' fair. In 2013 1,200 people had attended seeking employment and there had been 31 exhibitors. It was noted that the Fair was advertised in the Nottingham Evening Post and Rushcliffe Reports, however as the Borough included LE postcodes Members requested that information should be sent to the Loughborough Echo and the Melton Times. Following a question Members were informed that Metropolitan Housing were developing a 'Metroployment' scheme as it considered this was in their tenant's interest and as a result they could pay their rent and were less likely to have any problems.

In respect of communications Members were informed that the Council's website pages had been revamped and updated. The site now included profiles on local businesses to raise awareness. The Council had introduced a business newsletter which was distributed electronically to over 500 local businesses and had received good feedback from the first three editions, especially from businesses that wished to be showcased. Members queried if education establishments received the newsletter and were informed that they were involved in the Jobs Fair and the Cotgrave Partnership as training was an important aspect.

In conclusion officers explained the priorities that had been identified for 2014/15 including

- links with the Local Enterprise Partnerships to maximise Government or European funding
- working with landowners and developers to bring forward development on key strategic sites
- allocation of the New Homes Bonus through the Council's Medium Term Financial Plans
- approval of the Council's Local Plan
- letting Bridgford Hall
- facilitating opportunities for 100 new apprenticeships.

Members thanked officers for their informative presentation and requested that this item should be included in their work programme in twelve months and noted that they would also be receiving further economic related updates on more specific topics at future meetings.

It was AGREED that

- a) Members endorsed the actions and priorities proposed for the coming year, and
- b) Members recognised the work officers were doing to progress this strategic priority within the resources available.

## 26. Request for Scrutiny of Public Conveniences

Following a request at the Group's meeting on 18 March 2014 the Group had agreed to consider if the provision of public toilets should be included on its work programme. Councillor Boote stated that he had raised this issue in November 2011 and that when asked people would say that they would like better provision although this was not an area that received many complaints, he stated that the health aspect associated with this issue had been reported in the Independent newspaper that day. He had also raised this issue in 2008 when he had informed Members of the Community Toilets scheme initiated by Richmond on Thames Council. He pointed out that since then over 100 councils had adopted a similar scheme. He urged Members to consider working with shops and public houses or to have more vandalproof 24 hour facilities in the area.

It was noted that East Leake Parish Council provided toilets in the village and that these had recently been refurbished.

Councillors Greenwood and Boughton-Smith stated that the lack of provision in the village had been a driver for the Ruddington Parish Council to talk to local businesses regarding this issue and in fact some businesses saw this as a way to encourage more trade.

Other Members stated that businesses in their villages also did not object to people using the facilities and therefore felt that this was not an issue that the Borough Council needed to address. The Chairman stated that the Group had considered the item and had not felt that this should be included within the Group's work programme. However, as this had been identified as an issue that many parishes had considered it could be discussed at a future parish forum.

## 27. Work Programme

The Group considered its work programme. New Energy Initiatives had been included in the agenda for the Group's next meeting however this might have to be moved or, depending on discussions with British Geological Survey, become an extra date in the Group's calendar.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

## **ACTION SHEET COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP - TUESDAY 6 MAY 2014**

<b>Minute Number</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>
25. Economic Development	a) officers to inform members of the results of the funding, when available  b) future Jobs Fairs to be advertised in the Loughborough Echo and Melton Times	Executive Manager - Transformation  Transformation Project Officer
27. Work	Officers to inform Members of the	Executive Manager -

Programme	outcome of the discussion with the British Geological Survey	Neighbourhoods
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