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Our reference: LRJ
Your reference:
Date: 15 May 2013

To all Members of the Council

Dear Councillor

The Annual Meeting of the RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL will be held on Thursday 23 May 2013 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely

Executive Manager Operations and Corporate Governance

AGENDA

Opening Prayer

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes

To receive as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 7 March 2013 (pages 1 - 16).

4. Address of the Retiring Mayor
5. Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Mayor
6. Election of Mayor 2013/14

To consider nominations for the election of Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the 2013/14 municipal year.

After the vote on the election of Mayor has been carried the new Mayor, upon making the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, will take the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

7. Election of Deputy Mayor 2013/14

To consider nominations for the election of Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the 2013/14 municipal year.

8. Leader's Announcements

9. Appointment of Committees and Member Groups 2013/14

The report of the Executive Manager - Operations and Corporate Governance and a schedule detailing the proposed appointments will be circulated.

10. Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies 2013/14

The report of the Executive Manager - Operations and Corporate Governance and a schedule detailing the proposed appointments will be circulated.

Meeting Room Guidance

Fire Alarm Evacuation: in the event of an alarm sounding please evacuate the building using the nearest fire exit, normally through the Council Chamber. You should assemble in the Nottingham Forest car park adjacent to the main gates.

Toilets are located opposite Committee Room 2.

Mobile Phones: For the benefit of others please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off whilst you are in the meeting.

Microphones: When you are invited to speak please press the button on your microphone, a red light will appear on the stem. Please ensure that you switch this off after you have spoken.

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL
THURSDAY 7 MARCH 2013**

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

PRESENT:

I I Korn - 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 E Cottee, J A Cranswick, B G Dale, G Davidson, A M Dickinson, J E Fearon, J E Greenwood, R Hetherington, R M Jones, K A Khan, N C Lawrence, A MacInnes, Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender, S E Mallender, 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, J A Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, B Tansley, H Tipton and D G Wheeler

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

2 Members of the public

OFFICERS PRESENT:

D Banks	Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods
A Graham	Chief Executive
K Marriott	Executive Manager - Transformation
D Mitchell	Executive Manager - Communities
L Reid Jones	Democratic Services Manager
D Swaine	Executive Manager - Operations & Corporate Governance
P Steed	Executive Manager - Finance and Commercial

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors M G Hemsley, E J Lungley, Mrs J M Marshall, T Vennett-Smith

OPENING PRAYER

The Meeting was led in prayer by the Councillor Hetherington.

49. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

50. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13 December 2012 and of the Extraordinary meeting held on Thursday 24 January 2013 were received as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

51. **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor informed Council that he had attended 23 engagements since the last Council, including church services and other events. He reported that he had participated in Chinese New Year celebrations, met with RAF cadets, and visited Chilwell Barracks and other charitable organisations. The Mayor informed Council that he had almost reached his target of £13,200 for his charity, and there were four more events planned. The said he was confident that he would reach his target, and thanked everyone for their support.

52. **Leader's Announcements**

There were no announcements from the Leader.

53. **Chief Executive's Announcements**

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive

54. **Budget 2013/14 and Financial Strategy**

Councillor Clarke presented the report of the Executive Manager, Finance & Commercial regarding the Council's Financial Plans and by way of introduction made the following statement:

'Mr Mayor, over recent years I have introduced budgets which have been designed to meet the considerable challenges that face Rushcliffe. Challenges that we have met by a considered, planned and professional approach based on business cost reduction, income maximisation and service redesign.

However these challenges are a product of the national and international financial situation and unfortunately still remain as real today as they did last year. Against such a background it would be easy for us to retreat into our shell and start to focus on what we cannot do and cutting services or standards that our residents have come to expect. I am proud to say that to date that this has not been the case and that instead I am delighted that this budget focuses very much on what we still want to achieve for our residents and community. This Council will continue its "Can Do" culture.

Over the past year our business-like approach has resulted in many important achievements and this focus on "what we can do" has had many highlights. Including:

- *Working with partners to bring the centre of Cotgrave into public ownership, a vital stepping-stone towards the redevelopment of the core of this community*
- *Maintaining the quality and low cost of our bold, ground breaking Green Waste scheme.*
- *Investing our resources to acquire The Point development to realise an ongoing return on that investment, ensuring the continued provision of high quality offices in Rushcliffe whilst also achieving improved financial returns for the Council.*

- *Developing the YouNG project that is starting to provide a positive route for engagement and understanding with young people in Rushcliffe.*
- *Introducing a leaner, more focussed management team, a change which will ultimately save the Council over £250,000 per annum.*

However we cannot afford to be complacent. I recognise that we are fortunate that prudent management of our finances, assets and people in the past will help us deal with the challenges in the future. Therefore we have come to an important cross road where we need to be taking difficult decisions to ensure that our ethos of low cost but high quality can continue.

The financial strategy shows how we can use some of our reserves over the next five years to protect services and deliver investment. However these are valuable but limited resources and we need to start planning now to ensure that we can continue to achieve in the future.

Mr Mayor, over the past two years inflation has increased by about 7 per cent but, at the same time we have, through prudent management and government support, been able to freeze the council tax bills that are met by our residents.

To date this approach has enabled us to absorb / reduce expenditure by an incredible £2.5 million pounds helping us to deal with the changing demands that we face and real terms reductions in funding. However there is only so far we can go and we can be proud that our Council Tax Band D figure has been consistently within the bottom 15% for any District Council. However we now need to start to look to the future. In December the Government finally recognised that prudent, efficient councils such as Rushcliffe face an ever increasing challenge to make savings without impacting on services. This is because we made significant efficiency savings before the recession bit, but then were subject to the same substantial cuts over the last 2 years as everyone else. As a result the Government has issued guidance that allow low billing councils such as Rushcliffe to make a slightly higher council tax increase than would otherwise be the case without triggering a referendum.

In January many Members from all of the parties in this chamber met to discuss the challenges that faced us. We all recognised that these challenges are large and will be with us for many years to come. We also all recognised the difficult choices that need to be made if these challenges are to be met. Having listened to the views expressed, I am tonight proposing that we adopt a strategy which will result in a balanced approach that will avoid unnecessary cuts to services; an over reliance upon our reserves; or transfer New Homes Bonus funding that we had earmarked for community development. I am therefore proposing that for the first time in three years, it would be sensible to recognise the flexibility that has been provided to us by the government and to make an extremely modest increase in the council tax. The first such increase since April 2010.

Mr Mayor, there are times when we need to make difficult but important decisions and this is such a time. Having considered these issues it is Cabinet's recommendation that for the first time in three years Rushcliffe should increase its Council Tax by £4.77 to £117.99 on a Band D property, an increase that will add just 0.3% to the total council tax bill when taking into

account the other major Preceptors such at the County Council, whom I acknowledge and congratulate in making a freeze for an incredible fourth year, however we must recognise that their resource base and problems are significantly different to our own. Even with this modest increase Rushcliffe's council tax will remain amongst the lowest in the country. Indeed, as the average property in Rushcliffe lies within Band C, the impact on the average council tax bill in Rushcliffe will be just eight pence per week. However over the next five years this eight pence per week will result in an additional £977,000 being available for services in Rushcliffe. This funding will make a vital contribution as we look to maintain our essential services and high quality standards of which I for one am extremely proud.

I would like to think this modest adjustment will allow us to consider negating the need for increases in the next few years.

While this boost for services will be most welcome I also recognise that it takes much more than the Borough Council to deliver a vibrant Rushcliffe. I am proud to remind members that in January Council signalled its commitment to our communities by ensuring that the full share of government funding was passed on to our Parish Councils so that they could deal with the impact of the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme. I am equally as proud to announce that to further help local communities this budget also proposes to use New Homes Bonus funding to double the Community Support Scheme budgets that Councillors use to support community initiatives and groups within their wards. This will mean that an additional £25,000 will be available in 2013/14, an amount which I anticipate will have a real beneficial impact in communities across Rushcliffe.

And finally I would like to turn to the future. The Medium Term Financial Forecast demonstrates the scale of the challenges that face us in the years ahead. However we can learn from the past. As I said earlier over the past two years Rushcliffe has reviewed its services on a methodical basis, identifying opportunities to change and save. Across this time we have saved over £2.5 million whilst managing to maintain the excellent services that our residents expect and deserve. As we move forward we will use this experience to develop a new, exciting and sustainable chapter in our history one that further embeds Rushcliffe's reputation as an innovative and effective authority delivering excellent services.

Mr Mayor, I have please in moving the recommendations set out on page 18 of the Council Agenda and would request a recorded vote'.

Councillor Davidson began by thanking all of the finance officers for their hard work in producing the budget figures. He stated that he was happy with the proposed expenditure, and did not want to see anything taken from the list. He reminded Council that the Government would accept a £5 increase on council tax without a referendum, and this, he felt had its advantages in that it would increase the council tax base for subsequent years. He added that it was seen by some Councillors as a good time to agree an increase in council tax. Councillor Davidson stated that the Liberal Democrat Group did not think it was the right time to increase the council tax: residents were already facing a rise in household expenditure and financial pressure with low interest rates on

savings. He believed that the Council had a responsibility not to place additional pressures on households, but should do what it could to avert this.

Councillor Davidson moved an amendment in the following terms:

'I wish to move an amendment to the recommendation within the report, with the proposed changes underlined in italics in the text below'.

Recommendations

1. It is RECOMMENDED that Council receives: -
 - a) The report of the Council's Responsible Finance Officer (as detailed in **Appendix A**);
 - b) The Medium Term Financial Forecast (as detailed at **Paragraph 30**);
2. It is RECOMMENDED that Council approve: -
 - i. The General Fund Budget for 2013/14 (as detailed at **Appendix B and Appendix C**); *amended as follows:*
 - a) *Allocate £131,000 of funding from the New Homes Bonus as an element of the council's core funding;*
 - b) *The inclusion of £55,000 income in relation to the Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2013/14.*
 - ii. The Special Expenses for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth (as detailed at **Appendix D**);
 - iii. A *The 2013/14 Band D Council Tax for Rushcliffe Borough Council of £117.99 be frozen for the third year at £113.22* (as detailed at **Paragraph 27**);
 - iv. The Capital Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18 (as detailed at **Appendix F**);
 - v. The Prudential Borrowing Indicators 2013/14 (contained within the Treasury Management Strategy as detailed in **Appendix I**);

In moving the amendment Councillor Davidson summarised that the amendment would keep the council tax at the same level as last year, but the shortfall would be compensated by the £55,000 bonus from Government. He stated that it was a prudent way of keeping the faith of residents and followed the County Council lead in freezing the council tax.

Councillor MacInnes stated that it was the Labour Group's view that council taxpayers interests would be better served by accepting an increase as it guaranteed certainty and consistency in budget planning. He stated that they wanted to protect residents and an increase would ensure that the Council had money to provide services, for example the work in Cotgrave and the rural broadband initiatives. He stated that the Coalition Government had made it clear that grants may be cut in future, and local authorities had been asked to

plan for cuts over coming years. He believed that using reserves and income such as New Homes Bonus to subsidise council tax was not a good idea. He reminded Council that the use of reserves wasn't sustainable and only deferred the requirement to make savings. He went on to say that it was not clear from the amendment where or how the freeze would be funded, and that the New Homes Bonus was only available until 2019. He doubted the wisdom of the amendment, and stated that raising council tax was not an easy choice but the right choice in the circumstances.

Councillor Cranswick thanked Councillor MacInnes for his support. He referred to Councillor Davidson's comment about the rising costs people were facing and stated that the Council was also being affected by this. He added that this was in part due to the increase in inflation, and that matters of principle did not pay bills. He would not recommend using New Homes Bonus as it was not acceptable to use this to prop up council tax. He stated that he would not support the amendment.

Councillor Lawrence informed Council that he had been in the unusual position at the Members' Budget Workshop in January, of being at a table with the Group Leaders. He said it was refreshing that when discussing how the funding gap would be filled he recalled that all four Group Leaders were in agreement that a modest increase would be beneficial. He added that the New Homes Bonus should not be frittered away, but should be used for community initiatives. He questioned why the Council was moving away from financial prudence by this amendment, and why it was that Councillor Davidson was suggesting that some Councillors thought they could get away with an increase at this point in the election timetable. Councillor Lawrence believed that if the amendment was accepted, then Council would need to find £2.5 million in future years, but if the small council tax increase was agreed then £750,000 could be put towards the gap in funding. He considered that Councillor Davidson had decided on imprudence and not prudence.

Councillor G Mallender stated that the Green Group would be voting against the amendment. He understood that no-one liked to vote for an increase in council tax, however at this time the Council needed to be sensible.

Councillor S Boote informed Council that he had received comments from his constituents about why there was a proposed council tax increase and why the Council was not holding a referendum. He stated that the council tax did not have to be raised, and that New Homes Bonus could be used. He believed that the Borough Council should follow the County Council example by freezing council tax. He said that Members should rise above the politics and agree an increase in two years' time.

Councillor Davidson summed up by stating that the situation could be re-assessed in one year. He had initially felt that the Government's flexibility was superficially acceptable and was won over, but did not feel that this was the case. He denied that the amendment was imprudent.

Councillor Clarke drew Council's attention to a letter from Brandon Lewis, Under Secretary of State referring to a council tax increase. The letter indicated that district councils had the flexibility to set a £5 increase for this year. Councillor Clarke stated that for this year it had to be assumed that this

was a one year offer and that it was important to have prudent management of the Council's finances. He added that Councillor Davidson had been in favour of an increase at the Budget Workshops. Councillor Clarke re-iterated that the New Homes Bonus should not be used to prop up council tax as it was provided as a bonus to spend in communities. He thanked Councillor S Mallender for her support, and concurred that no-one liked to see an increase in council tax, but it was prudent to do so in this instance. Councillor Clarke added that he did not like to see last minute amendments, which had not been thought through carefully and he questioned how the Liberal Democrats were proposing the funding gap be bridged in future years.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

Councillor Jones stated that it was unfortunate that the discussions from the Member Budget Workshops were being branded around. He had understood these to be discussion forums and in his view it was not appropriate for comments made to be used in other arenas. He then sought clarification on the following issues: Given the New Homes Bonus was expected to be almost £1 million next financial year what was the projected New Homes Bonus income in the following year, where was it in this report and if the future years income from this source were not shown in the capital items why were they not included in this report. He asked for confirmation that in the next financial year 2013/14 that the proposal was to commit £346k on the Borough's own Leisure infrastructure but almost six times that amount on a further £2 million on the loan to the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club. He then asked what was the expected income from the options on the sale of land at Sharphill and at what stage was that likely to appear in future budget papers.

Councillor Cottee informed Council that he was not comfortable with an increase. He stated that the Council was run on a prudent and professional manner with reserves, property and sound management and no debt. He stated that the Government had given councils the option to increase council tax in January; however he believed the Council was not going to increase the council tax and would take the money being offered by the Government. He referred to the residents' view and considered that although the increase was small, those struggling at the moment would struggle even more. He said he was still not certain how he would vote.

Councillor Cranswick stated that no-one wished to increase the council tax, however it was clear that the Government was giving councils a lifeline by bringing the council to a financial level where it could stand stringent cuts. He understood Councillor Cottee's position, however he stressed the increase was a very small amount. With reference to comments about increasing council tax next year rather than this year, he reminded Council that it was likely that the financial position could get worse. He was not prepared to take the risk that the money would have available next year. In response to questions from Councillor Jones he stated that he did not have the detailed information to hand, but clarified that if the questions were put in writing to him he would arrange for a reply to be made.

Councillor D Boote raised the issue of the proposal to build a community contact centre in Cotgrave. She questioned why money had been earmarked

for this when other areas such as Keyworth couldn't afford a purpose built facility and were having to utilise existing buildings.

As a point of order Councillor Jones asked if he could repeat his questions to Councillor Cranswick, as one was about the integrity of the report. The Mayor informed him that Councillor Cranswick had provided a response by asking for the questions in writing so that he could reply to Councillor Jones

Councillor S Mallender thanked officers for the excellent report. She concurred with Councillor Davidson that the rise in council tax was not a good idea as costs were rising and pay staying the same or being cut. By reference to Councillor Lawrence's comments she stated that she was in favour of a small rise in council tax, but had spoken strongly against cuts in services and staffing at the Budget Workshops. She believed that the Council was in a dreadful position as a result of government cuts, whereby the council was being forced to make cuts. She felt that public sector jobs were being cut and not being replaced in the private sector.

In conclusion Councillor Clarke informed Council that he had received two emails from Keyworth residents objecting to proposals. He had sent a full explanation in response and had received an acknowledgement and understanding of why the proposals were made. He said that the residents had been appreciative of the calm and rational explanation which demonstrated the need to for Council to make a sensible and informed decision.

Recorded Vote:

Votes for:

S P Bailey, J R Bannister, D G Bell, N K Boughton-Smith, B R Buschman, H A Chewings, J N Clarke, T Combellack, J A Cranswick, B G Dale, A M Dickinson, J E Fearon, J E Greenwood, R Hetherington, I I Korn, N C Lawrence, A MacInnes, Mrs M M Males, 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, J A Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, B Tansley

Votes against:

L J Abbey, Mrs D M Boote, S J Boote, J E Cottee, G Davidson, R M Jones, K A Khan, G R Mallender, S E Mallender, H Tipton

Abstentions:

R A Adair, N A Brown, R L Butler, L B Cooper, G S Moore, D G Wheeler

RESOLVED that Council approve:-

- a) Receipt of the report of the Council's Responsible Finance Officer (as detailed in Appendix A of the report);
- b) Receipt of the Medium Term Financial Forecast (as detailed at paragraph 30 of the report);

- c) The General Fund Budget for 2013/14 (as detailed at Appendix B and Appendix C of the report);
- d) The Special Expenses for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth (as detailed at Appendix D of the report);
- e) A 2013/14 Band D Council Tax for Rushcliffe Borough Council of £117.99 (as detailed at paragraph 27 of the report);
- f) The Capital Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18 (as detailed at Appendix F of the report);
- g) The Prudential Borrowing Indicators 2013/14 (contained within the Treasury Management Strategy as detailed in Appendix I of the report).

55. **Council Tax Resolution 2013/14**

Councillor Clarke presented a report of the Executive Manager - Finance which set out the Council Tax Resolution for 2013/14. This consolidated the precepts of Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Nottinghamshire Fire Authority, the Borough Council and individual Town and Parish Councils.

Councillor Davidson informed Council that the Liberal Democrat Group would be abstaining from the vote as they did not accept the Council's precept.

RESOLVED that Council approve the Council Tax Resolution for 2013/14 as detailed in Appendix A of the report.

56. **Pay Policy Statement 2013/14 – Referral From Cabinet**

Councillor Clarke presented the report of the Executive Manager - Operations and Corporate Governance which detailed the Council's proposed Pay Policy Statement 2013/14. He informed Council that Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 required local authorities to publish a Pay Policy Statement by 31 March each year. The Pay Policy Statement 2013/14 had been recommended by Cabinet to Council for approval.

Councillor Jones stated that the report had been described at Cabinet as a technical document, however he did not agree with this policy. He felt that the policy described pay differentials between the highest and lowest paid staff being no greater than ten times, however the policy stated that there was no policy about pay multiples. He continued, by stating that it should be one thing or another and in his view there should be a ceiling on the differential. By reference to paragraph 4.1 Councillor Jones commented that the lowest full time employee wage was lower than the 'Living Wage', which he said David Cameron had once described as an 'idea whose time had come'. He informed Council that a number of local authorities had signed up to the Living Wage as the minimum pay level, and that until Rushcliffe was committed to this ideal he would not support the policy. He urged other Councillors to vote against it.

Councillor Plant supported Councillor Jones regarding the Living Wage, however the Labour Group would be supporting the motion. She asked whether the Council had plans to move to the Living Wage.

Councillor S Mallender stated that the Council should pay the Living Wage and not the minimum wage. She added that the highest paid employee should earn no more than ten times the lowest paid employee. The Green Group would not be supporting the proposal.

In response to a question from Councillor MacInnes the Executive Manager - Operations and Corporate Governance explained that there was a requirement under the Localism Act to agree such a policy. He added that pay was a contractual issue and if the policy was not agreed this legal obligation still remained. He also added that levels of pay, below that of the head of paid service were within the remit of the Chief Executive in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

In conclusion Councillor Clarke stated that it was a laudible aim to move towards the Living Wage and agreed with the principle and aspiration, however it had cost implications and the impact on the budget would need to be considered.

RESOLVED that Council approve the Pay Policy Statement 2013/14 as set out in Appendix A of the report.

57. **Notice of Motion**

- a) Notice of Motion put to Council by Councillor S Boote and seconded by Councillor S Mallender:

"Council regrets the decision by Cabinet to give £810,000 to Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club by way of converting part of a loan to a grant and by giving further amounts over 4 years. Council believes that, at a time of general austerity and belt-tightening, when the Council is continuing to look for major savings in expenditure, it is grossly inappropriate to use capital to fund the services of a professional sports club when it could be used directly to help younger residents, for example, by a stimulating a major increase in affordable housing."

In introducing the motion Councillor S Boote reminded Members that Council had voted in 2007 to make a loan to the Cricket Club, and that the Cricket Club had recently requested that the loan be kept. He explained that this was agreed by Cabinet in December 2012, and was subsequently called-in by Members for scrutiny by the Partnership Delivery Scrutiny Group. He reminded Council that the Partnership Delivery Group had concluded that the Council's decision making principles had been breached as there was no record of options having been considered, or why the decision had been reached. He acknowledged that Council did not have the power to overturn Cabinet's decision, but stated that it could express regret at a decision.

Commenting further Councillor Boote said that the £2 million loan towards the new stand was necessary for the Ashes test in 2015. Furthermore this and

other major events brought economic benefit to the region, although he believed that this would be to the city rather than Rushcliffe. He added that the Liberal Democrat Group did not object to the loan but considered that the grant was unacceptable. He believed that the grant was equivalent to £20 per household in Rushcliffe, and it was coming at a time where there were public sector redundancies and cuts in services. He went on to highlight the work of Positive Futures in Cotgrave and the payment made to the cricket club in recognition of the project. He recognised that crime and anti-social behaviour had reduced in Cotgrave but stated that other organisations such as the Football Foundation had also been involved in the initiative. He added that as inputs were not measured it was therefore not possible to measure outputs.

Councillor S Boote drew attention to an academic study which had been carried out about the financial savings from the reduction in crime, but he pointed out that the study did not say how much of this had been due to Positive Futures. He stated that it was ironic that the worst hotspot for crime in the Borough was not Cotgrave, but was Trent Bridge Ward.

In commenting on the expansion of the Positive Futures Programme elsewhere in Rushcliffe Councillor Boote stated that the detail of this was not clear, particularly in relation to the required current standard, and also the review of the scope and nature of the project. He stated that the Cabinet had made an open ended commitment to handover money without sufficient assurances of any benefits to the Council and the community. He added that Cabinet viewed this as an act of faith and he believed that this was no way to buy a service or spend taxpayers' money. Furthermore there had been no service level agreement or following of normal procurement processes. This he said, was a gift of taxpayers money to a private business and it was unreasonable to expect all taxpayers to pay their council tax to one part of the Borough. He added that no sports club should receive public money unless there were tangible outcomes. He stated that alternatively the capital reserves should be invested for the good of the Borough on building affordable homes for young families, preserving the theatre at Stanford Hall for amateur drama and encouraging cultural activities.

In summing up Councillor S Boote stated that the Liberal Democrat Group, regretted the decision of Cabinet for the following reasons: because there were better, fairer and more proportionate ways of using council taxpayers' money; the gift was not fully researched and alternatives were not explored; the inputs of the Positive Futures scheme and outputs from it had not been properly quantified; and the loan to the cricket club could have been extended instead of being partly cancelled.

Councillor S Boote asked for a recorded vote.

Councillor MacInnes stated that he was supportive of the cricket club's attempts to improve the club, and that the ground had been transformed into a most attractive ground. He recognised that they were undertaking an ambitious building project which would boost the ground capacity. Furthermore it had become a premier cricket venue outside of London, and was now bidding for the world cup series. He added that the impact of the cricket injected considerable sums of money into West Bridgford in terms of revenue generated, jobs were created, businesses supported and the associated media coverage was good for Rushcliffe. He informed Council that

the Labour Group would not be supporting the motion, and he congratulated the cricket club on their good work.

Councillor Clarke spoke against the motion, stating that he did not regret the decision of Cabinet. He reminded Council that it was not about cricket, or any other sport, but what the club has achieved for the Borough in providing a service to the community. He believed it was not necessary to use emotive language, such as a gift, as it was recognition of services carried out for the Council's partnership with them. He added that the main outcome from Positive Futures was about young people, and the contribution to the reduction in crime. This, he said, was about working in partnership, as the Council could not have provided the service as it did not have the professional expertise to use sport to develop young people. In terms of economic growth, he drew Council's attention to a report of the East Midlands Development Agency highlighted significant income to the area during the Ashes, a considerable amount of which would come direct to Rushcliffe. He reiterated that he did not regret the decision of Cabinet as this would benefit young people, and was a good example of partnership working.

Councillor Khan stated that it pained him to oppose the decision of Cabinet, as cricket was in his genes. He expressed concern about the timing of making the donation, as the Council were expecting residents to accept reductions to services. He believed it would be difficult to explain to his constituents why Council is giving money to the cricket club and not to other services.

Councillor Tansley stated that any money going to the cricket club would benefit the Borough. He would not be supporting this depressing motion which he believed rubbished the economic benefits. He said that the cricket club was well known throughout the world, and there were considerable economic benefits to Rushcliffe. He added that the Cabinet report in December had recognised Positive Futures as a jewel in the crown, but Councillor S Boote had been cynical in his reference to it. Furthermore there had been a substantial decrease in crime and anti-social behaviour, and whilst Positive Futures was not the only project for young people it was the flagship project. He stated that the academic study had referred to substantial savings generated by the Positive Futures project, and this was backed up by evidence. He believed that the Cabinet had done the right thing.

Councillor Cottey stated that he didn't think Councillor S Boote had understood the decision of Cabinet. He continued by saying that the cricket club had been in existence for over 100 years, and was now hosting test matches which brought significant sums of money into the local economy in Rushcliffe. He stated that other local authorities were giving money to cricket clubs to assist them in bidding for test match status; however Nottinghamshire Cricket Club had been successful in achieving this. He informed Council that the County Council had looked at a Positive Futures project for Nottinghamshire, and concluded by stating that cricket club was viable and the economic benefits were there for all to see in the Borough.

Councillor Davidson felt that Councillors had got the wrong end of the stick, and that loans played a substantial and important part in developing grounds. He reminded Council that this motion was about a loan which had been converted into a grant, where there were no quantifiable measures of what had

been achieved in Cotgrave.

Councillor Wheeler stated that he would not be supporting the motion. He showed Council a publicity leaflet from the cricket club demonstrating how their activities were aimed at young people. He informed Council that the test match had been sold out in four hours, with 70% of the tickets sold outside of Nottinghamshire, which demonstrated the benefits of regeneration to the area. He added that if the cricket club lost its test match status it would not get it back, and therefore it was important to spend money on it.

Councillor Jones said that it was not a vote on the cricket club and its place in the Borough, or credibility or loans, but there was no service level agreement, specification or contract in place. He felt that it was a large amount of money to handover without these. He added that the Football Association and Surestart were also involved in the reduction of crime in Cotgrave.

Councillor Butler stated that this was not a gift, but a good example of public and private sector partnership working. He believed that there was an immense benefit to Rushcliffe, the County and the City and this could not be underestimated. He informed Council that he felt passionate about Positive Futures, and considered it to be a superb example of young people being diverted from getting into things they shouldn't be. He said that the results of Positive Futures work were tangible, and gave examples of young people being enterprising, setting up small businesses and learning trades and skills. He recognised that this was unlikely to have happened without the cricket club, who were a reputable organisation and would not fritter the money away. He felt that Councillor S Boote and others were in favour of falling into the trap of thinking that the Council was being elitist in supporting the cricket club. He concluded that the Cabinet's decision was good for the Council and residents, and added it was good to get the support from Councillor MacInnes.

Councillor Cranswick stated it this was a difficult situation, and he had already explained the issue twice when Councillor S Boote was in the room. He reiterated that the Council was not giving anything to anyone, but that it was about paying for providing services the Council couldn't provide itself. He added that the cricket club would have to justify its spending. He continued by saying that to suggest 'we regret' was akin to saying we regret paying for electricity. He reminded Council that the money had been spent on a social awareness project which had improved the lives of countless young people in Cotgrave. He added that it had transformed Cotgrave from a crime hotspot to a place where people felt safer in their environment.

Councillor Cranswick informed Council of the initiatives the cricket club were involved in: schools' cricket development officer; match tickets for young people; 20:20 cricket demos by young people; tours of the ground for young people. He drew attention to the recurring theme: young people. Furthermore this was a national success story and it was now being mirrored by the County Council in Newark. He believed that the motion was about playing politics, and not about the young people.

Councillor S Mallender recognised the good work carried out by the cricket club in Rushcliffe, and that she did not want the work they did for young people to end. She highlighted other organisations who worked in partnership with

the Council to help young people, eg Nottingham Forest's football in the community programme, but they were not receiving funding from the Council. She added that there was a new centre for young people in West Bridgford and in the voluntary sector there were a number of organisations working with young people: sports clubs; play schemes; play groups, uniform groups – none of which received a gift from taxpayers in the way the cricket club had. She stated that there were good reasons to give loans, but in her view it was not a good idea to give a gift to the cricket club.

In summing up Councillor S Boote acknowledged that all of the speakers had referred eloquently to the place the cricket club had in the community and he agreed with it fully. He stated that he was not objecting to loans, but had serious misgivings that a grant had been given to the cricket club without proper procurement processes. He added that the Council should have in place a service level agreement as was the case with other organisations. He recognised the benefits in Cotgrave but felt that this was not only due to Positive Futures. He stated that there were no political motives to the motion, and it was not party politics: it was about trust and using Council money responsibly.

Recorded Vote

Votes for:

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

Votes against:

R Adair, S P Bailey, J R Bannister, D G Bell, N K Boughton-Smith, N A Brown, B R Buschman, R L Butler, H A Chewings, J N Clarke, T Combellack, L B Cooper, J E Cottee, J A Cranswick, B G Dale, A M Dickinson, J E Fearon, J E Greenwood, R Hetherington, K I Korn, N C Lawrence, 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, J A Stockwood, Mrs M A Stockwood, B Tansley, H Tipton, D G Wheeler

The motion was carried.

- b) Notice of Motion to be put to Council by Councillor R Jones and seconded by Councillor K Khan:

"As the Government has decided to go ahead with HS2, this Council wishes to ensure that the case for a station at East Midlands Parkway is fully made and considered and asks the Leader to represent those advantages to the relevant Minister."

In introducing the motion Councillor Jones stated that in the past most Councillors had voted against the case for a station to go through the Borough, instead choosing to support a motion focussing on the A453 and the electrification of the Midland Mainline. He felt that the Borough's silence about HS2 had stuck out like a sore thumb. He continued by saying that since the motion had been agreed, the Government had looked at the steady growth in rail travel and decided that new capacity was required, by way of the high speed line by 2030. Councillor Jones reminded Council that the current

proposed site for the East Midlands was Toton, which he pointed out had significant disadvantages: it was a freight yard and was not accessed by the current passenger network. He stated that this would put pressure on road access to both Derby and Nottingham along the already crowded A52, and the pressure for new housing development to give access to a Toton HS2 site would be hard to resist. He believed that the view that, given the proximity of the HS2 line to the three main cities and East Midlands Airport, there was a strong case for locating the station at East Midlands Parkway. Given that the power station adjacent to East Midlands Parkway was likely to become redundant in the 2030s Councillor Jones considered that the Council should be looking to energise and keep options alive for that area of Rushcliffe. He added that the station could be built on a split level, with a minor route amendment, and without disturbing an important archaeological site at Red Hill. He concluded by saying that businesses in Rushcliffe would benefit from the station being located at East Midlands Parkway and called for the Council to present its case clearly and persistently to the Government.

Councillor Clarke stated that the Council had not been silent on HS2 and had passed a motion on it. He did not disagree with the flavour of this motion, but was not entirely convinced that the HS2 would ever take place. He proposed an amendment to the motion to delete the words 'go ahead with' and insert 'continue promoting', delete 'at' and insert 'near', and insert 'should it go ahead', the amendment to read:

'As the Government has decided to continue promoting HS2, this Council wishes to ensure that the case for a station near East Midlands Parkway is fully made and considered, should HS2 go ahead, and asks the Leader to represent those advantages to the relevant Minister'

Councillor Jones stated that he could accept the first part of the amendment but not the conditional 'should it go ahead'. He stressed that Rushcliffe had fallen behind other authorities and needed to raise the issues with government.

The amendment was put to the vote and carried.

Councillor S Boote stated that when the HS2 route was published he was pleased to hear that it would stop in the East Midlands. He said that the obvious place was the triangle near East Midlands Parkway, given the main transport modes link there. He added that it was equidistant between Leicester and Derby and was vastly superior to Toton.

Councillor MacInnes informed Council that the Labour Group would abstain from the vote, as this was a complicated issue.

Councillor R Mallender stated that the fundamental point of the proposal was to minimise the transfer time between cities. He added that the cost would be prohibitive to take the HS2 line through the middle of Derby or Nottingham. Furthermore journey times would not be that different from the current Leicester to London journey time. He informed Council that a study by the Department for Transport had considered East Midlands Parkway, but without a second runway at East Midlands Airport, Toton would be the most

reasonable location. He said that the Green Group would be opposing the motion as it did not need to be put.

Councillor Lawrence stated that he agreed with Councillor Mallender that Toten was a better place than East Midlands Parkway.

On being put to the vote the amended motion was carried.

58. To Answer Questions under Standing Order 11 (2)

Question from Councillor S Boote to Councillor Fearon

"What can be done, and what is being done, to regulate the activities of pedlars and other doorstep sellers and to ensure that they respect the notices put up by many residents requesting that they stay away?"

Councillor Fearon responded by saying that he was aware that officers had recently provided Councillor S Boote with a full response on this issue and therefore he had nothing to add.

As a supplementary Councillor S Boote clarified that his question was what had been done, and was being done, and asked for a response.

In response Councillor Fearon re-iterated his previous comments and suggested that the information provided to Councillor S Boote was sent to all councillors in the form of a briefing note.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

MAYOR