

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL**

THURSDAY, 1 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 T Combellack (Chairman), S Bailey, B Bansal, K Beardsall, N Begum, A Brennan, B Buschman, R Butler, N Clarke, J Cottee, G Dickman, A Edyvean, P Gowland, B Gray, L Healy, L Howitt, R Inglis, Mrs C Jeffreys, R Jones, R Mallender, S Mallender, G Moore, J Murray, A Phillips, V Price, F Purdue-Horan, S J Robinson, K Shaw, J Stockwood, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, R Walker, L Way, J Wheeler and G Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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
E Richardson	Democratic Services Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillors D Mason, R Adair, M Barney, M Gaunt, D Simms, Mrs M Stockwood, J Walker and G Wheeler

39 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

40 Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 September 2022

The Mayor advised that Councillor Brennan wished to make an amendment to the minutes and invited her to do so.

Councillor Brennan referred to minute 31 Business from the last Council Meeting and clarified that rather than saying that "*the Council was currently looking into establishing a youth council for Rushcliffe*" she had said that "*the Council was exploring how young people could be encouraged to engage in the democratic process, which she knew was an issue that Councillor Jones had previously raised and expressed a key interest in*" and requested that the correction be noted.

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 29 September 2022, were approved as a correct record, subject to the agreed amendment referred to above, and signed by the Mayor.

41 **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor informed Council that her year continued to be very busy, having attended over 50 events, with another 13 already scheduled for December. The Mayor thanked Olha Bielohlazova for her very moving moment of reflection and added that her thoughts, like so many others would be with the people of Ukraine, who were experiencing a very different Christmas this year.

The Mayor referred to the many interesting people that she had met and experiences she had enjoyed, including having her portrait painted by the West Bridgford brownies, who were raising money for the local food bank, and switching on the Christmas Lights in West Bridgford, which had been so well attended and enjoyed by all.

The Mayor hoped that Councillors who had laid a wreath on her behalf on Remembrance Sunday had liked the environmentally friendly wreaths, which this year had been made out of laurel, being a symbol of honour, and she confirmed that she had attended three services on Remembrance Sunday and had also led a well-attended Armistice Day service on the croquet lawn in West Bridgford. She went on to thank the many residents who had knitted and crocheted the poppies, which had decorated the wreaths, and in particular was very touched to hear that residents in nursing homes had been delighted to make them too.

The Mayor spoke of her meeting with the Princess Royal at a riding for the disabled event, which had been very enjoyable, despite the inclement weather that day. She went on to mention the U3a beacon relay handover, and her opening of the East Leake Sports Pavilion, which had been an enormous community effort to build such a fantastic facility.

The Mayor also mentioned the Ruddington Awards, which had celebrated people who went the extra mile for their communities, which led her to highlight the annual Rushcliffe Awards, and thanked officers for their hard work and effort in organising such an excellent event. The Mayor had been very moved by many of the stories she heard that evening and to present Sam Perkins with the Pride of Rushcliffe Award for his charity work in raising awareness of Motor Neurone disease, from which he personally suffered, and she also mentioned Aleesha Gadhia, the six year old climate change activist, who won the Young Person of the Year award. The Mayor went on to thank the business community and sponsors for supporting the event.

The Mayor stated that she would be visiting staff before Christmas to thank them for their hard work throughout the year, and on Christmas Day she would be helping to serve Christmas lunch at the Friary.

Looking ahead to next year, the Mayor announced that on Sunday, 14 May 2023, she would be doing a sponsored abseil for her charities and invited Councillors to join her and take part.

42 **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader wished everyone a Merry Christmas and welcomed Councillor Begum to the meeting, in her capacity as Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, in Councillor J Walker's absence.

The Leader reminded Councillors of the two Budget Workshops being held next week and how important it was to have input from all Councillors in scheduling the budget, particularly during this difficult economic climate.

In respect of housing, the Leader advised that Councillor Upton, as a member of the Joint Planning Advisory Board had been negotiating on behalf of the Council, and the Leader was delighted to announce that a preferred approach had been reached, which would now be considered by inspectors and the Government. That approach would ensure that each council would be able to deliver its own housing numbers, and that Rushcliffe would not have to take any overspill from the City Council. The Leader confirmed that Rushcliffe already had enough allocated sites to meet its housing requirements, including a very healthy safety buffer and it was noted that last year the Council had delivered over 1,100 houses, many of which were affordable, and that was a great testament to the authority.

The Leader referred to the Trent Bridge crossing, being led by Nottingham City Council, and advised that this would now be delayed into next year, and it was hoped that construction in this key asset would begin in 2024 and opened in 2025.

The Leader reminded Councillors of how important the next few months would be to the Council, with work on the Freeport moving forward, the East Midlands Development Corporation taking shape, and Devolution progressing, all of which would have a significant material impact on the authority and create a new landscape. In May 2023, the Leader stated that many new Councillors would be welcomed, bringing new ideas, and he believed that at such a time it was important that the authority was flexible and could adapt to the new landscape and challenges, and he considered that it was both timely and in the best interest of the Council, that a new Leader should be appointed in May 2023. He considered that a new Leader would bring a fresh style and ideas to a role that was reflective of the new era, and he would therefore be standing down as Leader of Rushcliffe Borough Council in 2023. The Leader concluded by recognising the incredible teamwork, commitment and professionalism shown by Cabinet members, all Councillors, and officers in making Rushcliffe such an incredible place and stated that he had been extremely proud and privileged to be the Leader and would continue to give 100% commitment, dedication, and professionalism throughout the remainder of his leadership.

43 **Chief Executive's Announcements**

There were no Chief Executive's Announcements.

44 **Citizens' Questions**

A citizens' question had been submitted by Mr Richard Mackie. Mr Mackie was not in attendance, so his question was read out by the Mayor as submitted:

"The Rushcliffe Local Plan 2 removed some sites from the Green Belt, and this is confirmed in the latest Green Belt map.

Has the Borough Council authority either to extend the size of sites removed from the Green Belt or to remove new sites from the Green Belt.

If so, what processes of public consultation and notification are required?"

Councillor Upton thanked Mr Mackie for his question and stated that the Council had the legal authority to either add or remove land to the Rushcliffe Green Belt, but this could only be done as part of a review of its Local Development Plan, which the Government recommended was done every five years. In preparing or reviewing its Local Plan, the Council was required to undertake public consultation and it did so in accordance with its Statement of Community Involvement. There were specific consultation stages throughout the preparation or revision of this Plan and if, for example, someone would like the boundary of the Green Belt to be reviewed, they should write to the Council at the relevant consultation stage. Finally, individuals and organisations could register to be informed of future consultation stages for the Local Plan.

45 **Petitions**

No petitions had been submitted.

46 **Polling Districts and Polling Places**

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Chief Executive, outlining proposals for revised polling districts and polling places, following an interim periodic review requested by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

The Leader advised that the key objective of this review was to ensure that all electors had full access to facilities to vote and confirmed that the proposals had gone out to public consultation, and the responses received from a variety of people and groups were detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, with the proposed revised Schedule in Appendix 2.

The Leader drew Council's attention to a query relating to Normanton-on-the Wolds, in terms of voting in Plumtree, and he advised that the Chief Executive had met with the Chairman of Normanton-on-the Wolds Parish Council, and it was hoped that a compromise has been found, which would go back to the Parish Council.

Councillor Edyvean seconded the recommendation and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Begum thanked the Leader for welcoming her and stated that she would miss debating with him and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Councillor Begum thanked officers for their hard work during this process and confirmed that the Labour Group welcomed the report.

Councillor Jones reiterated the comments made by the Mayor about the Rushcliffe Community Awards and the amazing people there, and also thanked officers for their hard work in organising such a successful event. He referred to the Leader's announcement, and paid homage to his service as Leader.

In supporting the motion, Councillor Jones noted the considerable work undertaken by officers and stated that it was unlikely that the public realised the work involved, and thanked staff for their efforts. Councillor Jones did raise a concern that by introducing the requirement for photo ID, the Government was over-complicating the process, when there was no evidence of fraud taking place.

Councillor S Mallender stated that she would be sorry to see the Leader step down and hoped that future debates would continue to be as interesting. In supporting the motion, she reiterated the thanks given to officers and noted that the comments related to her ward had been considered to ensure that it was as easy possible for people to vote. Councillor Mallender referred to the importance of encouraging people to vote and agreed with the comments made by Councillor Jones regarding the introduction of photo ID for almost non-existent cases of fraud.

Councillor Thomas confirmed that the Leake Independent Group would be supporting the motion.

Councillor Edyvean advised that he had nothing further to add.

The Leader thanked Group Leaders for their comments and support and reiterated the thanks to staff for the incredible amount of work undertaken and referred to the considerable effort required not just on election day itself, but during the preparation, and referred to the fundamental importance of ensuing that everyone was able to vote.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) Council approves the:
 - (i) proposals setting out changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations; and
 - (ii) revised schedule of polling districts and polling places as set out in Appendix 2;
- b) Council requests the Chief Executive to formally publish the notice of the conclusion of the review and its findings; and
- c) the (Acting) Returning Officer be given authority to select an appropriate alternative polling place (if required). Formal retrospective approval be

sought by Council following the election if appropriate.

47 **Renewal of Public Spaces Protection Order (General ASB)**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Safety, Councillor Inglis presented the report of the Director - Neighbourhoods, outlining proposals to amend and renew the Council's Public Spaces Protection Order (General ASB).

Councillor Inglis stated that the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, provided powers for local authorities to introduce Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to address anti-social behaviour (ASB) in public places, and this report sought approval to amend and renew the Council's PSPO, which had previously been supported by this Council on its last review in 2020.

Council was advised that due to changes in the law, and the latest crime trends it was considered necessary to slightly amend the existing PSPO, by renewing the Order for restrictions on street drinking and removing the existing prohibition on outdoor sleeping but to include certain additional restrictions and prohibitions as specified in Paragraph 4.3 of this report. Details of the areas covered by the Order, were outlined in Appendix 4 of the report.

Councillor Inglis stated that to utilise the powers referred to in the Order, the Council had to be satisfied, on reasonable grounds that activities carried out in a public space would have or were likely to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; be persistent or continuing in nature; be unreasonable; and justify the restrictions imposed.

Council noted that as the Vagrancy Act had now been repealed, it was proposed to remove the prohibition on outdoor sleeping, although Councillor Inglis advised that the Council still faced other ASB issues, which the proposed PSPO would seek to control, based on current complaints and incidents, with details of the five targeted matters outlined in Paragraph 4.3 of the report.

Councillor Inglis referred to the consultation period, and the overwhelming positive public response, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, and confirmed that it was fully endorsed by Inspector Lawton, who led the Neighbourhood Police team, and the Crime Commissioner.

Councillor Inglis concluded by advising that he felt satisfied that the changes were relevant to the Act, proportionate and current, and that the renewed PSPO was needed, as it was not just an enforcement tool but a strong deterrent in a preventative way and provided officers with a means of dealing with offenders quickly and effectively. He also mentioned that the recent Safer Streets funding allocation to the Trent Bridge Ward had enabled the Council to provide extra patrols specifically targeting ASB and crime and to fund re-deployable CCTV cameras.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Cotte confirmed that he was very happy to endorse this proposal, as it was important that the Council could effectively deal with any ASB, which spoils the enjoyment for the majority who

both lived in and visited Rushcliffe. Councillor Cottee felt that the Council needed to portray a positive image that ASB would not be tolerated in Rushcliffe and this PSPO would go a long way to ensure that was the case.

Councillor Bansal confirmed that the Labour Group would support the proposed changes as he considered that the safety of residents was a priority and ASB was unacceptable. Councillor Bansal reminded Council that mental health issues were on the rise and many people needed support.

Councillor Jones was pleased that this would continue to apply to parks, including Sharphill Wood, which in his experience was very difficult to police, and that the reference to rough sleeping had been removed. Councillor Jones confirmed that the Liberal Democrat Group would be supporting the motion.

Councillor R Mallender thanked officers for the useful updates and stated that the Borough was fortunate that cases were low, although they did occur, and he was happy to support the motion.

In supporting the motion, Councillor Thomas advised that she would like to see more emphasis on providing help and assistance to people who found themselves in unfortunate situations, given that some ASB was deliberate, whilst some was due to circumstances. Councillor Thomas stated that she knew that officers were very sensitive to such issues, and also suggested that enforcement needed to be across the Borough and not just in West Bridgford.

It was **RESOLVED** that the amended Public Spaces Protection Order (General ASB) as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved and take effect from 2 December 2022.

48 **Notices of Motion**

No motions had been submitted.

49 **Questions from Councillors**

a) Question from Councillor R Mallender to Councillor Inglis

“Many borough and district councils are pressing ahead with food waste collection services for their residents. Given that there is still no word from the government on a national scheme isn't it time for Rushcliffe Borough Council to at least introduce a pilot scheme for this service?”

Councillor Inglis responded by stating that as the top recycling authority in the County, Rushcliffe was very proud of delivering a top-quality waste collection service for local residents. However, for the Council to unilaterally implement a food waste collection scheme even as a pilot would be premature, unwise, and unaffordable. Alternatively, the Council had been working on an externally funded joint project through the Nottinghamshire Joint Waste Management Committee, which was developing a model for how food waste could be collected and disposed of across Nottinghamshire as it was vital that this work was done as a system. This work would ensure that the Council and indeed

the whole County were in a very good place to implement a weekly food waste collection service once the government confirmed their requirements and funding arrangements for local authorities to deliver such a service. According to DEFRA such clarity should be available early in the New Year.

Supplementary Question

Councillor R Mallender welcomed that news but asked if Councillor Inglis would agree that one thing that could be done in parishes and local communities was to look at the possibility of having small community based schemes, to enable residents to work together at a lower level than the County.

Councillor Inglis agreed and reiterated his previous comments regarding the requirements for a County-wide approach. He stated that he saw no reason why communities could not get involved and it could be taken forward; however, what was required was a steer from Central Government.

b) Question from Councillor Thomas to Councillor Moore

“How much unspent money in total is currently being held by Rushcliffe as contributions from housing and other developers via Section 106 and CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)?”

Councillor Moore responded by stating that the up-to-date figure was as follows, for CIL £2,787,853.69 was held, of which £54,884 was committed or allocated and for Section 106, £39,476,585.23 was held, of which £12.3m was committed or allocated.

Supplementary Question

Councillor Thomas stated that this meant that Rushcliffe was holding over £40m, which was unspent and noted that it was inevitable that spending would lag behind development; however, there came a point when that was unacceptable and she felt that the Council should be encouraging its partners, such as the County Council to spend the money to bring forward projects, to provide those much needed facilities.

Councillor Moore sympathised, whilst reminding Council that projects including building a school were long term, and agreed that infrastructure followed on slowly after development, with officers trying to do as much as they could, but ultimately Rushcliffe was only responsible for holding the money for the County Council.

The meeting closed at 7.43 pm.

CHAIRMAN