

**MINUTES**  
**OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**CORPORATE OVERVIEW GROUP**  
**TUESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2022**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West  
Bridgford

**PRESENT:**

Councillors J Wheeler (Chairman), N Clarke, J Cottee, P Gowland and D Viridi

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

C Caven-Atack	Service Manager - Corporate Services
S Whittaker	Service Manager - Finance
E Palmer	Communications and Customer Services Manager
K Brennan	Finance Business Partner
T Coop	Democratic Services Officer

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillors G Williams

15 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest reported.

16 **Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2022 were approved by the Group and signed by the Chairman.

17 **Finance and Performance Management Q2 2022/23**

The Finance Business Officer presented the Group with the Council's financial position in respect of revenue and capital as at 30 September 2022, advising members of the current financial climate, particularly inflationary increases expected to rise to 14% and the impact of the 'cost of living' on residents.

The Group were advised that there is a predicted net revenue budget efficiency of £0.831m for 2022/23, as a result of Business Rates Pool, additional investment income and additional new burden grants. The Group noted that £0.67m of this is proposed to be earmarked for additional cost pressures and that this position is likely to change as further variances are identified. The variances were highlighted in a table provided in the report.

In respect of Capital Monitoring the Finance Business Officer advised the Group that the original programme for 2022/23 was £14.611m, with £10.646m carrying forward and other adjustments of £1.679m giving a current budget of

£27.178m. However, the projected outturn was reported to be around £19.2m, resulting in an estimated underspend of £4.98m. Primarily arising from:

- The provision for support for Registered Housing Providers (not wholly committed at this stage)
- Bingham Leisure Hub and Crematorium contingencies due to delays in both projects
- Unused contingencies on Cotgrave Phase 2 development
- Schemes for watercourse improvements, Disabled Facilities Grants, Hound Road and Edwalton Golf Course.

The Group noted that these are recommended to be re-phased into the 2023/24 Capital Programme.

The Finance Business Officer highlighted some of the pressures and uncertainties ahead, including the prime ministers budget announcements and the prediction that inflation could reach 14% later this year, giving significant risk to Council costs and the knock-on effect this may have on collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates and on fees and charges. The Group noted that the impact of continued increases would be monitored closely.

In concluding the Finance Business Officer advised that the capital position is positive and there will be no need to externally borrow in this financial year.

Members asked specific questions relating to the delays on the Bingham Hub and Crematorium and asked what the delays were and would the contingency allowance for each project be spent. The Group were advised that delays were caused with labour shortages, material shortages and increased costs, with regards to contingency, this is provided for unexpected costs and will not necessarily be spent.

Members commented on S106 and CIL funding from developer contributions and are there plans for spending this in the Council budget and asked if there were any transformation projects or longer term plans expected in the Council's Transformation Strategy. The Service Manager – Finance advised that officers are currently working on how/where to spend S106 and CIL contributions. With regards to the Council's Transformation Strategy the Service Manager – Finance referred to the Budget Workshops scheduled for December which will provide some options.

The Communications and Customer Services Manager presented the Performance Monitoring report and a summary of the progress of tasks and measures falling within each theme of the Corporate Strategic Scorecard.

The Group were advised that performance in quarter 2 continues to show improvement which is particularly evident in the following indicators:

- **LIDEG02** Processing of planning applications: Major applications dealt with in 13 weeks or agreed period – current performance is 76.2%, well above the 70% target.
- **LIDEG40** Percentage of RBC owned industrial units occupied – occupation

- levels have increased and currently 2.74% above target.
- **LIFCS24** Percentage of housing and council tax benefit claims processed right first time – processing accuracy has increased to 98%.
  - **LINS24** Number of affordable homes delivered – 149 homes have been completed up to the end of September. This is over the annual target of 200 homes and includes two sites with 100% affordable homes (East Leake and Radcliffe on Trent).
  - **LINS35** Average number of weeks for all Home Search applicants to be rehoused through Choice Based Lettings – applicants have waited 35 weeks on average, well under the 52 weeks target.

The Communications and Customer Services Manager referred to Appendix G provided with the agenda report and highlighted some of the performance successes, including the reduction of household waste collected, noticeable increase of community centre usage partly due to the increase in marketing and the new digital booking system. The Group noted the AV system in the Council Chamber at the Arena and the new conference facility at Rushcliffe Country Park both with the potential of providing good income streams.

In reference to the Operational Scorecard, the Communications and Customer Services Manager highlighted the increase in the number of calls received at the contact centre being answered within the 60 seconds target, which showed a rise from 60% to 72%. The Group were advised that the number of customers calling were continuing to fall and contact centre officers were signposting customers to the Council's online services where applicable.

The Group noted that although the Council was behind its target for bookings with increased communications and marketing there has been an increase in bookings in September and the trend is improving.

The Chairman asked a specific question in relation to Bridgford Field and whether this could be used for football parking to provide an income stream. The Communications and Customer Services Manager explained that the park is only used seasonally for cricket matches, Taste of Rushcliffe and Lark in the Park all summer events where damage to the grass and park usage is limited.

The Group asked whether the Council has any plans to introduce better digital access for customers using on-line facilities. The Communications and Customer Services Manager explained that currently the Council's webpages were not adequately accessible and that there is no appetite for an App at present. It was noted that over the past couple of weeks customers calling the contact centre were being asked why they were not using the on-line facilities to provide officers a better understanding of the barriers preventing on-line usage and provide feedback for future improvements.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Group notes:

- a) The expected revenue budget efficiency for the year of £0.831m and proposals to earmark this for cost pressures (paragraph 4.1 of the report)
- b) The capital budget efficiencies of £4.98m including re-profiling of provisions totalling £1.965m of which £0.465m to 2023/24 and £1.5m to 2023/24 (paragraph 4.7 of the report)

- c) The expected outturn position for Special Expenses to be £61k above budget (paragraph 4.5 of the report)
- d) Considers whether scrutiny is required for identifies performance exceptions

## 18 Customer Feedback Annual Report

The Service Manager – Corporate Services presented a report that summarised the customer feedback relating to both complaints and compliments received by residents during 2021/22 and provided the Group with a comparison to previous years performance.

The Group were informed that during 2021/22 the Council received 57 complaints at stage 1 of the complaints process, and it was noted that this was a slight increase compared to recent years and considered to be caused by additional pressures on Council services caused by the pandemic. The percentage of complaints escalated to stage 2 was 12 from the 57.

The Group noted the subjects for complaints were as follows:

- Planning applications/decision (5)
- Environmental Health enforcement (2)
- Environmental Health officer visit (1)
- Housing allocation (1)
- Homelessness (1)
- Council Tax (1)
- Planning officer conduct (1)

The Service Manager - Corporate Services reported that response to complaints remained consistent, as were the number of complaints responded to within target time. The Group were advised that during 2021/22 the Local Government Ombudsman |(LGO) received 10 complaints in respect of services offered by Rushcliffe Borough Council, the LGO issued decisions on 7 of the complaints, 3 were referred back to the Council for local resolution and 4 were closed after initial enquiries. The Group noted that the Council performs well in comparison to other authorities.

The Group were advised that the Council received 127 compliments about its services in 2021/22, noting this was 28 fewer than the previous year.

A question was raised in respect of compensation payments and how would they be justified. The Service Manager – Corporate Services explained that compensation would be considered if it was felt that the claimant had been disadvantaged or were 'out of pocket'. The Group were advised that the Council had not received any compensation claims.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be accepted as a true record of customer feedback in 2021/22.

## 19 Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen

The Chairman of Growth and Development Scrutiny Group advised the Group that at its last meeting on 21 September 2022 the Group were presented with

two items, Sewerage infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe and Covid 19 Business Recovery. The Group were advised that 2 external speakers attended the meeting, from the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water, both delivering presentations on sewerage and water discharge and the pressure of housing developments across the Borough. The Chairman of Growth and Development Scrutiny suggested that this item be brought back for further scrutiny next year. In respect of Covid 19 Business Recovery the Group were advised that officers had been complimented on the support provided to businesses during and after the pandemic. The Group were also advised of the UK Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), a new stream of funding that will benefit Rushcliffe residents. It was noted that the UKSPF would be brought back to Growth and Development Scrutiny Group in next year's work programme.

The Chairman of Governance Scrutiny Group advised the Group that the meeting of Governance Scrutiny on 1 November 2022 had been delayed due to the additional bank holiday in September. The Group were informed of a packed agenda including, the Internal Audit Progress Report, Streetwise Annual Report, Risk Management, Going Concern and the Council's Capital and Investment quarterly update. The Chairman of Governance Scrutiny Group reported that the internal audit had looked at risk management and the Council's project management framework. The Governance Scrutiny Group had raised the Redmond Review and the introduction of an independent member and were advised that this may come under review next year and could potentially be mandatory for audit committees. The Governance Scrutiny Group had noted that Streetwise had come back in house and business growth was steadily increasing. The Chairman of Governance scrutiny Group advised that Streetwise was being removed from the Governance Scrutiny work programme and is likely to be brought to the Corporate Overview Group in future. In respect of Risk Management, Going Concern and the Capital and Investment Strategy the Chairman of Governance Scrutiny Group advised that the reports were positive and concluded that the Council was performing well.

As the Chairman of Communities Scrutiny Group had sent his apologies the Chairman advised that at the last meeting of Communities Scrutiny Group the Group received reports on the Council's External Communications Strategy and the Customer Access Strategy.

## 20 **Feedback from Lead Officers**

There was nothing to feedback for this item.

## 21 **Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes**

The Group Considered three new Scrutiny matrices submitted by either Councillors or Officers since the last meeting of Corporate Overview Group.

In respect of the scrutiny matrix submitted by Councillor Way via a motion at Full Council in September concerning the protection of hedges and hedgerows it was agreed that this would be submitted for scrutiny by the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group at its meeting in January 2023.

The scrutiny matrix submitted by the Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property, in respect of the Fairham development, a strategic site identified for housing and employment development was approved for scrutiny as the Group felt it was important that members were kept up to date on its progress. It was agreed that this item would be submitted to Growth and Development Scrutiny Group at its meeting in March 2023.

The scrutiny matrix submitted by the Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property, in respect of a review of Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium, was also approved for scrutiny. The Group expressed how important it was for members to understand how the new facility will operate and its future plans. It was agreed that this item would be submitted to Growth and Development Scrutiny Group at its meeting in July 2023.

The Chairman of Growth and Development Scrutiny suggested two items that could be considered for scrutiny. The first one relates to new planning legislation and permitted development rights on the grounds that Councillors are not always made aware of these type of planning proposals and felt that ward members should have the opportunity to provide comment. Secondly an item relating to construction work and more robust conditions imposed at the planning approval stage. The Service Manager – Corporate Services advised the Chairman of Growth and Development Scrutiny that he would need to submit scrutiny matrices for officers to provide comment, adding that both items could provide a training opportunity for Councillors.

The Chairman suggested that an item in respect of Police priorities would be an opportunity for the Communities Scrutiny Group to consider at a future meeting and noted that a scrutiny matrix would need to be submitted.

**Work Programme 2022-23 – Corporate Overview Group**

21 February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing Items               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen</li> <li>○ Feedback from Lead Officer</li> <li>○ Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes</li> <li>○ Financial and Performance Management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rolling Items               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review of the 2019-2023 Strategic Tasks</li> <li>○ Review of the draft Business Continuity Strategy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing Items               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen</li> <li>○ Feedback from Lead Officer</li> <li>○ Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes</li> <li>○ Financial and Performance Management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rolling Items</li> <li>• Diversity Annual Report and update on the Equality and Diversity Strategy</li> </ul>
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing Items               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Feedback from Lead Officer</li> <li>○ Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes</li> <li>○ Financial and Performance Management</li> <li>● Rolling Items</li> <li>○ Health and Safety Annual Report</li> </ul>
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### **Work Programme 2022-23 – Governance Scrutiny Group**

24 November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Internal Audit Progress Report</li> <li>● Capital and Investments – 6 Month Update</li> </ul>
23 February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Internal Audit Progress Report</li> <li>● Statement of Accounts</li> <li>● Annual Audit Strategy</li> <li>● Risk Management</li> <li>● Capital and Investment Strategy Monitoring Q3</li> <li>● Capital and Investment Strategy 2023/24</li> </ul>
June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Internal Audit Progress Report</li> <li>● Internal Audit Annual Report</li> <li>● Annual Governance Statement (AGS)</li> <li>● Capital and Investment Monitoring Q4</li> <li>● Constitution Update</li> <li>● Code of Conduct</li> <li>● External Audit Annual Plan</li> <li>● Annual audit Letter and Value for Money Conclusion</li> </ul>
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Internal Audit Progress Report</li> <li>● Risk Management</li> <li>● Going Concern</li> <li>● Capital and Investment Outturn 2022/23</li> <li>● Capital and Investment Monitoring Q1</li> </ul>

### **Work Programme 2022-23 – Growth and Development Scrutiny Group**

4 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)</li> <li>● Hedges and Hedgerows within the Borough</li> </ul>
8 March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An Update on the Fairham Development</li> <li>●</li> </ul>
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A Review of Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium</li> <li>●</li> </ul>
September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●</li> </ul>

### **Work Programme 2022-23 – Communities Scrutiny Group**

19 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establishment of a Youth Council</li> <li>● Corporate Enforcement Policy</li> </ul>
16 March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Carbon Management Plan</li> <li>● Environment Policy</li> </ul>
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●</li> </ul>
October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●</li> </ul>

The meeting closed at 8.08 pm.

CHAIRMAN

DRAFT