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Our reference:
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Date: Monday, 19 December 2022

To all Members of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group will be held on Wednesday, 4 January 2023 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

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Yours sincerely



Gemma Dennis
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2022 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Pages 9 - 26)
Report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth
5. Hedges and Hedgerows within the Borough (Pages 27 - 34)
Report of the Director - Neighbourhoods
6. Work Programme (Pages 35 - 36)
Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services



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Membership

Chairman: Councillor N Clarke

Vice-Chairman: Councillor J Cottee

Councillors: M Barney, R Butler, M Gaunt, A Phillips, V Price, J Stockwood and L Way

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**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY GROUP
WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2022**

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

PRESENT:

Councillors N Clarke (Chairman), M Barney, R Butler, A Phillips, V Price,
J Stockwood, K Beardsall and L Way

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cooper - Sustainable Places Team Leader, Environment Agency
Chris Bramley – Strategic Catchment Planning, Severn Trent

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

C Evans

Service Manager - Economic Growth
and Property

T Coop

Democratic Services Officer

C Saxton

Economic Growth Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors J Cottee

5 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest reported.

6 Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 July 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2022 were approved as a true
record and were signed by the Chairman.

7 Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe

The Chairman reminded the Group that the Scrutiny Matrix submitted specified
that Councillors wanted to understand the situation in Rushcliffe regarding the
sewerage infrastructure and any unlawful discharges.

Richard Cooper, Sustainable Places Team Leader at the Environment Agency
delivered a presentation outlining planning and wastewater from the
perspective of the Environment Agency.

Mr Cooper advised the Group that in respect of strategic planning the
Environment Agency would normally provide comment on documents that form
part of a local plan, including Water Cycle Strategy, Strategic Flood risk
Assessments, Surface Water Management Plans, Strategic Infrastructure
Plans, Environmental or Green Infrastructure Study, Strategic Housing and
Employment Land Availability Assessments as well as main planning
documents (Local Plans). Mr Cooper advised that in most cases such

comments would be in the line of:

- All development should connect to the existing foul drainage network
- Development will need to ensure there's available capacity within;
 - a) The receiving sewerage network; and
 - b) The sewage treatment works
- Developers and the Local Planning Authority should confirm available capacity with the water company prior to allocating sites
- Development and Growth should not impact on the quality of watercourses in the Borough

It was noted that in respect of developmental planning the Environment agency would respond to a major development (10 or more dwellings) or where a proposal is not to connect to mains drainage.

Mr Cooper provided the drainage hierarchy as follows:

1. Infiltration to ground
2. Discharge to surface waterbody
3. Discharge to surface water sewer/highway drain or other
4. To a combined sewer

The group were provided with an explanation of how the sewerage system works, from wastewater (foul) being flushed away from properties, flowing to a local wastewater treatment works (WWTW), to then arriving for treatment before being discharged back into the watercourse. It was noted that in older systems both foul and surface water use the same pipe (combined system) and newer systems have separate pipes. However, whilst new housing schemes will have separate systems, it does not mean the system further downstream is separate.

In respect of rainwater some WWTW have storm tanks that provide storage when the incoming flow is greater than the capacity to treat. However, if the storm tanks are full, then to prevent the treatment works being flooded or the foul water backing up, the wastewater is allowed to spill. If pumping stations fail or breakdown then these too are allowed to spill. It was noted that such spills are monitored by the Government.

Mr Cooper explained that the Environment Agency administrates and regulates wastewater spills under the Environmental Permitting Regulations, adding that there is no limit on how often a storm overflow operates providing it is compliant with the permit. It was noted that the WWTW at Cotgrave has closed with the Radcliffe on Trent WWTW now receiving their sewage, adding that discharges are made directly into the River Trent. Mr Cooper advised that the WWTW at Radcliffe on Trent does have limits on when it should overflow but not on frequency and these occurrences are monitored.

Mr Cooper added that when a Combined Sewer Overflow spills above the Storm Overflow assessment Framework threshold this will be investigated by Severn Trent Water including the Combined Sewer Overflow at Radcliffe on Trent. It was noted that Severn Trent Water has a good performance on discharge permit compliance. In addition, the new Environment Act 2021 has

introduced a Storm Overflow Reduction Plan that will drive further improvement to reduce the number of spill events and the focus for the Environment Agency is to make sure everything that should be treated is treated and that sewage flows are not by-passing a storm overflow.

Chris Bramley, Strategic Catchment Planning for Severn Trent provided the Group with an overview of how Severn Trent identifies and understands the risks associated with development and what is being done to accommodate growth within Rushcliffe.

Mr Bramley informed the Group that developers have the right to connect to the sewerage system and as a water authority, Severn Trent is not able to refuse connection due to lack of capacity. Mr Bramley explained that Severn Trent engages with the Local Planning Authority at various stages of the Local Plan development process and that planning applications are reviewed by their Networks solutions department and where assessments indicate a risk these would be reviewed by the Asset Protection Department before advising on what conditions may be required or where schemes to provide capacity for growth are needed. It was noted that new schemes are assessed on a priority basis across the Severn Trent Region and are funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy charges (CIL).

Mr Bramley advised that Severn Trent operates a 5 Gate process in respect of promoting and delivering schemes:

- Gate 1 - High level assessment of risk to ensure that investment is allocated to the most appropriate locations
 - Gate 2 - Project feasibility, where a more detailed understanding of the risks and the concept solutions are developed – this stage involves surveys, flow analysis, costs and benefits of the scheme
 - Gate 3 - detailed design phase, where final solution is developed
 - Gate 4 - Delivery stage during which the scheme is completed
 - Gate 5 - Scheme review where the project delivered meets its set objectives
- Mr Bramley provided an illustration of Rushcliffe's Local Plan sites and some additional sites and the stage in the above process each is at.

Mr Bramley continued his presentation advising the Group of Severn Trent's draft Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan, which sets out how the water authority will extend and maintain a robust and resilient drainage and wastewater system. Mr Bramley explained the Plan provides greater transparency of current and future risks and consistency across the water industry with emphasis on wastewater and working collaboratively with stakeholders to mitigate future pressures associated with climate change, population growth and urbanisation.

Mr Bramley provided a timeline of objectives over the next few years including:

- Protection of river quality - by reducing storm overflow spills and upgrading storm overflows, in order that none of the drainage operations cause Reasons for Not Achieving Good Status (RNAGs) for rivers.
- Make areas more flood resilient – by upgrading surface water drainage,

including improved engineering methods to separate surface water and nature-based solutions.

- Improve Capacity of our Wastewater treatment – by upgrading wastewater treatment works and processes to improve capacity

The Group noted that the consultation period for the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan runs until 30 September 2022, with the final plan due to be published in December 2022.

Councillors commented on the Local Plan and Rushcliffe having a 30% increase in population due to housing development and reported issues in respect of flooding and sewerage spills at East Leake and Sutton Bonington. Councillors asked whether more robust planning conditions would help alleviate and prevent spills in future.

Councillors also commented on the closure of the WWTW at Cotgrave and whether the WWTW at Radcliffe is able to cope with the extra capacity.

Mr Bramley explained that there has been some investigation work at Sutton Bonington and at East Leake where issues were not picked up due to windfall developments, Mr Bramley advised that a new scheme was coming forward at Kingston Brooke which will alleviate some of the issues at East Leake.

Mr Cooper informed the Group that new developments are treated appropriately in respect of planning and planning conditions and reminded Councillors that Severn Trent cannot refuse connection to the water system for any new developments, and explained that attenuation areas and tanks are robust enough for most new developments. Mr Cooper added that both Severn Trent and the Environment Agency have set rules to follow and suggested that local authorities can influence what is agreed at the Strategic Local Plan stage.

Councillors raised concerns in respect of surface water flooding and the water authority and Environment Agency relationships with the local flood authority. Councillors also commented on where combined sewers were located and whether residents have access to such information. Mr Bramley advised that regular liaison meetings do take place and planning is often discussed, in respect of improvements and budget streams the Draft Wastewater Management Plan once adopted, would assist with long term schemes coming forward and allow for extra growth in the system. With regard to information on combined sewers, Mr Cooper advised that it is difficult to provide data that can be easily accessed as there are a number of organisations involved. Councillors noted this highlighted a problem in respect of public access to information and being able to report areas of concern and flood occurrences.

Councillors asked Mr Cooper from an environment view, how effective were the permits and conditions issued to Severn Trent and how are environmental breaches monitored and reported. Mr Cooper explained that monitoring is taking place within a wider framework directive and that there is an element of self-regulation for water authorities within the parameters of their permits. It was noted that Severn Trent report breaches to the Environment Agency.

With regards to funding streams for additional improvements to the system the Chairman asked whether Severn Trent can request funding contributions from the developer. Mr Bramley explained that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is charged to the developer, it is then up to the local authority how the CIL money is spent.

The Chairman suggested that this item be brought back to a future meeting of Growth and development scrutiny and that in the meantime the Council would improve its relationships with agencies to mitigate the impact of flooding events.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Considered the key lines of enquiry contained in the scrutiny matrix and asked questions of the expert speakers
- b) Requested that further scrutiny, related to sewerage infrastructure and discharge be brought back to a future meeting of this committee.

8 **Covid-19 Business Recovery Update**

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property and the Economic Growth Officer delivered a presentation in respect of Covid-19 Business Recovery, which provided the Group with an update on the work being done to support businesses to recover from the impact of the Covid pandemic.

The Group were provided with statistical data in respect of unemployment claims, job vacancies and business closures and were advised that the D2N2 LEP had provided an analysis of Rushcliffe's labour market demands, which showed there were 800 unique jobs advertised between January and July 2022.

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property explained that during the pandemic, the Economic Growth Team had monitored the vacancy rates in our main towns and villages and reported that the majority of the town centres had very few or no empty units, with only a couple in West Bridgford, Bingham and Radcliffe on Trent. It was noted that in August the occupancy level at Council owned industrial units was at 100% and the new yet to be opened Bingham Enterprise Centre already had four interested parties.

The Economic Growth Officer informed the Group of some of the activities that had been delivered using the Welcome Back Funding from the European Regional Development Fund to support the safe reopening of our town centres.

Some of this funding went to the following activities:

- The appointment of a temporary town centre consultant from September 2021 to June 2022.
- Enhanced and additional events in West Bridgford and some of the larger towns and villages
- Improvements to the visual appearance of town centres
- Promotion of job vacancies on the Council's Social Media platforms

- Ongoing communications campaigns e.g. Shop Local Shop Safe
- Exploring opportunities for Digital promotion of high streets e.g. West Bridgford Way
- Rushcliffe Business Partnership networking events in West Bridgford and Ruddington
- Continue to build on relationships with high street businesses – retail forums and WhatsApp groups
- Rushcliffe Big Business Carbon Club established to encourage larger businesses to act as champions to deliver a greener economic recovery

It was noted that the Economic Growth Team work closely with external agencies to sign post businesses and tailor support as required, primarily the D2N2 Growth Hub offering a range of business support and advice.

The Economic Growth Officer informed the Group of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and Rushcliffe's allocation of £2,571,46 to be spent over 3 years (2022/23 to 2024/25) as follows:

2022/23 - £312,071
 2023/24 - £624,141
 2024/25 - £1,635,250

The Economic Growth Officer advised the Group that an investment plan had been submitted on 1 August and the funding can be used from April 2022 to support activities as prescribed within the investment support priorities of the UKSPF which are, Community and Place, Business Support and People and Skills (People and Skills from 2024/25).

It was noted that lead local authorities across Nottinghamshire are encouraged to work with local partners to deliver on the UK Governments wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering the levelling up objectives. The primary goal of the UKSPF being to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK.

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property advised that the Council's desires are focussed on local projects that support the delivery of the Council's corporate plan priorities:

- Quality of Life
- Efficient Services
- Sustainable Growth
- The Environment to Rushcliffe

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property informed the Group of the recently announced Rural England Prosperity Funding and the allocation for Rushcliffe of £596,193 from April 2023 to March 2025. It was explained that this fund provides capital funding to support new and existing rural businesses and to support new and improved community infrastructure. It was noted that this fund was for projects in rural areas and that local rural partners would be consulted to deliver the fund.

The Group were advised that the Economic Growth Team have five key areas

of focus over the coming months to ensure ongoing support is provided for local businesses.

These are:

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- Rushcliffe Business Partnership
- Business Support – Chapel Lane
- High Street Support
- Growth Boards

The Group commended officers on their continued support to local businesses. However, it was felt that the UK was no longer in a pandemic and that moving forward the Council should be responding to the economic climate and growth, including rural communities, start-up businesses, industrial land allocations and promoting these areas to encourage businesses to provide local jobs for a local economy.

The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property explained that much of what had been suggested would be picked up by the UKSPF work. In addition, it was noted that the six strategic sites, including industrial allocations will be promoted when appropriate.

Councillors asked specific questions relating to the Community and Place investment priority and whether this would include some community involvement. The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property explained that the Leader of the Council was promoting the funding opportunities through the Town and Parish Council Forum. The Chairman explained that the Rural Fund had only recently been announced and that it was important to priorities what is relevant to Rushcliffe and what provides the best value for money.

Councillors suggested that transparency is required in respect to funding allocations and decisions, and that information needs to be communicated to Councillors and the Business Community so they are kept informed of the projects and objectives for delivering the funding. The Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property advised that stakeholders would be involved.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Growth and Development Scrutiny Group endorse the proposed future activity and identified and supports the rural economy
- b) The Group recognises and compliments the efforts of officers supporting local businesses

9 **Work Programme**

The Chairman highlighted the absence of new scrutiny items and suggested that Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe be brought back to a future meeting in the new year. He also asked the Group to consider new scrutiny items that could be put forward to the Corporate Overview Group using the Council's Scrutiny Matrix.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Group consider its Work Programme and that the following items for scrutiny were agreed.

4 January 2023

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- Work Programme

8 March 2023

- Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe (to be approved)
- Work Programme

ACTIONS – 21 September 2022

Minute No	Action	Officer Responsible
7	Councillors requested a visit to the Environment Agencies fish breeding farm at Calverton	Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property
7	A letter on behalf of the Chairman be sent to the Environment Agency and Severn Trent to establish whether both organisations have information available for residents to report incidents and to establish an action plan for preventative measures in respect of new developments to assist Officers and Councillors when applying condition to planning applications	Service Manager – Economic Growth and Property

The meeting closed at 9.22 pm.

CHAIRMAN



Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 4 January 2023

UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Fund

Report of the Director Development and Growth

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) are part of UK government's Levelling Up agenda, replacing the previous European Structural Investment Fund. The primary goal of UKSPF and REPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. This aligns with the Levelling Up White Paper mission, particularly: 'By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing'.
- 1.2. As the Council have received an allocation of UKSPF and REPF, it is important that Councillors are able to input into plans for the allocation of the funding. This report provides an update on spend in year one and draft proposals for year two for members of the Scrutiny Group to comment on.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Review proposals for year two and make suggestions for additional priorities and projects to support
- b) Review the stakeholder engagement plan and identify any additional groups to engage with or ways to engage.

3. Supporting Information

Background

- 3.1. Funding has been allocated to areas rather than there being a competition and Rushcliffe Borough Council's allocation is £3,167,655 for three years (2022/23 to 2024/25) with all spend to be complete by March 2025. All areas have received UKSPF but not all have received REPF, as this is targeted at more rural Council areas (three districts in Nottinghamshire have been allocated REPF: Rushcliffe, Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood). The Government has allocated the funding across the three years as follows:

- 2022/23 - £312,071
 - 2023/24 - £773,189 (includes £149,048 of REPF)
 - 2024/25 - £2,082,395 (includes £447,145 of REPF).
- 3.2. UKSPF and REPF are split into investment priorities with a list of interventions sitting underneath (see Appendix A for full list of interventions) that areas can choose to allocate funding to. The three investment priorities are:
- Communities and place
 - Supporting local business
 - People and skills (this is an investment priority for UKSPF only, not REPF).
- 3.3. The Fund will focus on communities and place and local business interventions in 2022/23 and 2023/24, alongside numeracy skills support through the Multiply adult numeracy programme (County Council led). UKSPF investment to support people and skills will follow from 2024/25.
- 3.4. REPF has been more recently announced by Government and is a top up to UKSPF to help address the extra needs and challenges facing rural areas. It succeeds European funding from LEADER¹ which was part of the rural development programme. The allocations made have been based on rural population, rural business and productivity and the importance of farming in each authority area. The Rural Fund provides capital funding to:
- support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams
 - support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy.
- 3.5. UKSPF is a mix of capital and revenue funding whereas the REPF is capital funding only. To secure funding the Council had to submit an investment plan for UKSPF which set out allocations of funding over the three years against the interventions. This is an indicative plan and funding was allocated against interventions not specific projects. This was submitted on 1 August 2022. The Council then had to submit an addendum to this plan for the REPF which followed a similar process; this was submitted on 30 November 2022.
- 3.6. As set out in a report to Cabinet in July 2022, in addition to the Government's objectives it is important for the Council to identify and agree the local principles that will apply for the allocation of funding. The identified principles are:
- The overarching principle is for alignment with the Government's levelling up objectives and the UKSPF objectives

¹ The acronym 'LEADER' derives from the French phrase "Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale" which means, 'Links between activities for the development of rural economy'.

- Initiatives must demonstrate how they contribute towards supporting delivery of the Council's corporate priorities:
 - Quality of life
 - Efficient services
 - Sustainable growth
 - The environment.
 - Supporting communities and businesses across the Rushcliffe, reflecting the diverse needs of the whole Borough
 - Projects need to demonstrate they are deliverable within the required timeframes, and this is particularly important in year one of the funding where timescales are tight
 - Projects will need to demonstrate value for money which may include requirements for match funding where appropriate
 - Projects should add value and not duplicate other support available
 - Projects should be able to demonstrate the need for the chosen intervention and what outputs and outcomes will be delivered.
- 3.7. Government have stated that 4% of the total UKSPF allocation (this only applies to UKSPF and not REPF) can be used to support the management and monitoring requirements. It has been agreed therefore that the Council will recruit a Project Implementation Officer to work with teams across the Council and external stakeholders to support the delivery of projects. Officers are exploring the opportunity to share this post with Broxtowe Borough Council.
- 3.8. Government have also encouraged areas to work with neighbouring local authorities to jointly commission projects, particularly on the business support and people and skills priorities. UKSPF and REPF replace the ESIF which was allocated by the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership which covers Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and so previous [?] business support and employment and skills programmes have been delivered across this geography. Officers are working closely with colleagues from across Nottinghamshire to see what could be commissioned jointly and a specification for business support has been produced.

Year One projects

- 3.9. As set out above the priority for projects to be delivered in year one is deliverability as there is a short timescale available to spend the funding. Proposals for year one spend were agreed by Cabinet in July 2022. There have been some changes to the projects however due to deliverability of the projects and restrictions on the funding.
- 3.10. The following is a comprehensive list of projects that have been allocated funding in year one, some has already been spent and some is just allocated at this time, but all recipients of funding understand the requirement to spend by the end of March 2023.
- Benches and awning/shelter at Rushcliffe Country Park to further enhance the offer there

- Community support delivered across Rushcliffe through workshops and one to one advice covering a range of topics including, cost of living, energy efficiency, employment support and digital inclusion
- Energy audit of some of the Council's operational properties to identify areas for future investment to reduce the Council's carbon footprint
- Reed clearance at Grantham canal to enable further work to be undertaken to help with water retention
- A business support digital tool kit to give businesses access to support and advice online including webinars and one to one advice
- Additional Police patrols for a period of 6 weeks around Ratcliffe on Soar to deal with the issue of car cruising
- Improvements to the electricity in the bollards at Bingham Market Place
- Required feasibility studies to explore the opportunity for a long stay car park in Bingham
- Central Avenue, West Bridgford accessibility study.

Proposals for year two

- 3.11. Plans for year two of UKSPF and the first year of REPF are currently being developed and so there is an opportunity for Councillors to provide input into proposals and suggest any additional areas of focus.
- 3.12. The proposal for REPF, which is capital funding only, is to split the money between grants for community groups and grants for businesses. In year one of REPF there is an indicative allocation of £149,048, this would be split as follows:
- Grant pot for businesses: £80,000 which could support:
 - Diversification projects
 - Net zero infrastructure
 - Rural business hubs
 - Visitor economy
 - Grant pot for community projects: £69,000 which could support:
 - Infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups
 - Creation/improvement to green spaces
 - Active travel
 - Cultural, historic and heritage institutions and activities.
- 3.13. The eligibility criteria and application process for both of these grant funding allocations will be developed by officers ready for launching in late February/early March. This will enable projects to submit applications and be ready to start in the new financial year.
- 3.14. Based on feedback from stakeholders, we would require match funding against both community and business grants and the recommendation was a 60/40 split (60% from business or community group). This is not finalised yet however so it could change and possibly operate flexibly to reflect the project and its total value.
- 3.15. UKSPF ideas for projects in year two include:

- Improvements in town centres – Bingham Market place and West Bridgford
- Capital Grants for neighbourhood infrastructure projects e.g. community centres, community support, active travel, green spaces, play areas etc.
- Improvements to green / blue spaces eg Compton Acres watercourse and further Grantham Canal works
- Projects focussing on Heritage assets
- Tourism / inward investment initiatives
- Business support package, both joint commissioning across N2 and local initiatives including grants
- Projects supporting decarbonisation
- Continued support with cost of living.

Communication and engagement

- 3.16. Government have identified that a Partnership Board is required to support delivery of UKSPF and REPF. As the Council already have a Strategic Growth Board it has been agreed that this will act as the Partnership Board and for meetings which focus solely on UKSPF and REPF additional attendees will be invited to join as required.
- 3.17. In addition to this, the Council is keen to engage with a range of stakeholders and has therefore produced a communication and engagement plan (Appendix B). This sets out the engagement activity that is planned for the three years of the funding.

4. Risks and Uncertainties

- 4.1. There is a risk that funding will not be spent/allocated within the required timescales. There is a project management framework that is supporting delivery of UKSPF and REPF and additional resources are being recruited to try and avoid this. Government have also indicated there will be some flexibility in the allocations for each year.
- 4.2. There is a risk that groups and businesses will not have the capacity to apply for any grant funding that is available. Officers from the Council will be able to support groups and additional resources are being planned to provide business and community support from UKSPF allocation.
- 4.3. There is a risk that existing business support and people and skills provision (funded by ESIF) will end before an alternative option is available. Officers from the Council are working with colleagues from across Nottinghamshire to, where possible, jointly commission new programmes of support to meet the needs of communities and businesses across the area.

5. Implications

5.1. Financial Implications

5.1.1. UKSPF and REPF will be paid at the start of each financial year or on sign off of investment plans for year one. As set out above the breakdown of funding over the three years is as follows:

- 2022/23 - £312,071
- 2023/24 - £773,189 (includes £149,048 of REPF)
- 2024/25 - £2,082,395 (includes £447,145 of REPF).

5.1.2. Government has advised that Local Authorities can allocate up to 4% of the UKSPF allocation only over the three years to management/administration costs. For Rushcliffe this amounts to £102,858 and some of this will be used to recruit a new Project Implementation Officer and the remainder will be offset against existing staff costs.

5.1.3. All activity outlined will be covered by the Borough Council's allocation of UKSPF and REPF. A dedicated cost code has been set up to support monitoring and reporting on spend. Adjustments to budgets and the capital programme will be made as required over the three years.

5.2. Legal Implications

5.2.1. There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.3. Equalities Implications

5.3.1. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the delivery of UKSPF and REPF. As outlined above one of the principles the Council has agreed for the funding is that it should support businesses and communities across the Borough, reflecting the diverse needs of the area.

5.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

5.4.1. There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

6. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	UKSPF is part of Government Levelling Up agenda and its primary goal is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK.
Efficient Services	There is no contribution from the UKSPF or REPF initiatives towards this corporate priority.
Sustainable Growth	The UKSPF and REPF will support businesses across the Borough with a range of opportunities across the life of the funding.

The Environment	The Environment and sustainability are key areas of focus for UKSPF and REPF and Rushcliffe's investment plan identified funding to support communities and businesses. Including support on how to reach net zero and grants to make required improvements e.g., to buildings.
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7. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Review proposals for year two and make suggestions for additional priorities and projects to support
- b) Review the stakeholder engagement plan and identify any additional groups to engage with or ways to engage.

For more information contact:	Leanne Ashmore Director of Development and Economic Growth LAshmore@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	UKSPF report to Cabinet July 2022
List of appendices:	Appendix A - UKSPF and REPF interventions Appendix B - Stakeholder engagement plan

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UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funding

UKSPF Interventions:

Communities and place

Objectives:

- Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.
- Building resilient, safe and healthy neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

Interventions

Intervention
E1: Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets, including better accessibility for disabled people, including capital spend and running costs.
E2: Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects including those that increase communities' resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding. This could cover capital spend and running costs.
E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces.
E4: Enhanced support for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer.
E5: Design and management of the built and landscaped environment to 'design out crime'.
E6: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.
E7: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area.
E8: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore the local area.
E9: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.
E10: Funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues; to bring people together.
E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.
E12: Investment in community engagement schemes to support community involvement in decision making in local regeneration.
E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, and combat fuel poverty and climate change.
E14: Funding to support relevant feasibility studies.

E15: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities.

Supporting local business

Objectives:

- Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions, and range from support for starting businesses to visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities.
- Promoting networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.
- Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports.

Interventions

Intervention
E16: Investment in open markets and improvements to town centre retail and service sector infrastructure, with wrap around support for small businesses.
E17: Funding for the development and promotion (both trade and consumer) of the visitor economy, such as local attractions, trails, tours and tourism products more generally.
E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption: Providing tailored expert advice, matched grants and leadership training to enable manufacturing SMEs to adopt industrial digital technology solutions including artificial intelligence; robotics and autonomous systems; additive manufacturing; industrial internet of things; virtual reality; data analytics. The support is proven to leverage high levels of private investment into technologies that drive growth, productivity, efficiency and resilience in manufacturing.
E19: Increasing investment in research and development at the local level. Investment to support the diffusion of innovation knowledge and activities. Support the commercialisation of ideas, encouraging collaboration and accelerating the path to market so that more ideas translate into industrial and commercial practices.
E20: Research and development grants supporting the development of innovative products and services.
E21: Funding for the development and support of appropriate innovation infrastructure at the local level.
E22: Investing in enterprise infrastructure and employment/innovation site development projects. This can help to unlock site development projects which will support growth in places.
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems, and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks.

E24: Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs, business support offers, 'incubators' and 'accelerators' for local enterprise (including social enterprise) which can support entrepreneurs and start-ups through the early stages of development and growth by offering a combination of services including account management, advice, resources, training, coaching, mentorship and access to workspace.
E25: Grants to help places bid for and host international business events and conferences that support wider local growth sectors.
E26: Support for growing the local social economy, including community businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises.
E27: Funding to develop angel investor networks nationwide.
E28: Export Grants to support businesses to grow their overseas trading, supporting local employment.
E29: Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy. Taking a whole systems approach to invest in infrastructure to deliver effective decarbonisation across energy, buildings and transport and beyond, in line with our legally binding climate target. Maximising existing or emerging local strengths in low carbon technologies, goods and services to take advantage of the growing global opportunity.
E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth, particularly in areas of higher unemployment.
E31: Funding to support relevant feasibility studies.
E32: Investment in resilience infrastructure and nature based solutions that protect local businesses and community areas from natural hazards including flooding and coastal erosion.

People and skills

Objectives:

- Boosting core skills and support adults to progress in work, by targeting adults with no or low level qualifications and skills in maths, and upskill the working population, yielding personal and societal economic impact, and by encouraging innovative approaches to reducing adult learning barriers.
- Reducing levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need. Investment should facilitate the join-up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one keyworker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers.
 - Expected cohorts include, but are not limited to people aged over 50, people with a disability and health condition, women, people from an ethnic minority, young people not in education, employment or training and people with multiple complex needs (homeless, care leavers, ex/ offenders, people with substance abuse problems and victims of domestic violence).
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support, including access to basic skills.
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. This should be supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.

Interventions

Interventions
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps
E34: Courses including basic skills (digital, English, maths (via Multiply) and ESOL), and life skills and career skills provision for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget or wrap around support detailed above. Supplemented by financial support for learners to enrol onto courses and complete qualifications.
E35: Activities such as enrichment and volunteering to improve opportunities and promote wellbeing.
E36: Intervention to increase levels of digital inclusion, with a focus on essential digital skills, communicating the benefits of getting (safely) online, and in-community support to provide users with the confidence and trust to stay online.
E37: Tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses. This includes supporting the retention of groups who are likely to leave the labour market early.
E38: Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that is not being met through other provision.
E39: Green skills courses targeted around ensuring we have the skilled workforce to achieve the government's net zero and wider environmental ambitions.
E40: Retraining support for those in high carbon sectors.
E41: Funding to support local digital skills.

Rural England Prosperity Funding Interventions

The Rural Fund objectives sit within the UKSPF investment priorities for - Supporting Local Business and Community and Place. The Rural Fund provides capital funding to:

- support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams
- support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy

Interventions

- Funding (capital grants) for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas. Including capital funding for net zero infrastructure for rural businesses, and diversification of farm businesses outside of agriculture to encourage start up, expansion or scale up of these businesses where this involves converting farm buildings into other commercial or business uses. *(new intervention)*
- Funding (capital grants) for growing the local social economy and supporting innovation. This includes: • community businesses • cooperatives and social enterprises • research and development sites *(This corresponds to UKSPF intervention)*
- Funding (capital grants) for the development and promotion (both trade and consumer) of the visitor economy, such as: • local attractions • trails • tourism products more generally *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*
- Funding (capital grants) for investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities. *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*
- Funding (capital grants) for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*
- Funding (capital grants) for creation of and improvements to local rural green spaces. *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*
- Funding (capital grants) for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer. *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*
- Funding (capital grants) for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities. *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*
- Funding (capital grants) for active travel enhancements in the local area. *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*
- Funding (capital grants) for rural circular economy projects. *(new intervention)*
- Funding (capital grants) for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places. *(this corresponds to UKSPF indicator)*

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UKSPF and REPF stakeholder engagement plan

Activity	Stakeholders	Timeline / frequency	Purpose/Target outcome
Officer meetings	RBC Officers, who are responsible for programme management (Economic Growth Team) and project delivery (Property, Community development and others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme management review fortnightly • Project review monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor programme performance, expenditure • To monitor project delivery, outcomes and outputs. • Scoping and planning for projects, eligibility assessments and procurement compliance
Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees	RBC Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually to Growth and Development Scrutiny • As required to Cabinet for decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update on progress • To gain agreement on future plans and initiatives • To make decisions as required.
All RBC Councillors session	All RBC Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aiming to do in early 2023 and again in early 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an overview of REPF and UKSPF and invite suggestions for priorities and projects
EMT updates	EMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update on proposals / progress
Rural Stakeholders – Teams Call	RCAN RCVS CLA NFU CPRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial meeting held in November to help inform REPF addendum • Follow up meetings as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an overview of REPF. • To hear directly from rural stakeholders about the specific issues facing our rural communities and to get a better understanding of where REPF could have maximum impact.
Town and Parish Forum	Clerks and Chairs only	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an overview of REPF and UKSPF and invite suggestions for priorities and projects
Strategic Growth Board – extended meeting	Extended Strategic Growth Board membership, to include additional stakeholders – University of	Initial consultation meeting July 2022, then Biannually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update the Strategic Growth Board in its capacity as the Partnership Board responsible for overseeing expenditure of UKSPF and REPF.

Activity	Stakeholders	Timeline / frequency	Purpose/Target outcome
	<p>Nottingham, Nottingham Trent University, RCAN, RBP, RCVS, Trent Bridge Community Trust, rep from big business community.</p> <p>Extended membership to be flexible depending on projects under discussion.</p>		
Rushcliffe Business Partnership Steering Group meeting	RBP Steering Group members	Biannually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update on activity, particularly relating to the theme 'Supporting Local Business' • To hear directly from businesses about the specific issues facing our small business communities and to get a better understanding of how funding could have maximum impact
Regional Collaboration	<p>Regional partners e.g. Nottinghamshire County Council, District and Borough Councils.</p> <p>Subgroups of relevant officers to focus on activity within each investment priority: communities and place, business support and people and skills.</p>	Currently monthly, then as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure we are exploring areas where we can work together and jointly commission delivery for greater impact or more effective working. • This activity will feed into the N2 Economic Prosperity Committee •
Wider public communication			
Rushcliffe Reports	Rushcliffe residents and businesses	Possibly quarterly subject to space and projects to feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update on projects, with a focus on outcomes/outputs.
Website	All stakeholders, with a particular emphasis on	Page on website to give overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide information about UKSPF and REPF.

Activity	Stakeholders	Timeline / frequency	Purpose/Target outcome
	groups looking to access funding.	Updated regularly with project updates/support available, grants and calls for quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide interested parties with information when we launch calls for projects e.g. capital grant pot for community groups – outline what they can and can't apply for, how much, what outputs/outcomes etc
Social media	Rushcliffe residents and businesses	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote grants and support available

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Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 4 January 2023

Hedges and Hedgerows within the Borough

Report of the Executive Manager Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report is to provide Councillors with an overview of the legal and policy framework for the protection and enhancement of hedgerows. It also provides insight into what will be required as a part of Government's mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain, including monitoring and reporting.
- 1.2. In addition, the report outlines the information that is available for residents and stakeholders to provide advice on the maintenance and management of hedgerows. Opportunities for how this could be improved are provided but the Group is asked to provide feedback on this and additional ideas.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Request a future Scrutiny item to be presented with details of requirements for methodology for the monitoring and reporting of Biodiversity Net Gain.
- b) Review current advice about the management and maintenance of hedges and suggest additional promotion opportunities and groups to engage with.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The Council will soon have a requirement to report on bio-diversity net gain to demonstrate that all new developments in Rushcliffe are delivering their required 10%. The methodology for this reporting is yet to be outlined in detail by Government but a further report on this will be presented to scrutiny when this information is available.
- 3.2. It is important that Councillors understand the current legal and policy framework and how this will change over the coming year.

4. Supporting Information

Policy Framework

- 4.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council has a strategic aim to protect hedges within the Borough and to increase the hedgerow network by 40% by 2050. It is therefore important for Councillors to understand the current policy and legal framework and how this is proposed to change in 2023.
- 4.2. The Government's Environment White Paper 2011 - The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature and National Planning Policy Framework require land-use plans create a resilient and coherent ecological network of designated and non-designated habitats. These networks are those which, by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as rivers with their banks and hedgerow field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (water bodies, grassland sites and woodland) are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. It is important that the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity and the wider ecological network is considered as part of the design of proposed development schemes from the outset.
- 4.3. It is important to understand what we mean by hedgerow. DEFRA in its publication (2007) Hedgerow Survey Handbook defines a hedgerow as:

A hedgerow is defined as any boundary line of trees or shrubs over 20m long and less than 5m wide at the base, provided that at one time the trees or shrubs were more or less continuous. It includes an earth bank or wall only where such a feature occurs in association with a line of trees or shrubs. This includes 'classic' shrubby hedgerows, lines of trees, shrubby hedgerows with trees and very gappy hedgerows (where each shrubby section may be less than 20m long, but the gaps are less than 20m).

- 4.4. Rushcliffe Borough Council's Cabinet adopted the latest version of the Nature Conservation Strategy in February 2021. This is a partnership document that sets out nature conservation aspirations in Rushcliffe and covers the period of 2021 to 2025.
- 4.5. Rushcliffe's Nature Conservation Strategy is a material consideration within the Local Plan. Local Plan part 2 section 12.26 states:

"Policies in this Local Plan Part 2 regarding nature conservation should be read alongside those policies in the Core Strategy and other policies within this plan which seek to protect and enhance the green infrastructure network and Rushcliffe's Nature Conservation Strategy. Where appropriate, developments should take all opportunities to achieve net-gains in biodiversity, improve the ecological network and provide multi-function and accessible Green Infrastructure".

- 4.6. The Nature Conservation Strategy notes that hedgerows "both provide useful habitat and link wildlife sites" and sets out that the partners (including the Council) will seek to: Promote conservation, replanting and appropriate management of hedgerows using the Hedgerow Regulations as appropriate. Additionally, hedgerows are identified as an important aspect of nature

recovery and landscape feature and, for most landscapes, the Strategy seeks to protect, restore and develop hedgerows.

- 4.7. Hedgerows are also identified in the Strategy as useful carbon sinks, helping to address climate change when well managed. It also recommends shrub and hedgerow species to be used when planting hedgerows in Rushcliffe.
- 4.8. The Rushcliffe Local Plan seeks to improve and increase biodiversity through new development, including priority habitats such as hedgerows. This is achieved through Core Strategy policy 17 on biodiversity and several policies contained within Local Plan Part 2. Policy 38 is of particular relevance as it requires, where appropriate, that all developments will be expected to preserve, restore and re-create priority habitats and the protection and recovery of priority species in order to achieve net gains in biodiversity.
- 4.9. The Borough's biodiversity assets include woodlands, grasslands, hedgerows, wetlands and watercourses. These provide wildlife corridors and stepping stones which support the movement of species, and sustain designated and non-designated conservation sites and habitats. Ensuring these habitats are bigger, better and more joined up and not isolated is one of the most important factors in maintaining biodiversity.
- 4.10. Development should be appropriately designed to facilitate the emergence of new habitats through the creation of links between habitat areas and open spaces, for example hedgerow, shelter belts and drainage ditches. Together, these provide a network of green spaces which serve to reconnect isolated sites and facilitate species movement.
- 4.11. The priority habitats within Rushcliffe are identified within the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Plan, Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy and Rushcliffe Biodiversity Opportunity Report. The action plan identifies hedgerows, woodlands (coniferous and broad leaf), lowland grasslands and water courses (as well as others) as priority habitats and sets out a broad range of actions which should be taken to protect and enhance them. This includes local authority planning decisions.
- 4.12. When sites come forward for development the existing hedgerows are reviewed and where possible are protected through the design of the site and use of conditions. In addition, on sites where a design code is developed hedges can be incorporated into this if appropriate to the context of the site.

Bio Diversity Net Gain

- 4.13. Government's mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain is due to be enacted from November 2023. This is an approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. Under the mandatory scheme there is a requirement for the majority of developments to provide a minimum of 10% gain. The Council can require higher if the local plan, when it is updated, includes a policy stipulating a higher required gain. That would need to be

justified however and the impact of viability of any new developments considered. This is something that is being explored with advice from external experts.

- 4.14. Hedgerows and linear trees are measured separately within Biodiversity Net Gain, so if they are present to start with, at the end of the development there needs to be a minimum of 10% more (or the same length but in better condition), assessed using the Natural England metric, in addition to other biodiversity habitats.
- 4.15. Applicants for planning permissions will be required to assess the baseline length and quality of hedgerow on their site prior to development using the Natural England metric, they will then be required to assess the length and quality of hedgerow to be provided after the development is completed, using the metric. The applicant will need to demonstrate at least a 10% increase (in length and / or quality).
- 4.16. Following the completion of the development, the applicant will have to provide monitoring reports at intervals set out by the local planning authority to show that the planned hedgerow improvements have been achieved.
- 4.17. The local planning authority will be required to keep data to show what Biodiversity Net Gain (including hedgerows) achieved across the borough and report these at least each 5 year period, guidance on the methodology is yet to be published by the Government.

Hedgerow Removal Notice

- 4.18. There are regulations which are intended to protect important hedges in the countryside. These apply to hedges more than 20m long, (or less if connected to another hedge) on or adjacent to:
 - Land used for agriculture or forestry, including the keeping of horses or donkeys
 - Registered common land and village greens
 - Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

They do not apply if the hedge is within or on the boundary of the curtilage of a house.

- 4.19. Anyone proposing to remove a hedge to which the regulations apply must give the Council six weeks' notice and give the reason for seeking to remove it. Some works are exempt from the need to notify, including:
 - The creation of an access to replace an existing access which will be filled in with a new section of hedge, or where there is no existing access except at unreasonable cost
 - To carry out development which has been granted planning permission.
 - To comply with a statutory plant or forest health order
 - To gain temporary access in an emergency.

- 4.20. Some public bodies and utility operators also have exemptions; for example, for statutory drainage works and to keep power lines clear. The Council has a Hedgerow Removal Notice and guidance notes available on the website.
- 4.21. Once a Hedgerow Removal Notice has been received, the Council must decide if the hedge is 'important' as defined in the Regulations. This depends on its historical or wildlife value. For example, a hedge which existed before 1850 or which is associated with an archaeological feature will be important. A hedge which contains a diverse range of species of plant or provides a habitat for particular species of birds could also be important. Other factors include whether it adjoins a ditch, or public footpath.
- 4.22. If the hedge is important as defined in the Regulations, the Council must then decide whether its removal is justified or to serve a Hedgerow Retention Notice which prevents its removal. If it is not important it may be removed. Government advice is that there is a presumption in favour of retaining important hedgerows unless there is a strong case for their removal. There is a right of appeal against a retention notice.
- 4.23. If a hedgerow does not meet the criteria to be considered 'important' as defined in the Regulations, the Council has no option but to allow its removal. It is an offence to remove a hedge without giving notice whether it is important or not and to remove a hedge in contravention of a retention notice. In addition to a possible fine of up to £5,000, there is a duty to replant.
- 4.24. The Regulations also apply to hedges removed or destroyed as an incidental effect of other operations, for example, clearance of ditches. They do not apply to normal maintenance operations, including coppicing, from which the hedge will re-grow.
- 4.25. The Council has a record of 54 hedgerow removal notices, from 1997 to 2022:
- 27 hedgerow retention notices have been served since 1997
 - The Council has had no option but to allow 21 hedgerows to be removed because they were not 'important' as defined by the Regulations, or because it wasn't possible to prove they met the criteria to be considered important
 - 4 hedgerows were allowed to be removed for the reasons given
 - 2 hedgerow replacement notices have been served where hedgerows were removed without prior notice.
- 4.26. The Council does not currently record work allowed under exemptions, but this usually relates to utility operators removing small section of hedges to allow services to be installed. When this occurs the Council always ask for the gap to be replanted. Officers rely on the fact that half of the Borough is covered by Sanderson's 1835 map which covers an area 20 miles around Mansfield. If a field boundary is visible on this map, it can generally prove it is important for historical reasons. It is very rare that a hedge meets the criteria to be considered important for wildlife reasons.

Communication

- 4.27. There is currently a webpage on the Borough Council's website which has a focus on the protection of trees including details of funding. Officers could extend the content of this page to include hedgerows and hedgerow advice. Information about the Hedgerows Removal Notice process and forms are already available on the website.
- 4.28. Through the Nature Conservation Strategy the Council has a [Biodiversity Support Grant](#). Hedgerows creation and maintenance have been funded through this scheme. Between 2019 and 2022 £2800 has been awarded to support 890m of hedgerow in Cotgrave, Widmerpool and Kinoulton. The Council also currently provide community tree grants and this could be extended to cover hedgerow plants also. Officers in the Communities Team are exploring ways to extend this pot of funding including working with colleagues on plans for the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funding.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. This report provides Councillors with an overview of the current policy and legal framework for the protection and enhancement of hedgerows. There are no risks or uncertainties associated with this.
- 5.2. The new requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain place an additional duty on the Council to ensure the right processes are in place for monitoring and reporting on this. This could present a risk as it is a new and developing area of work however Officers have been planning for some time for the changes being implemented in November 2023.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Protecting and enhancing the environment of the Borough will have a positive impact on the quality of life of our residents.
Efficient Services	Not applicable
Sustainable Growth	The Biodiversity Net Gain duty will play an important role in strengthening broader sustainability objectives in terms of housing growth and development.
The Environment	Protecting and enhancing the hedgerow network in the Borough, as well as other natural habitats will have a positive impact on the environment.

8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- c) Request a future Scrutiny item to be presented with details of requirements for methodology for the monitoring and reporting of Biodiversity Net Gain.
- d) Review current advice about the management and maintenance of hedges and suggest additional promotion opportunities and groups to engage with.

For more information contact:	Leanne Ashmore Director of Development and Economic Growth LAshmore@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	
List of appendices:	

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Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 4 January 2022

Work Programme

Report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

1. Summary

- 1.1. The work programme is a standing item for discussion at each meeting of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group. In determining the proposed work programme due regard has been given to matters usually reported to the Group and the timing of issues to ensure best fit within the Council's decision making process.
- 1.2. The table does not take into account any items that need to be considered by the Group as special items. These may occur, for example, through changes required to the Constitution or financial regulations, which have an impact on the internal controls of the Council.
- 1.3. The future work programme was updated and agreed at the meeting of the Corporate Overview Group on 6 September 2022, including any items raised via the scrutiny matrix.

Members are asked to propose future topics to be considered by the Group, in line with the Council's priorities which are:

- Quality of Life;
- Efficient Services;
- Sustainable Growth; and
- The Environment

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Group agrees the work programme as set out in the table below.

8 March 2023

- An Update on the Fairham Development
- Work Programme

3. Reason for Recommendation

To enable the Council's scrutiny arrangements to operate efficiently and effectively.

For more information contact:	Pete Linfield Director of Finance and Corporate Services 0115 914 8349 plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	None.
List of appendices (if any):	None.