

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET
TUESDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2022**

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

PRESENT:

Councillors S J Robinson (Chairman), A Edyvean (Vice-Chairman), R Inglis,
G Moore and R Upton

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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| L Ashmore | Director of Development and Economic Growth |
| D Banks | Director of Neighbourhoods |
| G Dennis | Monitoring Officer |
| P Linfield | Director of Finance and Corporate Services |
| K Marriott | Chief Executive |
| H Tambini | Democratic Services Manager |

APOLOGIES:

Councillor A Brennan

33 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

34 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 November 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 8 November 2022, were
declared a true record and signed by the Chairman.

35 Citizens' Questions

There were no citizens' questions.

36 Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

There were no Opposition Group Leaders' questions.

**37 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2022/23 - Financial Update
Quarter 2**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Customer Access, Councillor
Moore presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services
outlining the budget position for revenue and capital as at 30 September 2022.

Councillor Moore stated that the overall picture was positive, with a predicted net efficiency of £831k; however, the position was likely to change with additional cost pressures identified, many of which were discussed at the two Budget Workshops. Cabinet noted that Table 1 of the report highlighted some interesting variances, primarily lost income due to delayed capital projects, various additional costs, and rental income, and were showing an adverse variation from budget. On a more positive side, Councillor Moore welcomed the increases in investment income, and increased income from Edwalton Golf Course and planning fees.

The Revenue Monitoring Statement for each service area was detailed in Appendix A to the report, with an update on Special Expenses detailed at Appendix E, which Councillor Moore advised was currently expected to be £61k. That figure was above budget, primarily due to increased utility costs and maintenance.

Councillor Moore advised that the original Capital budget for this year was £24.18m, with the projected outturn now at £19.2m, with the underspend primarily due to project delays.

Cabinet was reminded of the pressures being experienced, including pay increases, inflation, together with an anticipated drop in collection rates. In respect of Business Rates, Councillor Moore advised that the situation had been very positive this Quarter, although that could not be relied upon going forward.

Councillor Moore confirmed that the report had been considered by the Corporate Overview Group, and no significant issues had been raised. He concluded by stating that the report was positive, although Cabinet was reminded that there were uncertainties ahead, and it was important to use this positive efficiency wisely.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Edyvean stated that everyone was aware of the cost of living pressures suffered by residents, and this report highlighted that the Council was not immune to those pressures, which were likely to increase going forward, and the Council's continued sound financial management was important.

Councillor Edyvean highlighted the money spent on agency staff for planning and refuse collection; however, he stated that those were two areas where the Council consistently outperformed other councils, and it was important to get the balance of service provision and costs right.

In conclusion, Councillor Edyvean stated that this was a positive report, which highlighted the hard work of officers and thanked the Director – Finance and Corporate Services and his team for ensuring that the Council continued to be financially well managed.

Councillor Robinson reiterated the thanks given to officers and referred to the current difficult times and to the challenges which lay ahead. He referred to the increased planning fees, which highlighted the considerable pressures on the authority to deal with that, and the importance of matching resources with fees

coming in. Cabinet was reminded that the timeframe of delays was due to the large capital projects, which were always challenging to deliver, although it was positive to see that they were on budget and should be delivered on time.

It was RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the report noting:

- a) the expected revenue budget efficiency for the year of £0.831m and proposals to earmark this for cost pressures;
- b) the capital budget efficiencies of £4.98m including the re-profiling of provisions totalling £1.965m of which £0.465m to 2023/24 and £1.5m to 2024/25; and
- c) the expected outturn position for Special Expenses to be £61k above budget.

38 Leisure Facilities Strategy Mid-Point Review

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Councillor Upton presented the report of the Director – Neighbourhoods outlining the mid-point review of the Leisure Facilities Strategy for 2017 to 2027.

Councillor Upton advised that whilst there was no statutory requirement to produce a Strategy, it was considered to be good practice, to set out plans, monitor progress, and to ensure that the Council remained on the right track. Cabinet was reminded that the current cost of living pressures were impacting on the amount of disposable income some people had to spend on leisure, and with the increased running costs of those facilities, it was timely to undertake a mid-point review to ensure that it was still appropriate to all those changes in a post-Covid era.

Councillor Upton referred to the Strategy, detailed at Appendix 1 to the report and to the draft Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan at Appendix 2, and confirmed that consultations had taken place with appropriate stakeholders, with the Strategy supported by four guiding principles and six objectives, as detailed in paragraphs 4.7 and 4.8 of the report.

Councillor Upton concluded by reminding Cabinet that the Council continued to invest significantly in its leisure facilities, and the multi-million pound leisure centre due to open early next year in Bingham was testament to that.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Moore congratulated the Director – Neighbourhoods and his team for the very thorough report, highlighted the six objectives, and stated that he was very happy to note that the first would be to retain five leisure facilities and ensure that they were fit for purpose, which had not always been the case. He was pleased to note that partners and parishes would be supported to deliver priority projects, and referred to the support given to East Leake, and to the importance of joint working. Councillor Moore referred to the maintenance of allotments and how many underestimated the physical benefits from working on them.

Councillor Robinson agreed that despite the financial pressures it was pleasing

that the Council continued investing in its leisure facilities, as could be seen in Cotgrave, Keyworth and now Bingham, and reiterated the thanks given to the Director – Neighbourhoods and his team for their hard work. He reminded Cabinet that Rushcliffe was rightly very proud and renowned for its sport and its facilities and that it was included in the Council's strapline.

It was RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- a) adopts the updated Leisure Facilities Strategy 2017-2027 incorporating the mid-point review 2022;
- b) supports work to develop the detailed specification for Capital investment into Cotgrave Leisure Centre and Keyworth Leisure Centre, which are already included in the Capital Programme for 2023-2024; and
- c) delegates authority to the Director – Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change to approve the final content of the associated Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan refresh.

39 Streetwise Annual Report

The Leader, Councillor Robinson, presented the report of the Chief Executive detailing the Streetwise Annual Report.

Councillor Robinson advised that this report looked retrospectively, within the context of the Streetwise service moving back in-house in September 2022, and how the service had coped with the effects of the Covid pandemic. Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Governance Scrutiny Group on 1 November, and whilst the Group was satisfied with the report, it had raised some points detailed at paragraph 4.4 of the report.

Councillor Robinson referred to Appendix C to the report and advised that this looked at performance, the impact of Covid and the significant loss of the Metropolitan Housing contract, whilst also highlighting the increasing business outside of the contract. Cabinet noted that the report reflected performance across Community Development, Neighbourhoods, Events and Grounds Maintenance, and showed a mixed performance, although that had to be taken in context in respect of the pandemic and the competitive markets.

Councillor Robinson remarked that it was pleasing to see that Streetwise had continued to improve its environmental credentials in line with the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan by the renewal and updating of the fleet to use low emission fuels and supporting community groups.

In respect of finance, there had been a decrease in revenue of 9.7%, which reflected the loss of the Metropolitan Housing contract, and it also reflected the competitiveness of the market and the effect of the pandemic. Councillor Robinson advised that Streetwise had been profitable for eight years, which when taken into context against other authorities, was particularly good, and at the end of March 2022, it had nearly £500k, which he considered to be a

testament to the management team and staff.

Councillor Robinson concluded by reminding Cabinet that as Streetwise was now back in-house, it was being covered by different scrutiny processes, as referred to in the report.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Inglis endorsed the previous comments and advised that the signed off accounts for previous years provided a base comparison for the in-house absorption of Streetwise back into the Council's management. He stated that it was not just about turnover, rather it was the end of year profits that were important, and there had already been changes to enhance those profits, and work was commencing into securing new and viable contracts to provide a quality, enhanced service, with a focused dedication to all of Rushcliffe.

Councillor Inglis concluded by advising that he was confident in the new management, procedures, and the positive staff engagement and that appropriate oversight would be undertaken by the Governance Scrutiny Group.

Councillor Upton advised that he had always found Streetwise staff to be incredibly helpful and knowledgeable, with good customer care, and he had never heard any criticism of their work and by keeping areas clean, graffiti and litter free that meant a great deal to local residents.

Councillor Robinson agreed that this formed an important element of Rushcliffe's quality of life and Streetwise and its management team had provided an excellent service and should be commended for that work over the years, and following its return in-house, he hoped to see increased performance around the Rushcliffe contract.

It was RESOLVED that Cabinet accepts the Streetwise Annual Report 2021/22 and notes the comments made by the Governance Scrutiny Group.

40 **Bingham Improvement Board Update**

The Leader, Councillor Robinson, presented the report of the Chief Executive updating Cabinet on the Bingham Improvement Board.

Councillor Robinson reminded Cabinet that it had considered the Board's report at its meeting in June, with the report then submitted to Council in July, and then to Bingham Town Council in October this year. Councillor Robinson stated that given the time, money and resources involved, it was important to reflect and look at progress made, and he had therefore requested that an update report came to Cabinet in six months.

Cabinet noted that the Action Plan and updates were attached at Appendix A to the report and reflected on the professionalism and experience of Board members in producing meaningful actions, which made a difference to a very difficult situation. Councillor Robinson was delighted to report that Bingham Town Council had acted very positively and reacted well to the actions going forward, with progress made, and no further complaints had been made between Councillors since the report had come forward, which was a great

testament to both the Town Council and to the quality of the Improvement Board in ensuring that a very resilient plan was in place.

In conclusion, Councillor Robinson stated that from a very difficult situation, considerable progress had been made, and credit should be given to the Town Council for that, and local residents now appeared to have more confidence in the Council, which was the best testament to this.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Edyvean agreed that all Councillors should act appropriately and in line with the Nolan Principles and Bingham Town Council was striving to improve. It was clear from reading the update against the agreed Action Plan that the Town Council had become more civil and inclusive, and Councillor Edyvean hoped that in the next election new candidates would come forward, and people who had previously served as Councillors but had left due to the pervading atmosphere. Councillor Edyvean concluded by noting the hard work of Councillors and staff at the Town Council in bringing the changes forward.

Councillor Robinson reiterated the importance of the Nolan Principles, which all Councillors worked under, and stated that this had been sadly lacking at Bingham Town Council. This was a strong move forward, and an indication to all parishes that such behaviour would not be tolerated, and the progress made was a vindication of the action taken by Rushcliffe Borough Council.

It was RESOLVED that Cabinet endorses the progress made and congratulates Bingham Town Council on its commitment to delivering the Action Plan.

41 **Adoption of Cropwell Bishop Conservation Area**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Councillor Upton presented the report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth outlining the proposed adoption of the Cropwell Bishop Conservation Area.

Councillor Upton summarised the legal duty imposed on local planning authorities to designate as Conservation Areas any areas of special or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it was desirable to preserve or enhance. Councillor Upton advised that following request from residents and the Ward Councillor, Cropwell Bishop was considered for designation, and had been found to meet the requirements of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Cabinet noted that an extensive public consultation had taken place in August and September this year and this report recommended the adoption of the proposed Conservation Area, attached as Appendix 1 to the report. Councillor Upton confirmed that a Conservation Area was not formally adopted in law until a notification of an adoption by the Council was posted in the London Gazette.

Reference was made to Recommendation b) in the report, which asked that consideration be given to the objections from 8 Nottingham Road and Stackyard Close to being included in the proposed Conservation Area. Councillor Upton confirmed that Cabinet was being asked to choose a Conservation Area boundary, which would include or exclude those properties,

with the details of those options outlined in Appendices 3 to 6 to the report. However, Councillor Upton advised that paragraph 4.1 of the report stated that the amended Conservation Area Character Appraisal, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report was the document proposed for adoption.

Councillor Upton referred to Section 5 of the report, which summarised the comments received, the various boundary options considered and reasons for their rejection and stated that paragraph 5.3 outlined the four boundary options offered for consideration. Section 6 of the report outlined the risks and uncertainties associated with the four options, and Councillor Upton concluded by stating that unless Cabinet was minded to change the proposed Conservation Area boundaries, it should support Recommendation a) as detailed in the report. Councillor Upton reiterated that having considered the risks and uncertainties, and that if the objectors' properties were removed from the Conservation Area boundary, that could set a precedent and asked that Recommendation a) and Appendix 1, which excluded the request for the properties at 8 Nottingham Road and Stackyard Close to be taken out of the proposed boundary be supported.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Moore confirmed that as the Ward Councillor he had been involved with this for a number of years and advised that the process had originally been started by a group of enthusiastic villagers, who had worked with the Council's Conservation Officer. Cabinet noted that the process had briefly been put on hold; however, it had been re-energised, and Councillor Moore thanked local residents for their hard work and dedication.

Councillor Moore confirmed that at the last meeting of Cropwell Bishop Parish Council, the local residents involved were invited to attend, and he confirmed that those residents and Parish Council members had unanimously agreed that 8 Nottingham Road and Stackyard Close should be included in the Conservation Area, and they had asked for that recommendation to be noted tonight. Councillor Moore concluded by stating that it was important to protect this attractive central part of the village, although it was acknowledged that not everyone would be in favour of its establishment.

Councillor Robinson referred to the uniqueness of Rushcliffe in respect of its Conservation Areas and stated that it was important to consider and debate such issues and have public involvement. Cabinet was reminded that Conservation Areas protected and retained the character and history of an area, whilst it was acknowledged that it was a complicated process, with many issues to consider and that some people not in favour of them. Councillor Robinson advised that he was fully supportive of Conservation Areas, whilst ensuring that appropriate consultation had taken place, and thanked officers for their hard work, which he was sure local residents appreciated.

In answer to a question regarding timescales, the Monitoring officer confirmed that once a decision had been taken to formally adopt the Conservation Area, and that notice was published in the London Gazette, then the process would be completed.

It was RESOLVED that the Conservation Area Character Appraisal in Appendix 1 be adopted as the document, which outlines and describes the special architectural and historic character of the Conservation Area, which it will be desirable to preserve or enhance.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

CHAIRMAN