MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL
THURSDAY, 1 JULY 2021

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford and live streamed on the Rushcliffe Borough Council YouTube channel

PRESENT:

Councillors S Mallender (Chairman), T Combellack (Vice-Chairman), R Adair, S Bailey, B Bansal, M Barney, K Beardsall, N Begum, A Brennan, R Butler, N Clarke, G Dickman, A Edyvean, M Gaunt, P Gowland, L Healy, R Inglis, Mrs C Jeffreys, A Major, R Mallender, D Mason, G Moore, J Murray, A Phillips, F Purdue-Horan, S J Robinson, K Shaw, D Simms, J Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, C Thomas, R Upton, D Virdi, J Walker, R Walker, L Way, G Wheeler and J Wheeler

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
C Caven-Atack	Service Manager - Corporate Services
T Coop	Democratic Services Officer
P Linfield	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
K Marriott	Chief Executive
S Sull	Service Manager - Legal Services
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillors B Buschman, J Cottee, B Gray, L Howitt, R Jones and G Williams

9 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

10 **Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 20 May 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

11 **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor informed Council that whilst her last few months had not been as full of engagements as she expected them to be, there were a few highlights she was able to share. She had enjoyed playing table tennis in Bingham marketplace to celebrate U3a day and had participated in the Great British Spring Clean in Lady Bay where residents were following the positive example set by Cotgrave by going ‘plastic free’ in local shops. She also mentioned the Lady Bay festival, the Queen’s birthday service and raising the flag for Armed

Forces Day. The Mayor concluded with an update of her walking tour of the borough and thanked fellow Councillors for their support in aid of her three charities.

12 **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader of the Council welcomed all Councillors back to the Council Chamber. He went on to thank officers for the efforts they had undertaken to ensure Councillors felt safe returning and informed Council that this also extended to external meetings in Council facilities. Just this afternoon he had attended a meeting of the East Midlands Global Gateway (Freeport) in the Chamber, the Council's external partners were very impressed with the facility, and the meeting was an excellent showcase of what Rushcliffe had to offer. The Leader especially welcomed back Councillor Jeffreys following her illness and congratulated Councillors J Walker and Begum on their new positions as Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Leader was proud to share a few statistics with Councillors that had been published that morning. Rushcliffe, he reported, had the country's third best collection rate for Council tax, the sixth best collection rate for Business Rates, and the second-best combined collection rate over the last twelve months. Finally, the Leader informed Council that the extension to the Coronavirus restrictions had led to the Proms in the Park celebration being postponed to September 2021, resulting in the Council's first major event being the Taste of Rushcliffe food festival in West Bridgford this coming weekend.

13 **Chief Executive's Announcements**

There were no Chief Executive's Announcements.

14 **Citizens' Questions**

There were no Citizens' Questions.

15 **Business from the last Council meeting**

Question from Councillor Thomas to Councillor Moore

"The CIL charge includes amounts collected for Leisure Centres and Playing Fields, which are held by Rushcliffe to be spent by Rushcliffe. Please provide a statement showing how much money has been collected to date under these two categories of expenditure and how much has been spent."

Councillor Moore informed Council that to date, since the adoption of the Community Infrastructure Levy in October 2019, the Council has collected £815,402.13 of strategic CIL from developments across the Borough; no expenditure has happened to date. The CIL operated on the basis of a roof tax with monies received held in a Borough wide fund and not initially collected or apportioned for specific projects or types of infrastructure. Money would be spent on items in the infrastructure list and would be apportioned based on the identified funding gaps for each of the items on the list. The detail of this allocation would be the subject of a scrutiny review in October after which it would be considered at Cabinet. Councillor Moore outlined the items on the

infrastructure list as:

- Provision of Park and Ride along the A52 corridor and bus priority measures in West Bridgford.
- Provision of or improvements to playing pitches and ancillary facilities.
- Provision of or improvements to indoor leisure provision.
- Provision of additional secondary school places across the Borough through new provision or extension to existing provision.
- Provision of health facilities across the Borough through new provision or extension to existing provision.

Supplementary question

Councillor Thomas asked what the identified funding gaps for each of the five items on the CIL infrastructure list were.

Councillor Moore agreed to forward that information to Councillor Thomas.

16 **Approval of the Scrutiny Annual Reports 2020/21**

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services providing a review of the work undertaken by the Council's four Scrutiny Groups during 2020/21. The Leader invited each of the Scrutiny Group Chairmen to deliver a brief summary of the work of each Group over the year.

Councillor Combellack, Chairman of the Corporate Overview Group, reported that despite being a very difficult year for all, scrutiny had been successful. The transition from the previous scrutiny arrangements had been completed and reviewed, and the new arrangements were working well. The Corporate Overview Group continued to meet throughout Covid to manage the work programmes of all the scrutiny groups as well as scrutinising important topics such as quarterly finance and performance monitoring, health and safety, and customer feedback. Councillor Combellack had continued to meet with other councils via the East Midlands Scrutiny Network and reported that virtual meetings had increased membership and engagement within that group. She concluded by thanking all Scrutiny Group Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for their time and efforts over the last twelve months as well as the officers involved in supporting scrutiny meetings.

Councillor Clarke, Chairman of the Growth and Development Group, thanked his Vice Chairman, Councillor Virdi, and congratulated him on his new role with the Governance Scrutiny Group. He outlined a number of the important items his Group had scrutinised during the year such as the crematorium, a new policy for planning enforcement and the new development at Abbey Road, which he hoped would prove to be an exemplar of energy efficient housing that others could follow. He also commended Councillors on the other side of the chamber for raising the management of open spaces as an item for scrutiny which led to a very interesting and productive discussion.

Councillor Purdue-Horan, Chairman of the Governance Scrutiny Group, stated that the work of the Group was extremely important to the governance of the Council. He commended the tremendous amount of work both officers and external partners had produced this year to bring forward items such as internal audit, the Constitution review, a review of risk management, the Statement of Accounts, treasury and asset investment update, the Capital Investment Strategy, external audit, the Annual Governance Statement, a report on the Redmond Review, and the Council's Annual Fraud Assessment. The Group had also received an additional item assessing the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's operational stability – the 'going concern' report. Councillor Purdue-Horan thanked supporting officers and members of the Group, especially his Vice Chairman, Councillor J Walker.

Councillor Wheeler, Chairman of the Communities Scrutiny Group, stated that meetings of the Group had been very varied, with challenging issues to consider and he thanked all members of the Group for their excellent work. It was noted that the Group had made a number of recommendations and scrutinised some issues more than once, and all Councillors were welcomed to provide the Group with feedback and comments if they wished to do so. In conclusion, Councillor Wheeler thanked officers for their support throughout the year.

Councillor Robinson thanked all members of Scrutiny for their commitment over the last twelve months and Councillor Edyvean, in seconding the item, reminded Council that members of the Executive would be happy to attend scrutiny meetings when invited.

Councillor Bansal, on behalf of the Labour Group, agreed that many interesting topics had been scrutinised over the last twelve months and also thanked the officers involved in supporting scrutiny. He reminded Council that scrutiny should seek to gain the views of residents, community groups, users and experts and hoped that more use would be made of this aspect of scrutiny in the coming year.

Councillor Major noted the considerable work that had been undertaken by the Scrutiny Groups, which was vital to ensuring the Council's continued commitment to transparent governance. It was critical that the Scrutiny Groups continued to thoroughly scrutinise the work undertaken by the Council to ensure that residents were well served.

Those comments were echoed by Councillors R Mallender and Thomas.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Edyvean and **RESOLVED** that the work undertaken by the four Scrutiny Groups during 2020/21 be endorsed.

17 **Councillors' Learning and Development Policy 2021-2025**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Customer Access, Councillor Moore presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services, explaining that the Councillors' Learning and Development Policy had been reviewed following the 2019 Borough Council election, to reflect current

practice and the needs of Councillors in terms of training and development. The Policy, developed in conjunction with Member Development Group, ensured that Councillors were adequately trained, having the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes, to deliver effective decision making within the Borough. It provided both face-to-face and online training opportunities from both internal officers and external partners covering a wide range of topics. Councillor Moore concluded by reminding Councillors that training was vitally important and that, in his opinion, there was always something new to be learnt.

Adoption of the Policy was seconded by Councillor Brennan who thanked officers and the Member Development Group for updating this important Policy. She recognised that it was difficult to get the balance right between training that was essential to maintaining the good governance of the authority and keeping Councillors safe, and that which was desirable and designed to help Councillors undertake their roles more effectively. This was made more difficult because each person had a different skill set when elected as a councillor and a varied set of experiences to bring to the role.

Councillor J Walker commented that the training she had received both from officers and external providers had been of excellent quality and that she was happy to support the adoption of this Policy.

Councillor Major thanked the Member Development Group for its hard work in ensuring that Councillors were fully trained and supported to undertake their role and was happy to support the adoption of this Policy.

Councillor R Mallender welcomed this Policy coming forward for adoption and informed Council of the debate held at Member Development Group on the two occasions the Policy had come to the Group. He stressed the importance of Councillors being appropriately trained to carry out their roles, urged Councillors to go online and undertake the essential e-learning courses and to speak to officers if they identified any specific training, they would like to undertake which could be funding from the Members' Training budget.

Councillor Shaw reported that as a member of the Member Development Group he was also very happy to recommend the adoption of this Policy.

RESOLVED that the Councillors' Learning and Development Policy 2021-2025 be adopted.

18 **Ruddington Neighbourhood Plan**

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Growth, Councillor Edyvean presented the report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth, providing information on the Ruddington Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Edyvean advised that the documents had been introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and were recognised by the National Planning Policy Framework, with local residents empowered to shape the future of their community. A plan had to in general conform with the strategic policies of the local planning authority and if the plan was made part of the Local Development Plan, then planning applications within that area would be determined in accordance with both the

Rushcliffe Local Plan and the relevant Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan had been promoted by the Parish Council, publicised, consulted on, examined by an independent Examiner and considered by the Borough Council. If the Plan was approved, it would then proceed to a referendum and if more than 50% of those voting voted “yes” then the Borough Council was required to “adopt” the Plan. If the result was “no”, then the Parish Council would have to decide what it wanted to do.

Councillor Inglis, in seconding the recommendations, stressed the importance of an adopted Neighbourhood Plan to support communities wishing to influence development in their local area. The Ruddington Neighbourhood Plan was an excellent and detailed Plan and the community deserve the opportunity to adopt this through a referendum.

Councillor Gaunt recognised the massive effort behind the detailed Plan and thanked the Neighbourhood Planning team in Ruddington for their time. He extended this thanks to the parish councillors and volunteers who had spent the last four years consulting and engaging with the community to shape the document. The Neighbourhood Plan could not have come at better time for Ruddington where the community had really come together over the last twelve months through the pandemic to support local residents and businesses.

Councillor Major recognised the time, energy and passion of local people in Ruddington and their desire to influence the future of their community.

Both Councillors R Mallender and Thomas congratulated the community on an excellent Neighbourhood Plan and wished them luck at the polls.

RESOLVED that, subject to a majority vote in the referendum:

a) the Ruddington Neighbourhood Plan be adopted; and

b) that the Director – Development and Economic Growth be granted delegated authority to issue a statement setting out this decision as soon as possible following the referendum.

19 **Revisions to the Council's Constitution**

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Monitoring Officer that outlined revisions to the Constitution. Councillor Robinson reminded Councillors that the Constitution was a live, working document that was reviewed throughout the year. The amendments outlined in the report were mainly due to the internal restructure undertaken by the Chief Executive, delegated decisions, the changes required to remove reference to remote meetings during the pandemic, and the trial arrangements for the Planning Committee moving forwards. All amendments to the Constitution were listed in the appendix to the report to make it clear what had been amended. Councillor Robinson informed Council that the Governance Scrutiny Group had considered the changes to the Constitution last month. The Leader highlighted an error in section 4.5 of the report which related to the date of this meeting which should read 24 June 2021.

Councillor Robinson focused on the changes to the start time of Planning Committee, which would be trialled for six months. He highlighted the success of previous trials on changes to processes, such as the changes to scrutiny in 2019, the introduction of e-learning and paperlite for Councillors and encouraged Councillors to give it a go even though they might have some reservations.

Councillor Gowland asked to move an amendment to the recommendation, that Council approved the revisions to the Constitution, without the change to Standing Orders to allow Planning Committee meetings to move to the afternoon.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Begum.

Councillor Gowland stated that although she appreciated that the change to the start time for Planning Committee was to be a trial, she considered that there were other alternatives, which could solve the issues that had been identified. It was noted that sometimes residents who had attended evening meetings had been unable to speak, as meetings had been adjourned due to the lateness of the evening; however, it was important to realise that by moving the meetings to the daytime, many people who worked would have to take time off to attend. It was accepted that sometimes less attention might be given to applications, if it was very late; however, it was hoped that other alternative solutions could be found, rather than moving the start time of the meeting. It was important to ensure that people who worked were not discriminated against, and the impact that this would have on Councillors should also be acknowledged. By moving meetings to the afternoon, it could mean that fewer Councillors who worked would be able to sit on the Committee. Although employers should give time off work to allow Councillors to attend meetings, it was noted that this often was not the case, and some employers were not supportive. Councillor Gowland reiterated that although this was a trial, she considered that the issue should be revisited, with other alternative options, before this significant change was made.

Councillor Begum reiterated the comments made by Councillor Gowland and stated that some Councillors were already taking time off work to sit on other committees, and this change would add additional pressure to workloads.

Councillor Thomas requested a recorded vote on the amendment and informed Council that she felt this would be a significant and harmful change, as afternoon meetings would reduce democracy. Whilst she was aware that employers should offer time off for Councillors to attend to the business of the Council, she explained that many occupations did not lend themselves to this type of flexibility and that publishing the agenda one week in advance would not be enough notice to organise time-off.

Councillor Major reiterated comments previously made and stated that this change would lead to a significant proportion of both Councillors and residents being discounted from participating at Planning Committee meetings, even if it was for only six months, and that would be very damaging to the Council.

Councillor R Mallender reminded Councillors that other local authorities had daytime meetings, as well as evening meetings and that this change would undoubtedly affect which Councillors could participate in the Committee and who could attend meetings to speak due to work or childcare issues.

Councillor Brennan reminded Council that was proposed was a trial and that all aspects of this would be taken into account. She also highlighted that for many people, attending an evening meeting was just as difficult, such as those working in the hospitality industry or with emergency services, as well as those with children to care for.

Councillor Clarke pointed out that everyone was right and that it was because there were so many valid but opposing views that a trial was necessary to see what would work and what would not. He went on to say that to remain a good Council the authority needed to continually evolve and that those changes should be based on evidence, evidence that would be collected during the trial. He concluded by reminding Councillors that this change had been put before a cross-party scrutiny group, so everyone had already had the chance to comment and shape the trial moving forward.

Councillor J Walker referred to people who were unable to be flexible regarding their working arrangements and stated that many would struggle to attend daytime meetings, and although it was acknowledged that this was a trial, she considered that it would not work.

Councillor Combellack believed that the potential changes to the start time of the Planning Committee were timely, as it was right to assess the Council's working practices as result of pandemic.

Cllr Butler reminded Council that he had considerable experience of chairing the Council's Planning Committee and was in favour of the changes proposed. Even with the slightly earlier start time, the meetings were very long and complex and whilst public speaking had introduced much more depth to the decision-making process it had also had an effect on the length of meetings. Unfortunately, he had not yet found a way of beating the human body clock and was concerned that the ability of the Committee to absorb information and make important decisions late into the evening was unreasonable. He reminded Council that the reviewers who had conducted the Planning Peer Review a few years ago had been concerned that the Council still held planning meetings in the evening as many other authorities had moved to day-time meetings. He concluded that whilst appreciating that the change would not suit all he wished for Council to agree the change so that evidence about the impact could be collected and assessed.

Councillor Gaunt expressed his disappointment that there had not been an opportunity to consider a range of options or alternatives to the single solution proposed for the trial. He went on to say that it was too early to assess the lasting impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and how this would affect residents' working arrangements and their future ability to attend Planning Committee.

Councillor Edyvean informed Council that speakers who could not attend a particular day-time meeting could submit a written statement, which would be

read out at the meeting by the Chairman.

Councillor R Mallender asked for clarification on how the feedback from the trial would be captured.

Councillor Way expressed concern about the negative public perception of a written statement over the option of being able to address the meeting in person.

Councillor Robinson informed Council that he was disappointed that the proposals for Planning Committee had been met with such resistance as there were many other examples of trial periods resulting in significant and positive changes for the Council and the Borough's residents.

Councillor Gowland acknowledged that some people would find it difficult to attend meetings whenever they were held. She went on to say that it would be useful to have an open discussion on all aspects of how the Planning Committee operated. In conclusion, Councillor Gowland reiterated the importance of being able to come and speak in person at a meeting, rather than having to submit comments, that would be read out in their absence.

In accordance with Standing Orders - Council 16.4, a recorded vote was taken on the amendment to the motion as follows:

FOR: Councillors B Bansal, N Begum, M Gaunt, P Gowland, A Major, J Murray, K Shaw, C Thomas and J Walker

AGAINST: Councillors R Adair, S Bailey, M Barney, A Brennan, R Butler, N Clarke, T Combellack, G Dickman, A Edyvean, L Healy, R Inglis, Mrs C Jeffreys, D Mason, G Moore, A Phillips, F Purdue-Horan, S Robinson, J Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, R Upton, D Virdi, R Walker, D Wheeler and J Wheeler

ABSTENTIONS: Councillors K Beardsall, R Mallender, S Mallender, D Simms and Way

The amendment to the motion proposed by Councillor Gowland was lost.

Councillor Robinson informed Council that the proposed changes to the Constitution had been through scrutiny and had not been objected to by any Group or individual. He reminded Councillors that what was being proposed was a trial, feedback would be gathered from all parties and would be fully evaluated before a final decision was made.

Councillor Thomas requested a recorded vote on the original motion.

In accordance with Standing Orders - Council 16.4, a recorded vote was taken on the original motion as follows:

FOR: Councillors R Adair, S Bailey, M Barney, A Brennan, R Butler, N Clarke, T Combellack, G Dickman, A Edyvean, L Healy, R Inglis, Mrs C Jeffreys, D Mason, G Moore, A Phillips, F Purdue-Horan, S Robinson, J Stockwood, Mrs M

Stockwood, R Upton, D Virdi, R Walker, L Way, D Wheeler and J Wheeler

AGAINST: Councillors N Begum, M Gaunt, P Gowland, A Major, J Murray, C Thomas and J Walker

ABSTENTIONS: Councillors B Bansal, K Beardsall, R Mallender, S Mallender, K Shaw and D Simms

The motion was carried.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Edyvean and **RESOLVED** that the revisions to the Constitution be approved.

20 **Notices of Motion**

a. The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Way and seconded by Councillor J Walker.

> **"**This Council notes the alarming decline in number of hedgehogs and threat of extinction and pledges to:
>
> (i) Adopt landscape management practices on land it owns and manages that are supportive to hedgehogs and their habitat.
>
> (ii) Encourage other agencies/councils operating in Rushcliffe to do likewise.
>
> (iii) Conduct a public awareness campaign to encourage the public to adopt supportive practices.
>
> (iv) Include appropriate conditions and advisory notes on planning consents to support the species."

Councillor Way informed the Council in moving the motion that in the first half of the 20th century there were estimated to be over 30 million hedgehogs in Britain, but this number has now fallen to around one million. It was noted that, despite a petition for the government to review the inclusion of hedgehogs to be protected under section 5 of the Countryside and Wildlife Act 1981, local action could not be instigated to protect the species before the petition be debated in Parliament on 5 July 2021.

Councillor Way stated that much of the decline in the number of hedgehogs was due to the loss of habitat by developers. Councillor Way provided the example of the Rempstone Road development in East Leake where hedges had been removed and replaced by an open seeded grass area which is of no benefit to any wildlife. It was also noted that the guidance provided by the Council for developers stated that hedges should not be removed during hibernation periods in the winter however, hedges had been removed in February 2021 on Lantern Lane, East Leake. Councillor Way was concerned that despite the Council intending to prevent this from happening, there was little being done to ensure compliance.

It was suggested that the Council could protect hedgehogs by either reducing or eliminating strimming under hedges, which would save animals from injury, more areas could be included in the 'no-mow' scheme and the reduction of the use of pesticides. Additionally, areas where it was known that hedgehogs were known to be active would benefit from the use of road signs to encourage drivers to slow down. Also, it was noted that the Council should encourage its partners to follow this guidance and that with good practice others would follow. Councillor Way stated that a comprehensive and widespread publicity campaign needed to be undertaken and support given to groups trying to promote the welfare of hedgehogs. It was noted that the Council should encourage residents to provide hedgehogs with areas in their gardens to be reconnected such as planting hedges, providing rough areas for shelter or making small holes in walls or fences so they could move freely around in search of food and mates. Therefore, this would provide the public with advice on how to provide habitats for hedgehogs and inform them of the benefits of encouraging wildlife into their gardens.

Councillor J Walker seconded the motion and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Brennan remarked that she had only seen one hedgehog whilst living in her current home of 15 years and recognised that the Council needed to help hedgehogs to foster their survival. Councillor Brennan supported the motion but noted that the Council was already trying to protect hedgehogs, for example, practices agreed recently by Cabinet as part of the Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy and the inclusion of hedgehogs as a local bio-diversity action plan species which sought to support the habitats of wildlife currently in danger. It was also stated that the Council encouraged developers to include hedgehog gates and holes in fences in order for them to move around more freely. Councillor Brennan informed the Council that in 2019, Streetwise received training to avoid injury to hedgehogs whilst carrying out maintenance work.

Councillor Brennan proposed an amendment to the motion:

> "This Council notes the alarming decline in number of hedgehogs and threat of extinction and pledges to:
>
> (i) Strengthen landscape management practices on land it owns and manages that are supportive to hedgehogs and their habitat.
>
> (ii) Encourage other agencies/councils operating in Rushcliffe to do likewise.
>
> (iii) Build on existing plans to conduct a public awareness campaign to encourage the public to adopt supportive practices.
>
> (iv) Continue to include appropriate conditions and advisory notes on planning consents to support hedgehogs and keep these under review in the event of changes to the protected status of the species."

Councillor Barney seconded the amendment to the motion and thanked the Councillors for welcoming him as a member of the Council. In thanking

Councillor Way for moving the original motion however, he agreed with Councillor Brennan that the Council's current efforts should be acknowledged. Councillor Barney was also pleased to note that local Facebook groups had been set up to support the species.

In responding to the amendment, Councillor Way thanked Councillor Brennan for supporting the majority of the motion.

Councillor Jeffreys encouraged Councillors to not use slug pellets as hedgehogs may eat the poisoned slugs.

There was no further debate. After being put to the vote, the amendment to the motion was accepted and became the substantive motion.

Councillor Way requested that enforcement be necessary if developers were not compliant to planning conditions in regard to protecting hedgehogs and their habitat.

Councillor Brennan proposed that the substantive motion be amended to:

> "This Council notes the alarming decline in number of hedgehogs and threat of extinction and pledges to:
>
> (i) Strengthen landscape management practices on land it owns and manages that are supportive to hedgehogs and their habitat.
>
> (ii) Encourage other agencies/councils operating in Rushcliffe to do likewise.
>
> (iii) Build on existing plans to conduct a public awareness campaign to encourage the public to adopt supportive practices.
>
> (iv) Continue to include appropriate conditions, enforcement where possible and advisory notes on planning consents to support hedgehogs and keep these under review in the event of changes to the protected status of the species."

Councillor Robinson seconded the proposal.

There was no further debate. After being put to the vote, the amendment to the substantive motion was accepted.

Councillor Gowland congratulated the Council working in Abbey Ward to increase the presence of wildlife.

Councillor R Mallender supported the motion and noted that despite streets on new developments in West Bridgford being called Hedgehog Gardens, Magpie Close, and Foxfield way it was those developments that were contributing to the destruction of wildlife and their habitats.

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

b. The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Thomas and seconded by Councillor Major.

> "This Council understands the concerns that our residents have about infrastructure not being developed alongside housing and resolves to:
>
> (i) Proactively work to ensure that developer contributions for the infrastructure items that are Rushcliffe's responsibility, whether collected through S106 or CIL, are spent in a timely fashion to mitigate the impacts of development, providing regular progress reports
>
> (ii) Proactively monitor the contributions collected with respect to Rushcliffe housing developments on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council and other agencies, (regardless of signatory), to likewise ensure that contributions are spent promptly and relevant to the developments
>
> (iii) By such timely spending on infrastructure, reduce over time the total amount of developer contributions held by Rushcliffe and any reliance on this to service the council's cash flow
>
> (iv) Provide, as part of the budget reporting round, annual reports of S106 and CIL contributions held, collected and spent during the year, including which developments attracted the charges and what the money was spent on, with locations."

Councillor Thomas informed Council, in moving the motion that residents were very concerned about the development of appropriate and necessary infrastructure to support new developments within or adjacent to their communities. This included pavements and crossings, community centres, play parks and access to public transport. Residents were aware that developers were required to make contributions to infrastructure projects and that this funding was held by the Borough Council. Councillor Thomas informed Council that developing the necessary infrastructure to support both new and existing communities was of paramount importance. She pointed out that there was no transparent way of residents finding out how much money had been contributed by developers as this information was not routinely published for residents to scrutinise. Whilst she accepted that there was a significant amount of work involved in managing these funds, it was not sufficient for the Council to act as an efficient banker. The purpose of this motion was to avoid large sums of unspent money sitting in the Council's bank account and to provide traction to move spending along.

Councillor Major stated that the motion spoke for itself so in the interests of transparency and to benefit the local communities as intended, she would be happy to second the motion and reserve her right to speak.

Councillor Moore stated that all members of the Council were aware of the infrastructure pressures that new housing developments brought to the Borough. He informed Council that a framework for allocating CIL funding would be considered at scrutiny in October 2021, and a firm proposal would be submitted to Cabinet in December 2021, which would enable the Council to distribute funds early in the new year. Councillor Moore went on to inform

Councillor Thomas that parish councils were already able to access the proportion of funding due to them and that the Council had a dedicated Planning Contributions Officer to monitor the funding and ensure it was channelled to where it was needed. He added that the Council was legally obliged to publish a s106 and CIL statement by 31 December each year. The statement detailed all cash flow including payments made to other bodies such as the County Council but that the Borough Council could not control how fast other bodies converted this funding into action. Councillor Moore moved to proceed to the next item on the agenda under Standing Orders – Council 14.11 and that this be put to the vote.

Councillor Robinson seconded the proposition and reiterated the comments made by Councillor Moore and advised Councillors that the Government was considering combining CIL and Section 106 monies, new guidelines would be issued, and it was therefore not timely to consider this at the moment.

The Mayor used her discretion to allow short statements from other political groups.

Councillor J Walker felt this was a timely motion which would hopefully result in clarity for local communities. She reported that she had attended a parish council meeting earlier in the week where there had been many questions regarding CIL and Council was advised that parishes did not have the information they needed to access funding and, as a consequence, it was not being used. She concluded her remarks by informing Council that it was clear to her that this motion would have a direct impact on the communities represented in this Chamber and requested that a recorded vote be taken on the request to move to the next item on the agenda.

Councillor R Mallender informed Council that he understood the frustration behind this motion. He understood the trade-off between additional housing and a new school or health centre, which would benefit both the existing and new communities but all too often new housing was built without the necessary infrastructure being developed alongside. More transparency of information would help manage residents' expectations.

Councillor Thomas reported her disappointment that there was a desire to move this motion straight to a vote without a proper debate. She felt that this displayed a misunderstanding about how Rushcliffe residents felt about the issue.

Councillor Major also stated that she understood the sentiment behind the motion and did not believe that transparency was a big ask. She also felt that taking this item through scrutiny would delay the process.

Councillor Robinson reminded Council that the Borough Council could only spend a small proportion of the CIL and s106 funds. The majority of money was for partners in health and the County Council to spend, Rushcliffe was just a banker. Therefore, the Council's efforts need to be focused on influencing its partners. He concluded his remarks by stating that information about the amount of CIL and s106 funding collected each year is available on the Council's website as it had to publish this annually by law.

In accordance with Standing Orders - Council 14.11, a recorded vote was taken to move to the next item on the agenda:

FOR: Councillors R Adair, S Bailey, M Barney, K Beardsall, A Brennan, R Butler, N Clarke, T Combellack, G Dickman, A Edyvean, L Healy, R Inglis, Mrs C Jeffreys, A Major, R Mallender, D Mason, G Moore, A Phillips, F Purdue-Horan, S Robinson, D Simms, J Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, R Upton, D Virdi, R Walker, D Wheeler and J Wheeler

AGAINST: Councillors B Bansal, N Begum, M Gaunt, P Gowland, J Murray, K Shaw, C Thomas, J Walker and L Way

ABSTENTIONS: Councillor S Mallender

The vote was carried and there was no further debate.

Councillor J Walker requested a recorded vote on the motion.

In accordance with Standing Orders - Council 16.4, a recorded vote was taken on the motion as follows:

FOR: Councillors B Bansal, N Begum, M Gaunt, P Gowland, A Major, J Murray, K Shaw, C Thomas, J Walker and L Way

AGAINST: Councillors R Adair, S Bailey, M Barney, K Beardsall, A Brennan, R Butler, N Clarke, T Combellack, G Dickman, A Edyvean, L Healy, R Inglis, Mrs C Jeffreys, D Mason, G Moore, A Phillips, F Purdue-Horan, S Robinson, J Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, R Upton, D Virdi, R Walker, D Wheeler and J Wheeler

ABSTENTIONS: Councillors R Mallender and S Mallender

The motion was lost.

21 **Questions from Councillors**

a) **Question from Councillor Thomas to Councillor Moore**

"Please provide a statement showing how much CIL has been collected since introduction of the levy in October 2019, how much has been distributed (itemised by town, parish, West Bridgford etc) and what has been spent on the five items on the Infrastructure List (which includes playing fields and leisure centres), giving a description and location of each project."

Councillor Moore informed Councillor Thomas that information had been pulled together by officers and that she could collect that after the meeting.

The below information highlighted the amount of CIL that had been collected and distributed. Funds were distributed twice a year in April

and October (the difference between the amount distributed in Keyworth and the amount collected was due to funds not being received before April, the remaining £9,301.58 would be paid over in October).

CIL Admin (5%) £51,229.43
Strategic CIL £815,402.13

East Bridgford NCIL (15%) £626.22 (with £634.10* distributed to the parish council)
Keyworth NCIL (25%) £12,514.15 (with £3,212.57* distributed to the parish council)
Kneeton NCIL (15%, capped) £2,500.00
West Bridgford NCIL (15%) £63,604.64

Supplementary question

Councillor Thomas asked if it was true that £20million was currently held by the Borough Council and remained unspent.

Councillor Moore agreed to forward that information to Councillor Thomas.

b) **Question from Councillor Gowland to Councillor Brennan**

"The bowls club has been a long-standing feature of the Arena from well before the building was redeveloped, and clearly we might expect the generally more elderly membership to drop during a pandemic. Please can you explain how the Council has supported bowls club to increase its membership, prior to any changes that the Council might make that would limit the viability of the club."

Councillor Brennan responded that Rushcliffe Indoor Bowls Club was an independent club, which had historically received far more support than any other sports club from both Council officers and the leisure operator, to aid the administration of the Club and support membership growth. The Council supported the Club through facilitating events, coaching courses, marketing and accessing grants to purchase equipment. The Council and the leisure operator had met regularly over the years with the Club and discussions had continued during the Pandemic. Unfortunately, there was a decline in membership pre-pandemic, and that had continued. The bowls hall was the subject of a Cabinet paper on 13 July 2021, and the papers for that would be published shortly. There was an opportunity to raise a question at the Cabinet meeting via Group Leaders once those papers were published.

Supplementary question

Councillor Gowland asked if Councillor Brennan could reassure her that any Equality Impact Assessments undertaken would take account of the age distribution of people involved in the Club.

Councillor Brennan responded in the positive.

The meeting closed at 9.21 pm.

CHAIRMAN