



**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL
THURSDAY 15 DECEMBER 2011**

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

PRESENT:

G S Moore - Mayor
I I Korn – Deputy Mayor

Councillors L J Abbey, R A Adair, Mrs S P Bailey, J R Bannister, D G Bell, Mrs D M Boote, S J Boote, N K Boughton-Smith, N A Brown, B Buschman, R L Butler, H A Chewings, J N Clarke, T Combellack, L B Cooper, J A Cranswick, B G Dale, G Davidson, A M Dickinson, J E Fearon, J E Greenwood, M G Hemsley, R Hetherington, R M Jones, K A Khan, N C Lawrence, E J Lungley, A MacInnes, Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender, S E Mallender, D J Mason, F J Mason, B A Nicholls, E A Plant, F A Purdue-Horan, S J Robinson, D V Smith, Mrs J A Smith, P Smith, Mrs M Stockwood, B Tansley, H Tipton, D G Wheeler

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

14 Members of the public

OFFICERS PRESENT:

C Bullett	Deputy Chief Executive (CB)
P Cox	Senior Solicitor
A Graham	Chief Executive
S Griffiths	Deputy Chief Executive (SG)
V Nightingale	Senior Member Support Officer
P Randle	Deputy Chief Executive (PR)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors J E Cottee, Mrs J M Marshall, J A Stockwood and T Vennett-Smith

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

The Mayor welcomed to the Chamber, children from Cropwell Bishop Primary School. The children sang three carols for the Members of the Council. The Mayor sincerely thanked the children and their teachers and wished them a very happy Christmas and New Year.

OPENING PRAYER

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

32. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

33. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 September 2011 were received as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

34. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor informed Members that he had completed 52 engagements since the last Council meeting, which had included many carol services. He highlighted two major engagements. Firstly the Remembrance Sunday for which he thanked all Councillors who had attended services on the Council's behalf. He felt that it was important that people honoured the brave men and women who had fought, and continued to fight, for the country and for freedom. He stated that he had attended the Launch of the Poppy Appeal on the Embankment and reminded Members that the British Legion was celebrating its 90th year of existence.

The second memorable event was the opening of the Maggie's Centre at the City Hospital, which was his chosen charity for the year. He said that over £2.8 million had been raised and the Centre was growing quickly. Currently the organisers were advertising for a Benefits Officer as the consequences of dealing with cancer were far wider than medical problems. He was pleased to announce that his own fundraising was progressing well and he had currently raised over £15,000 during the last six months. He thanked the Mayoress for all her hard work in helping with the events.

Finally, the Mayor had great honour in presenting a gift to Councillor Clarke who had served the residents of Rushcliffe for over 25 years.

Councillor Clarke thanked the Mayor and said he had enjoyed representing the constituents of the Borough.

35. Leader's Announcements

Councillor Clarke stated that the Council had been shortlisted for the Local Government Chronicles' efficiency award. He felt it was a great honour to be shortlisted and informed Members that the final would be held in March 2012. He thanked all officers and staff for their hard work.

36. Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive, on behalf of all staff, wished Members a happy and peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

He informed Members that this was Susan Griffiths' last meeting before she retired. Sue had started at Rushcliffe in 2007 and was his first appointee to the Senior Management Team. He stated that Sue was a dynamic person, a real strength to the organisation and had helped the organisation to be recognised nationally. Her professionalism and skills had assisted the Council to reach decisions on areas such as the Leisure Facilities Strategy, the Customer Services Centre and its subsequent move to the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre, and East Leake Leisure Centre. He wished her well in all her future projects.

On behalf of the Members Councillor Clarke echoed the sentiments made by the Chief Executive and thanked her for the valuable contribution she had made.

In response the Deputy Chief Executive (SG) informed the Council that she had enjoyed her time with Rushcliffe and especially the work undertaken with Members. She felt that democracy was strong and healthy and that the discussions had always been robust and challenging but respectful. In these current difficult times she wished all Members and officers well.

37. **Local Development Framework – Draft Core Strategy Proposals**

Councillor Bell presented a report regarding the draft Core Strategy Proposals. He stated that it was a long and complex document and was the culmination of five years hard work undertaken by the Local Development Framework Group. He thanked all Councillors, past and present, and officers for their input into the process. He reminded Members that it was important that the Council kept abreast of new legislation, such as the Localism Act and the emerging National Planning Policy Framework. He stated that the Localism Act would abolish the Regional Spatial Strategy which had placed an unnecessary housing burden on Rushcliffe, although some of the evidence that underpinned those numbers of houses was still relevant. Also, the Council had a duty to co-operate with its neighbours in the Nottingham Housing Market Area, on strategic planning. He stated that the key message was that in the absence of a Plan there would be an assumption of sustainable development which could leave the Borough in a vulnerable position in respect of unwanted development. It was vital that the Plan was fit for purpose and would withstand public examination. He realised that not everyone would agree with every aspect of the Plan but the Council needed to look at a Borough wide picture. It was regretful that not all the infrastructure would be in place at the beginning of the Plan but this would be taken into account as individual planning applications were considered. However, it was necessary to look at all the Borough especially as in some of the villages the populations were declining and without further development the areas could become unsustainable. It was also necessary to provide houses in the villages to enable young people to be able to live in their own areas.

He stated that the document contained many policies and strategies, some of which were incomplete, however these policies were not contentious and would be referred to the Local Development Framework Group before the document was published for representations. As a result of a recent ministerial comment regarding the A453, Policy 2 had been amended, part 8 was to be deleted as the site could now be identified as an allocation in the Policy and part 7 would now read

7. *The following strategic sites have the status of allocations:*
 - i) *Sustainable Urban Extension on land off Melton Road, Edwalton;*
 - ii) *Sustainable Urban Extension to the South of Clifton;*
 - iii) *North of Bingham*
 - iv) *Former RAF Newton; and*
 - v) *Former Cotgrave Colliery.*

As allocations, each site is identified on the Key Diagram, the site boundaries are shown on the accompanying Proposals Map and the distribution of proposed uses of each site is indicatively illustrated on Figures 1 to 4. Planning permission will be granted for mixed use development at these locations which comply with the detailed development principles and requirements set out in Policies 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23.

A new Policy 23 would be created – Strategic Allocation at South of Clifton.

Councillor Bell stated that he had asked for Policy 23 to be produced in consultation with himself in accordance with recommendation ii) before consultation with residents. However, he wanted to take the final draft back to the Local Development Framework Group before finalisation.

Councillor Davidson welcomed the fact that Councillor Bell would be taking the final document back to the Local Development Framework Group before consultation. He had been concerned that some of the larger developments were not sustainable as they were heavily reliant on people using cars to travel to and from work, etc. It was imperative that the infrastructure was there before the developments to help reduce their carbon impact.

In respect of affordable housing Councillor Davidson wished to strengthen this point. He felt that there should be a minimum of 30% throughout the Borough as there was very little affordable housing in the area. Socially rented housing was the only real affordable housing as it had been shown that part ownership did not have the required impact.

Regarding the Land North of Bingham he noted that neither the Highways Agency nor Nottinghamshire County Council had objected. He stated that they had not considered the traffic on the A52 or the A6097, especially during the rush hour. With regard to public transport it was difficult for buses to get through at the moment. Nor did the documents contain any details about the railways. Another concern was that there was no easy way to cross the railway line where, even since the widening of the A46, there was always serious congestion, which would have to be addressed. For these reasons he could not support the recommendation.

Councillor MacInnes asked for a point of clarification. He wanted to clarify which parts of the document would be referred back to the Local Development Framework Group. He was assured that all the documents would be taken to the Group before finalisation.

Councillor D Boote proposed that the motion should be amended to give the Local Development Framework Group delegated authority to effect the changes. The Chief Executive clarified that the Constitution did not allow a Member Group to have delegated authority. Following a discussion and confirmation that all the changes would be presented to the Local Development Framework Group prior to publication Councillor D Boote withdrew her amendment.

Councillor Bannister agreed that this document represented a vast amount of work by both officers and Members. He recognised that not everyone would

welcome all the developments but this was a densely populated country and more housing was a necessity. He regretted that not all the infrastructure would be in place as there was little funding available but advocated that people changed to two wheel transport instead. He hoped that the Strategy would be well received throughout the Borough.

Councillor S Mallender thanked all the officers and Members for their hard work and was glad to see that the Local Development Framework Group would be consulted on the final document. However, she agreed with Councillor Davidson that there was not enough emphasis on sustainability to aid the Development Control Committee to develop carbon neutrality, micro energy generation, solar panels, etc. She stated that the definition for sustainability should be ecological as well as economical. In respect of affordable housing it should be more than 30% with a mandatory 30% of rented housing. She stated that she would abstain when this was put to the vote.

Councillor D Mason stated that every Councillor had agreed that the previous number of houses allocated to Rushcliffe had been unrealistic and the Strategy replaced these with realistic figures. Without a Local Plan the Council had not been able to stop unwanted developments and Members needed to adopt the Plan to help defend the Borough. She reminded Members that the Secretary of State had decided about the housing at Edwalton after the Council had refused planning permission. She also stated that the document was not just about housing it contained issues such as climate change, bio diversity, etc. An important part was affordable housing and developers contributions would help towards meeting the need. This was a very positive document although lengthy.

Councillor Khan welcomed Councillor Bell's assurances. He wanted to ensure that adequate time was put aside for consultation and reminded Members of the letter from Barton in Fabis residents. He urged that all the issues raised were seriously discussed and that the residents should see democracy in action.

Councillor Jones supported the reduction in the number of houses and agreed that the document contained other policies. However, he was concerned that when the document had been considered by Cabinet it had contained two extra pages on climate change. He was pleased that all the work in progress policies would be presented to the Local Development Framework Group. In respect of developments at Cotgrave and Sharphill Woods it was important that the Green Belt was protected. In West Bridgford people were interested in ensuring the survival of local shops and felt that this should be an important part of the document. Also the Council should be firmer with developers in relation to affordable housing.

Councillor Tansley stated that Members were here as Borough Councillors and should consider the document as such. It was noted that it was difficult to be 100% happy but he was sad to hear that some Members would be abstaining from the vote as he felt it was such an important issue. He reminded Councillors that Policy 4 outlined the provision of employment land. Within the development at Cotgrave there was 4.5 hectares of land identified which would create about 500 jobs. He agreed that the infrastructure was

lagging behind development but the 453 improvements were on stream, the A46 was nearing completion and it was hoped that the A52 would follow. In respect of the Green Belt the proposed allocations would only take 1.6%; he felt that this was a relatively small amount to help regenerate the Borough.

Councillor Adair stated that it would take approximately ten to fifteen years for the proposed developments to be built, and it would have to be market led which in the current climate would be slow. He stated that the locations had been well thought out and that local people had been consulted about their villages. It was important that the correct information was readily available for everyone, including details on health, leisure, employment and shops for families. Infrastructure was an issue but rail and bus links would be developed when a need was evidenced however it was important to note that employment trends were changing and more people were working from home. With regard to the Green Belt he did not like to see it attacked but the small reduction was acceptable in order to prepare for the next generation. He supported the document as it focussed development into the right areas.

Councillor Butler spoke of the work undertaken by the cross party Member Group. He recognised that planning was always a controversial and emotive subject. However he felt that doing nothing was not an option. By agreeing the Plan the process would move forward with further consultation and examination. He reminded Members that there was Government advice stating that local authorities should agree their plans as soon as possible. He supported the comments that the developments would take time to build.

Councillor Mrs Stockwood supported the comments in relation to employment trends and infrastructure. She also stated that over 40% of the Borough would still be Green Belt land.

Councillors Cooper and Lawrence supported the comments made. Councillor Lawrence also stated that land at Cotgrave and Newton was in the Green Belt but the developments proposed were on brownfield sites. He felt that the Plan would protect the villages of Rushcliffe especially those near to the proposed larger developments.

In summary Councillor Clarke reiterated that this was the culmination of five years hard work by Members and officers and that it was vitally important that the Core Strategy was adopted. With regard to the letter from Barton in Fabis he informed Members that, with officers, he had met with representatives from Barton, Gotham and Thrumpton to discuss all the points. In respect of the Green Belt this could alter with any new boundaries. If anyone was to make objections to developments these would have to be evidence based. With regard to any missing pages Councillor Clarke assured Members that the complete final document would be presented to the Local Development Framework Group. It was vitally important that the Plan was adopted and taken forward. Finally, he requested a recorded vote.

Councillor Cranswick said that firstly that this process was not yet finished as it was not guaranteed that the Planning Inspectorate would find the proposed figures acceptable. Secondly the document represented the bible for planning for the Borough for the next few years. It would be the rules that any planning decision could be set against.

In summing up Councillor Bell stated that putting a percentage against affordable housing would not always be appropriate but the figures within the document would provide room for negotiations. With regard to the Green Belt all non-Green Belt sites would be considered first. Finally he commended the report and stated that all the comments had been very useful to give a complete picture of how to improve facilities and enhance the Borough for all.

On being put to the vote these were recorded as

For:

Councillors R A Adair, Mrs S P Bailey, J R Bannister, D G Bell, N K Boughton-Smith, N A Brown, B Buschman, R L Butler, H A Chewings, J N Clarke, T Combellack, L B Cooper, J A Cranswick, B G Dale, A M Dickinson, J E Fearon, J E Greenwood, M G Hemsley, R Hetherington, I I Korn N C Lawrence, E J Lungley, A MacInnes, Mrs M M Males, D J Mason, F J Mason, G S Moore B A Nicholls, E A Plant, F A Purdue-Horan, S J Robinson, D V Smith, Mrs J A Smith, P Smith, Mrs M Stockwood, B Tansley, H Tipton, D G Wheeler (38)

Against: Nil

Abstain:

Councillors L J Abbey, Mrs D M Boote, S J Boote, G Davidson, R M Jones, K A Khan, G R Mallender, S E Mallender (8)

RESOLVED that:

- i. Council agree the draft Core Strategy, in order that it be published for a six week period of representations; and
- ii. the Deputy Chief Executive (PR) be given delegated authority, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, to effect such changes as are considered necessary to strengthen or to provide clarity to the draft Core Strategy up to its publication, provided that such changes are neither strategic nor directional, in order to ensure its soundness.

38. The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

Councillor Cranswick presented the report outlining the Council's four year review of all polling stations used in the Borough. He also presented a revised appendix 2, following negotiations with representatives from Bingham the polling station for Bingham East had reverted to the Robert Miles School. He stated that the work had been undertaken by the Registration Office and that 78% of responses were supportive of keeping the existing sites. The report highlighted the ten responses that did not support these sites and the Returning Officer's responses.

Councillor Davidson stated that he was one of the Bingham representatives who had met with the Returning Officer to discuss the proposed changes. It had been felt that the Town Pavilion was not the best site for electors. He said

that they had accepted the present situation as they had been assured that it would be kept under constant review.

Councillor S Mallender spoke on the proposals for the Lady Bay Ward. She stated that she had complained as the existing site had been difficult for people with mobility problems; although it would have to be kept as there were no other suitable places yet. She informed Members that there were other commercial buildings that she was hoping could be used if the owners could be contacted.

Councillor S Boote said that although there had been no official complaints about the use of Crossdale Drive Primary School he had been informed that it was felt to be a disruption to the school's curriculum. He reminded Members that due to the high number of postal votes in the Borough polling day was not a large event but because the school was used it caused problems for parents who had to arrange childcare and for the teachers as it was an extra holiday for the pupils. These were concerns for all schools used. He said that public houses had been used as polling stations in other areas of the country. He proposed an amendment that iv) should read "that Council makes every reasonable effort to avoid disrupting the normal work of schools when choosing polling places".

In support of this amendment Councillor Abbey stated that special schools were not chosen as polling stations because of the disruption to pupils, however because of the use of inclusion now many disabled pupils were in main stream schools. Also because of the problems with childcare this had a larger impact on the more vulnerable one parent families.

Councillor Cranswick did not accept the amendment. Councillor Clarke stated that this was singling out one type of location and these concerns could be applied to other locations. He was not concerned as he had confidence that the Returning Officer and staff made these judgements when considering premises. Councillor Cranswick stated that only six schools were used.

Councillor Boote replied that although the number of schools used had reduced over the years it was still a concern if it was your child's school used. He stated that the law had changed in 2007 to widen the type of premises that could be used.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost.

Councillor Purdue-Horan said that candidates did not appreciate the work undertaken by officers and other individuals in respect of polling stations. He and his fellow Bingham colleagues would work with officers and the Chief Executive to find a long term and sustainable solution for the two Bingham wards, whilst leaving the present sites in operation for the Police Commissioners' election on 15 November 2012.

Councillor Mrs Stockwood supported these comments and also stated that the ward boundaries might change and have to be addressed again.

RESOLVED that

- i. Council approve the (a) recommendations at paragraph six of the report setting out changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations, and (b) proposed revised schedule of polling districts and polling places as set out in the revised **Appendix 2**.
- ii. Council requests that the Head of Corporate Services formally publish the Review report and its findings on 23 December 2011.
- iii. Should a polling place be unavailable in the run up to an election, the (Acting) Returning Officer be given the authority to select an appropriate alternative and formal retrospective approval be sought by Council following the election should this be a permanent proposed change.

39. Electoral Review – Proposed Council Size Submission

Councillor Clarke presented the Council's proposed submission to the Boundary Commission to reduce the number of councillors from 50 to 45. He stated that there were good reasons for making this amendment as it would make councillors more efficient and give a better balance to the numbers of electors represented. Also it gave an opportunity for the ratio between councillor and elector to be brought into line with other Nottinghamshire councils. It would also give an opportunity to look at the work councillors undertook and to generate some savings. He said that other councils were also looking at reducing their numbers as well as a proposal at Westminster to reduce the number of MP's by 10%.

Councillor Davidson put forward an amendment that

- i. notes the Council size submission (attached) as recommended by Cabinet which proposes a reduction from 50 to 45 Councillors, and considers that a sufficiently strong case for a reduction to 45 councillors has not been made and agrees that the Council should comprise 50 councillors; and
- ii. requests that the Chief Executive make arrangements for a revised submission and recommendation of 50 Councillors be sent to the Boundary Commission as the Council's agreed submission.

He stated that it was necessary to have a review as the percentage variance was more than an acceptable level and this needed addressing. There had previously been a review that came into operation in 2003, which had reduced the number of councillors from 54 to 50; at that time a reduction to 45 had been considered but was rejected. The Borough had increased in size and this trend was going to continue. It was noted that the Commission had been interested in the predicted number of electors in five years' time. With regard to councillors workload this was increasing not decreasing. He felt that the reasons for the reduction had not been made nor was it clear how this figure had been reached. He felt it would be difficult for the Commission to arrive at equal numbers for wards and still keep community cohesion. He was concerned about the logic in relation to reducing the number of scrutiny groups to three to accommodate the reduction in numbers to 45 and he felt that this

was unacceptable. There was no sound justification and the submission was flawed.

Councillor S Boote explained that the last review has taken place in 2001 and that over the last ten years the population had increased and was continually growing. The workload for both Members and officers had also increased through legislation, finance, service delivery, communication and would continue to grow due to the development of localism and neighbourhood plans. The amount of police consultation had doubled, the work on the budget had increased, the formula grant and council tax capping was unknown, the number of Member Groups and Panels, consultations and workshops had all increased. He stated that the number of hours he spent on council business had increased from 30 to 50 hours per week. To say this was a cost saving exercise was wrong, if the Council wanted to save money it could reduce the Members' allowances by 10%. A review of boundaries would stretch and distort the community boundaries that existed. He felt that there should not be a reduction as this would impact on residents contacting councillors.

Councillor MacInnes stated that he could not support the amendment as the Labour party had drawn up their own proposal and sent it to the Boundary Commission. It was possible to make a reduction but not at the expense of good governance. He said that 45 should be the minimum number and 50 should be a maximum. There were some merits in having 45 but it was felt that it would be better to have a flexible approach to ensure that boundaries relate to communities. In smaller wards there would have to be significant changes to reach the average of 1,974 electors. Where the community dictates there should be single member wards but also where preferred multi member wards. There would need to be reforms to the governance arrangements and also a reduction in the membership of some committees. He understood that the workload of a councillor had increased but evidence from the survey had indicated that there was scope to do more. He felt that all non-executive members should be involved in scrutiny. Scrutiny should be changed to make it more investigative, this could lead to it being effective and efficient and save time. There could be effective neighbourhood delivery, shaping of local services and local issues raised. In West Bridgford there was no parish or town council which could be introduced to make democracy fairer, meet localism and increase voter turnout. He suggested that there should be a working group set up to consider this issue. He stated that this should not be seen as the end but the beginning of the process.

Councillor Jones agreed that a review of ward sizes was necessary because of the wide variations of elector numbers between wards. He felt that the current submission did not give enough weight to the proposed changes in the number of electors. The last review had been based on the 1998 figures and the electorate had increased by 6.2% since then; at that time the projected increase had been about 4,000 where it had actually increased by 5,081. The submission referred to the forecasted number for 2016 but this figure was not in the document, it merely stated that the increase in housing growth would not resolve the disparity between wards.

He believed that there was no case put forward to revise the Council structure and he stated that this issue had not been considered by Councillors or a scrutiny group. In particular he did not feel that a reduction in the membership

of the Development Control Committee would be beneficial as it would reduce the safe spread of geographic knowledge and range of opinion. He stated that the proposal did not take into account Councillor involvement in member training, consultations or information events. He reminded Members that the Audit Commission had praised the high level of Member involvement in the Borough but he felt that this was ignored in order that the Cabinet could be kept at six yet still reduce the number of councillors.

The report referred to the effect of town and parish councils but did not refer to the democratic deficit in respect of West Bridgford. He believed that multi member wards provided residents with greater choice and variety and maximised the responsiveness of the local councillor. Councillor Jones stated that his major concern was that by putting this into effect it would not encourage new people to put themselves forward to join the Council but would create a job only for those who had retired.

Councillor G Mallender supported some of the comments made, especially those relating to communities, local areas and reflecting diversity. There was a need to create wards that people felt they could represent. The survey had evidenced that the majority of councillors were male and retired. He felt that the impact of this submission would be to increase the number of barriers and make it more difficult for people to stand for election, thereby reducing representation. If Members felt that they did not have enough work to do there was always the Big Society ethos or a return to the committee system.

Following a comment Councillor Clarke stated that the submission was based on councillors duties for this Council and it could not take into account Members wishes to sit on other bodies such as parish or county councils.

Councillor Cranswick informed Members that the submission had been based on the 2016 projections. He was surprised that councillors felt they had too much work as the new scrutiny arrangements had been criticised as backbenchers had stated that they did not sit on enough committees and only attended once every three months. This submission was not about creating work but to achieve a sensible number of councillors to carry out the work. The submission was the Council's suggestion but the Boundary Commission who had the ultimate authority to make the decision, they could decide that 55 would be better or even 35.

In summarising Councillor Davidson did not feel that an adequate reason had been given for the reduction to 45 and why this was best.

On being put to the vote the amendment was lost.

Councillor MacInnes stated that he would not support the recommendation as the Labour party had prepared their own submission. He was disappointed that there had been no consultation with the opposition parties and that the document had only been circulated shortly before the Group Leaders' meeting.

RESOLVED that

- i. agrees the Council size submission (attached) as recommended by Cabinet which proposes a reduction from 50 to 45 Councillors, and

- ii. requests that the Chief Executive make arrangements for the document to be sent to the Commission as the Council's agreed submission.

40. Motion to Extend the Meeting

The Mayor proposed a motion to extend the meeting to 10.30 pm which was agreed unanimously.

41. Review of Scheme of Delegation

Councillor Clarke presented a report outlining the changes to the Scheme of Delegation and Article 12, which had previously been considered by Cabinet and the Corporate Governance Group. The changes were of a technical nature and were not contentious.

RESOLVED that

Council agrees the proposed revisions to the Scheme of Delegation - Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions and Article 12 – Officers within the Council's Constitution.

42. Questions Under Standing Order 11(2)

a) Question from Councillor S J Boote to Councillor J N Clarke

Following the Government's announcement that the A453 dualling is to go ahead, how certain is it that this Council's contribution of £500,000 is still necessary and desirable?

Councillor Clarke replied that the offer had been made and it was now up to the Government to ask the Council for the sum of money. He had heard that Nottinghamshire County Council had received a request for their money.

Supplementary question

Councillor Boote asked that as the Council had found it appropriate to spend £500,000 on the A453 how much would the Council contribute towards the A52 before the houses were built.

Councillor Boote was reminded by the Mayor that the supplementary question should relate to the A453 and therefore no answer was given.

b) Question from Councillor S J Boote to Councillor J N Clarke

What mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that the New Homes Bonus will be equitably distributed to communities in proportion to their need and/or to the numbers of new homes which will be built in their areas?

Councillor Clarke informed Councillor Boote that he had received an answer to this question when it had been raised at scrutiny.

Supplementary question

Councillor Boote asked Councillor Clarke if the public would be consulted or would Councillor Clarke use implicit consultation.

Councillor Clarke responded that he felt that questions should be reasonable and respectful and not have a personal slant. He informed Members that the public had been consulted during the Local Development Framework process and would continue to be. This consultation would provide the evidence for any further proposals.

c) Question from Councillor D G Wheeler to Councillor J N Clarke

Could the Leader comment on what the effect will be on Rushcliffe as a result of the A453 improvements announced in the Chancellor's Autumn statement?

Councillor Clarke replied that he was very pleased to hear the news. He believed that the effect on Rushcliffe would be to make the economic regeneration quicker and would relieve congestion and rat running. The overriding benefit would be that when the economy recovered it would make the situation easier in Rushcliffe and would enhance the Borough's reputation.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

MAYOR