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Our reference:
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Date: 27 February 2024

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, 6 March 2024 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

This meeting will be accessible and open to the public via the live stream on YouTube and viewed via the link: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RushcliffeBC>
Please be aware that until the meeting starts the live stream video will not be showing on the home page. For this reason, please keep refreshing the home page until you see the video appear.

Yours sincerely



Gemma Dennis
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
[Link to further information in the Council's Constitution](#)
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 January 2024 (Pages 1 - 10)
4. Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe (Pages 11 - 14)
Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods
There will be two presentations from the Environment Agency
5. Connectivity and Communications (Pages 15 - 20)
Report of the Director – Growth and Economic Development



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Opening hours:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
8.30am - 5pm
Wednesday
9.30am - 5pm
Friday
8.30am - 4.30pm

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Rushcliffe Arena
Rugby Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7YG



There will be one presentation from Nottinghamshire County Council

6. Work Programme (Pages 21 - 22)

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services.

Membership

Chair: Councillor P Matthews

Vice-Chair: Councillor L Way

Councillors: R Butler, K Chewings, J Cottee, S Dellar, C Grocock, D Soloman and R Walker

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**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY GROUP
WEDNESDAY, 3 JANUARY 2024**

Held at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West
Bridgford
and live streamed on [Rushcliffe Borough Council's YouTube channel](#)

PRESENT:

Councillors R Walker (Chair), L Way (Vice-Chair), R Butler, K Chewings,
J Cottee, S Dellar, C Grocock and P Matthews and A Phillips

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

R Waddell	Greenbelt
A Ralph	Greenbelt
C Smith	Nottinghamshire County Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
C Evans	Service Manager - Economic Growth and Property
C Prendergast	Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer
R Mapletoft	Planning Policy Manager
E Richardson	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors D Soloman

12 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

13 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 October 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2023 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

14 Management of Open Spaces

The Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer presented an update to the Group about Management of Open Spaces on New Developments

The Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer said that prior to 2000 the Council had adopted all open spaces with no cost to developers, that between 2000 to 2011 the Council had adopted open spaces with a commuted sum from developers and, that from 2011 it no longer adopted open spaces, with developers being required to submit an open spaces management scheme as part of their planning application. She said the Council's current approach was the one most commonly taken by local authorities.

The Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer highlighted some of the main concerns raised by residents about management company practices, including in relation to transparency and fairness with a lack of awareness of fees and billing; quality of maintenance work and; poor customer service with no right to challenge or hold the management company to account. She said that some management companies included clauses that allowed residents to take over management of their open spaces.

In relation to national activity, the Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer referred to the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill which was introduced to Parliament in November 2023 and on which it was due to report by 1 February 2024. She explained that key aspects of the Bill were that it would likely grant leaseholders the same rights as freeholders and would also create a New Homes Quality Board and Code, which would require developers to provide clear and accurate information about management services and charges and ensure that buyers knew that they should appoint an independent legal adviser.

The Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer explained that while the Council had limited powers, it could act as a facilitator and encourage good practice and build closer relationships with developers at an earlier stage in the process, inviting them to attend the Council's Growth Boards (for example Fairham and Bingham) and support residents' groups in making contact with management companies. The Council would also explore development of a Good Practice Code.

Mr Wadell from Greenbelt presented an update to the Group about Greenbelt Management Company. He said that the company had been operating for 25 years in the UK and originated from Strathclyde Council in the mid-1990s, ultimately becoming fully autonomous. The company had evolved over time to take on new work and bring in new specialists as open spaces became more complex, including amenity spaces, sustainable urban drainage features and biodiversity net gain commitments. He said that the company initially funded adopting sites through commuted sums from developers but due to the increased complexity of spaces it had moved to requiring residents to pay management fees.

Mr Wadell explained that Greenbelt had a standard form of agreement with developers that could be flexed to suit particular sites and that the company predominantly took ownership, or a long lease, for sites. He said that the company looked to implement long term plans, including ecological plans, for sites allowing it opportunity to get to know residents. He said that Greenbelt had built in the right for residents to end their arrangement with the company and take control of management, through 'consumer options' if they wished and that this would be built in as a legal right in the future.

The Chair asked for more information about residents opting out of management service contracts. Mr Wadell explained that developers went out to tender and appointed the company to manage the open spaces on a site and that once all houses had been sold, ownership for that site was transferred to that company. Greenbelt were able to start engaging with residents and

managing open spaces on a site earlier through a lease agreement with the developer.

Mr Wadell said that Greenbelt give residents on their sites the option to self-manage their open spaces, as long as certain criteria were met, for example that they had a 51% majority and that the local planning authority had given consent and that outstanding debt had been recovered.

Councillor Way asked a number of questions, including about the definition of open spaces and transparency about services and fees. She said that many residents were unaware of much of what was covered, including that they could receive charges for future matters such as fly-tipping, and as such it was having a financial and emotion toll on them. Mr Wadell said that Greenbelt had a 97% payment rate but was aware that some residents were struggling to pay. He said that Greenbelt had a duty to maintain the open spaces and as it needed residents to make payments to do this, it tried to keep charges reasonable. He said that there would be some non-routine costs, such as for storm damage and vandalism, which could not be predicted for which it tried to spread the costs to soften payments.

Mr Wadell said that the company wanted to work with residents and maintain a good relationship with them and would work with residents to find solutions where possible.

Councillor Way referred to responsibility for ensuring that residents understood about fees and services and Mr Ralph said that a management company could not control what information was provided to residents at the point of sale, but that Greenbelt tried to ensure that developer sales teams provided as much information as possible. He thought that buyers taking independent legal advice would help provide this scrutiny. The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that the Council was looking at engaging with developers regarding the sharing of information with prospective buyers to ensure that it was communicated prominently to allow buyers to make informed decisions.

Councillor Butler referred to additional levies for one-off occurrences such as storm damage, in addition to Council Tax, and fees for facilities used by people not on the estate and noted how this could be seen as unfair by residents. The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that Government led changes in requirements for open spaces on housing estates had increased over the years, from being small parcels of land to becoming more complex spaces, and as such the Council could no longer afford to maintain them. She understood the perception of unfairness across older and newer estates and said that finding an equitable solution was challenging.

In relation to unexpected charges, Mr Ralph said that there was the option of creating a sink fund to cover such expenses but this came with difficulties, for example if not spent how would residents selling their property be reimbursed.

Councillor Grocock asked about the relationship between the Council and management companies, having greater transparency and governance, the possibility of the Council having a preferred management company and

whether other bodies such as town and parish councils could adopt open spaces.

The Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer referred to appendix B of the report which set out the Council's proposals for how it could take a more active role and develop relationships. She confirmed that the Council did not have a role in appointing a management company and so could not determine who would be appointed but that developing a good practice code could set out the Council's expectations. She said that the Council could only require that the developer appoint an appropriate body to carry out management, not which body, but that this could be a town or parish council if they had the skills and expertise and the developer chose to appoint them.

Councillor Chewings asked why the Council had moved away from managing open spaces in 2011 and whether the Council could return to doing so if it were to receive SUDS monies. He wondered what other local authorities did.

The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that a reason for the change in practice was due to developers not wanting to pay large, commuted, sums upfront to the to cover the next 15 years, but rather were choosing to spread it annually per dwelling. She said that it was for the developer to choose how they funded the work. She said that the Council would also need to consider how the maintenance would be funded after the 15 years.

The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that if a developer did not wish to pay S106 monies then it may withhold transferring ownership of an open space to the Council. She said the Council could investigate whether it could enforce a developer to pay a commuted sum. She said that the Council had looked at how other local authorities approached this matter and it was not aware of any who had taken management in-house. The Corporate and Commercial Projects Officer referred to the only related practice the Council was aware of being by Stratford on Avon Council developing a policy around them exploring taking over management if their town and parish councils were unable to do so.

Councillor Matthews asked how many management companies there were in Rushcliffe, whether the Council was mandating the creation of these open spaces through its planning process and whether it would be possible to change the Council Tax banding for the estate housing to increase income.

The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that the Council only retained 7% of the Council Tax levy and so to raise sufficient funds would require a significant increase, above that allowed by Government. She said that the Council did not control Council Tax banding levels for houses which was carried out by the valuation office. She said that the Council was currently compiling a list of all management companies within the Borough.

The Chair referred the Group to actions in Appendix B of the report. In relation to the SPD, the Planning Policy Manager said that it would cover a wide range of matters including open spaces and whilst the Council may not be able to mandate what developers did, it would set out best practice and the expectations of the Council.

Councillor Way referred to a proposal before Cabinet in 2021 to create an SPD. She asked whether the Council could give consideration to suggestions from this Group, including the possibility of estates sharing facilities, for example adjoining estates sharing a play area rather than having one each, encouraging cooperation and a more holistic approach. The Planning Policy Manager said that in the sequence of developing planning documentations that SPD hadn't taken place as yet and said that only matters covered by the Local Plan could be included in the SPD but that aspects outside of it could be included in other guidance.

Councillor Grocock suggested that the Council use robust and specific language in its documentation and use its influence to encourage best practice. The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that that was what the Council wanted to achieve through a Good Practice Guide.

The Chair referred to section 4.11 of the NPPF regarding use of conditions and suggested that the Council seek external advice about how it could be most robust.

The Chair referred to the Good Practice Guide development and noted that it was developers and not management companies who signed up to NHQC. The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill would give leaseholders the same rights as freeholders, giving them a right to redress. She said that the Council could include reference to management companies' complaints procedures in the Good Practice Guide and confirmed that the Council would seek to use strong and clear language. She proposed that once created, the Guide be taken to the Local Development Framework Group for scrutiny as per other planning policy documentation

Mr Ralph said that a stewardship framework was being developed by Building with Nature, which while voluntary was envisioned that quality, open space green infrastructure management companies would sign up to. He said that Greenbelt had been heavily involved in contributing to the framework. Mr Wardell added that Scotland had introduced a Property Factors Act for open spaces management which set out a suite of standards and which required management companies to create a written statement of service for their residents. He said that Greenbelt had applied their written statement of service to all of their sites across the UK even though it was not required to do so in England and Wales.

The Chair referred to the proposed advocacy role by the Council. The Director of Development and Economic Growth said that the Council recognised that there were pockets of residents on some estates who were dissatisfied with the services and that the Council would focus attention there initially, in making introductions between residents and management companies where these weren't taking place.

Councillor Way suggested inviting residents to attend the Growth Board meetings and the Director of Development and Economic Growth noted that the Growth Boards covered a wide remit of matters and suggested that a forum

outside of those constraints would be more beneficial to bring related parties together.

The Chair asked for clarification on the role of the Council. The Director of Development and Economic Growth said initial work would be to set out terms of reference in relation to the role of the Council, with the Council looking to facilitate initial introductions between residents and management companies and encourage management companies to sign up to the Code and encourage best practice. She said that the Council would not act as an arbitrator between parties.

Councillor Chewings proposed that recommendations a, c, d, and e be retained and that recommendation b be removed, due to further financial scope work being required. He proposed that three additional recommendations be added, as set out below:

- f) Investigate the legal position on whether a commuted sum to cover maintenance for 15 years could be legally enforced by Rushcliffe Borough Council
- g) Investigate the work carried out by Stratford on Avon District Council and invite a guest speaker from the District Council to attend a Growth and Development Scrutiny Group meeting
- h) Provide a detailed forecast for revenues received by Rushcliffe Borough Council from an example development (for example Fairham) over the 15 year period.

The proposals were seconded by Councillor Grocock.

Councillor Grocock said that he would wish to have more information relating to the gap between the Council's income of £77k and estimated costs of £11m.

The Director of Development and Economic Growth explained that revenues received by the Council from Council Tax from a new development site would already be accounted for to pay for provision of existing and statutory services, such as refuse collections. She explained that additional services such as management of open spaces would require new funding stream/s.

It was RESOLVED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Acknowledges the complexities of the management of open spaces and the multiple factors at play leading to no simple solution;
- ~~b) Accepts the conclusions arrived at in section 5 regarding the financial risks to the Council in pursuing the adoption of open spaces or acting as the management company and supports the conclusion arrived at;~~
- c) Supports the proposal for the Council to take a more active role working with developers at the Planning stage to establish the Council's expectations regarding the service expected for its residents;
- d) Supports officers continuing to work through the emerging issues with developers, management companies and residents, with the aim of providing greater transparency and governance for future homeowners of new estates, whilst recognising the Council has no authority over the operation of management companies;
- e) Seeks to raise the general issues and concerns raised by residents on

- new housing estates with developers and management companies to raise the profile of the issues being experienced
- f) Investigate the legal position on whether a commuted sum to cover maintenance for 15 years could be legally enforced by Rushcliffe Borough Council
 - g) Investigate the work carried out by Stratford on Avon District Council and invite a guest speaker from the District Council to attend a Growth and Development Scrutiny Group meeting
 - h) Provide a detailed forecast for revenues received by Rushcliffe Borough Council from an example development (for example Fairham) over the 15 year period.

15 **Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe**

The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property introduced this item and explained that it followed on from discussions at the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group in September 2022 where information had been provided by Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency. She said that Members had expressed interest in receiving an update from Nottinghamshire County Council in their role as flood authority and as such Mr Smith was attending this meeting. Representatives from Severn Trent and the Environment Agency had also been invited to attend but unfortunately Environment Agency representatives had had to send their apologies due to commitments with the current flooding. They had said that they would be happy to attend a future meeting instead. Severn Trent may not have capacity to attend.

Mr Smith from Nottinghamshire County Council presented an update to the Group about the County Council's role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

Mr Smith provided information about Storm Babet and said that approximately 1200 properties had been internally flooded, spread across 79 areas, with 28 properties being in Rushcliffe. He said that over 100 roads had been closed making access to affected areas difficult.

Mr Smith explained that the role of the LLFA was to coordinate flood risk management across Nottinghamshire, coordinating with the various agencies involved, including Severn Trent Water, the Environment Agency and town and parish councils. He said that the LLFA managed surface water only and was a statutory consultee on surface water only to the local planning authorities and the County planning authority for major applications. He said that it could not comment on issues such as river or sewer flooding.

Mr Smith informed the Group that the County Council maintained a register of assets that had a critical impact on flood risk in the County, such as culverts, to ensure that they were adequately maintained and it issued land drainage consents and compliance checks. He said that the County Council published and developed a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan and that it worked with communities to raise awareness of flood risk and support them in how to become more flood resilient. The County Council also delivered the Capital and Revenue Flood Risk Management Schemes programme

The LLFA was required to carry out a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment

Review (PFRA) every six years and as part of the recent review it had rewritten documentation to bring it up to date, in line with current policies and to include analysis of potential future flood impacts and information about who to contact for advice about various concerns. The documentation was published in July 2023.

Mr Smith said that the County Council owned a suite of four drones for which it had seven qualified pilots and that it used them for a variety of work including to help with flood surveillance work and inspecting assets. He said that the County Council would be happy to share these resources with partner agencies where possible.

In relation to property flood resilience, Mr Smith said that the County Council had funded flood resilience solutions such as flood resistance doors and gates. To date 55 properties had had bespoke solutions installed and it hoped that 100 more would be protected in the future programme of works.

Mr Smith said that LLFA managed the Community Flood Signage Scheme which gave it the power to close roads during flood events to help reduce impacts from bow waves caused by vehicles driving through flood water. He said that there were currently 18 active schemes.

The County Council were involved with providing education sessions for schools across the County, which were targeted at years 4 and 5 and comprised hands on experiments to help raise awareness and knowledge about climate change and flooding.

The Group were informed that the County Council had bid for funding to implement natural flood management techniques in Cropwell Butler and had recently received funding to work with land owners in Gotham to implement further flood management measures.

Councillor Grocock asked whether the County Council team was linked in with the D2N2 Careers Hub and Mr Smith said that they would explore this suggestion.

Councillor Grocock referred to communication about the Community Flood Signage Scheme and Mr Smith confirmed that emails had been sent to town and parish councils with information about the scheme, that drop in sessions had been held by the team and that it was also working with County Councillors in sharing information.

Mr Smith asked Members to email the team if they were aware of any concerns or any areas which benefit from road closures or any schools that would like to receive an education session at flood.team@nottscc.gov.uk. The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property agreed to circulate Mr Smith's presentation to the Group with parish council Clerks.

The Chair noted the difficulty in identifying the different reasons for much flooding and Mr Smith suggested that people email the team about specific concerns for advice and support.

Councillor way referred to SUDS on privately managed estates. Mr Smith said that the LLFA did not currently have any authority in this matter but said that the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 contained a Schedule (3) which would make local authorities responsible for adopting SUDS in new developments, and whilst this Schedule had not been enacted as yet there were proposals for it to be enacted in the future.

Councillor Butler referred to flooding from water coming off fields and asked about influence on land owners. Mr Smith explained that there were some powers contained within the Land Drainage Act which allowed the risk management authority to serve notice if a land owner was not allowing free movement of water on their assets, however the preferred practice was to work with land owners in the first instance.

The Chair referred to recommendation b, in relation to Severn Trent and the Environment Agency being unable to attend. The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property noted suggestions from Members of the Group, including promoting flood management work with parish councils and working with the Careers Hubs that were outcomes from these discussions and said that representatives from the two agencies could be invited to attend the next Group meeting in March.

It was RESOLVED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Review the scrutiny matrix and notes of the previous meeting (21 September 2022) and ask questions of the expert witnesses
- b) Identify if there are any areas where further work or further updates are required e.g., communications or engagement between organisations.

16 **Work Programme**

The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property presented the report of the Director Finance and Corporate Services, which detailed the proposed Growth and Development Scrutiny Group Work Programme for 2023/24. She confirmed that representatives from Severn Trent and the Environment Agency would be invited to attend the next meeting in March 2024.

Members of the Group suggested future scrutiny items of an update on Development of the Economic Growth Strategy and an update on Management of Open Spaces, subject to matrices being submitted to and approved by the Corporate Overview Group.

It was RESOLVED that the Work programme detailed below be approved by the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

6 March 2024

- Connectivity and Communications
- Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe
- Work Programme

Xx July 2024

- Review of the Crematorium

- Work Programme

Xx October 2024

- Infrastructure Delivery
- Work Programme

Action Table 3 January 2024

Min No.	Action	Officer Responsible
15	Completed - circulate the presentation to town and parish council Clerks.	The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property has shared the presentation with Clerks

The meeting closed at 9.11 pm.

CHAIR



Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 3 January 2024 – carried forward to
Wednesday, 6 March 2024

Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. At Growth and Development Scrutiny in September 2022, representatives from Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency attended to inform Councillors about their respective roles and how they worked with relevant departments at the Borough Council on sewage infrastructure and discharge.
- 1.2. At that meeting it was resolved that further scrutiny related to the issue be brought back to a future meeting of the Group. Councillors were particularly interested in the role that Nottinghamshire County Council plays as Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 1.3. Councillors were also interested to obtain a response from Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency on the request to establish an action plan for preventative measures in respect of new developments to assist Officers and Councillors when applying conditions to planning applications. An Officer from the Environment Agency will attend the meeting to provide an update. Despite numerous attempts no response has been received from Severn Trent Water to requests to attend the meeting.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) review the scrutiny matrix and notes of the previous meeting (21 September 2022) and ask questions of the expert witnesses
- b) identify if there are any areas where further work or further updates are required e.g. communications or engagement between organisations.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The purpose of the report and supporting presentation from Nottinghamshire County Council is to support the Group in their understanding of the role of different organisations in relation to sewage infrastructure and discharge and planning for the growth of the Borough. This will enable Councillors to better respond to residents' concerns and questions on this issue, and to identify areas where further work is required.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. As outlined in the scrutiny matrix (Appendix A), and in previous discussions at scrutiny in September 2022, Councillors are concerned about sewage infrastructure and unlawful discharges in the Borough, and the impact on the environment, humans and wildlife locally. At the meeting in September 2022, Councillors heard from Severn Trent Water (STW) and the Environment Agency (EA) on:
- Both agencies role in relation to strategic planning and planning
 - Overview of the sewage system
 - The role and responsibilities of each organisation
 - STW Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (published in December 2022).
- 4.2. During discussions at the meeting Councillors raised concerns in respect of surface water flooding, and the relationship between the water authority, the Environment Agency and the local flood authority. It was therefore identified that as the lead local flood authority, Councillors would like to invite Nottinghamshire County Council to attend a meeting of the Group, to provide an overview of their role with regard to Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe and to set out their relevant plans for the coming year. Officers from Nottinghamshire County Council will be at the meeting in January 2024 and will be delivering a presentation for Councillors.
- 4.3. Officers from the Environment Agency will attend the meeting to provide an update since the last meeting and to share an overview of their recently published Adaptive Investment for Growth document.
- 4.4. Councillors also noted problems with public access to information and being able to report areas of concern and flood occurrences. STW and EA both identified that this can be complex however it was identified that if more information was publicly available Councillors would be in a better position to provide advice. STW and EA were keen that concerns from residents continue to get reported to them so they are able to respond as required but agreed that more publicly available data may assist with awareness and when to report.
- 4.5. Following the meeting, to highlight the above concerns, a letter was sent to STW and EA which requested that an action plan for preventative measures in respect of new developments be developed, which would assist Officers and Councillors when applying conditions to planning applications. To date no response has been received to the letter and Severn Trent Water were also invited to the meeting in January but have yet to respond to these requests.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. There are no risks associated with this report and presentation as it is for Councillors information to support understanding of the role of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

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.

6.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no biodiversity net gain implications associated with this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Having the right infrastructure in place for our local communities and businesses is important to support their quality of life.
Efficient Services	It is important to understand the role of different agencies to ensure the Council is working effectively with partners to deliver efficient services to residents.
Sustainable Growth	The Borough is accommodating a lot of housing growth and this has an impact on the capacity of all infrastructure. It is important to ensure the right processes and solutions are in place to respond to this growth.
The Environment	The requirements for sewage and infrastructure in the Borough are impacted by changes in the climate and these need to be considered as part of plans for the future and new developments in the Borough.

8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) review the scrutiny matrix and notes of the previous meeting (21 September 2022) and ask questions of the expert witnesses
- b) identify if there are any areas where further work or further updates are required e.g. communications or engagement between organisations.

For more information contact:	Dave Banks Director Neighbourhoods dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Sewage infrastructure and discharge report to Growth and Development Scrutiny Committee – 21 September 2022 Minutes of Growth and Development Scrutiny Committee – 21 September 2022
List of appendices:	Appendix A: Scrutiny Matrix

Rushcliffe Borough Council – Scrutiny Matrix

Councillor Request for Scrutiny		
Councillors Barney, Brennan, Clarke, Combellack, Dickman, and Upton		
Proposed topic of scrutiny ...	Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe	
I would like to understand ... (key lines of enquiry)	<p>Councillors are concerned about sewage infrastructure and unlawful discharges in the Borough and the impact on the environment, humans and wildlife locally.</p> <p>Councillors need to be in a position to reassure residents that sewage is fully treated before any discharge to water courses; a better understanding of the sewage system and controls within the Borough and how the situation can be addressed would therefore be helpful.</p> <p>At Growth and Development Scrutiny in September 2022, representatives from Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency attended to inform Councillors about the situation in Rushcliffe regarding sewage infrastructure and unlawful discharges and their respective roles. At that meeting it was resolved that further scrutiny, related to the issue be brought back to a future meeting of the committee.</p> <p>As the lead local flood authority, Councillors would like to invite Nottinghamshire County Council to attend a meeting of the committee, to provide an overview of their role with regards to Sewerage Infrastructure and Discharge within Rushcliffe and to set out their relevant plans for the coming year.</p>	
I think this topic should be scrutinised because ... (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor Performance Identified
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in Legislation or Local Policy
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Resident Concern or Interest
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cabinet Recommendation
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Links to the Corporate Strategy
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state reason)

Officer Consideration of Councillor Request for Scrutiny

Officer Feedback (please tick)		Officer Comment
- Issue already being addressed	x	
- Issue has already been considered in the last 2 years?	✓	
- Issue is a legal matter	x	
- Issue of a complaint investigation	x	
- Issue is a staffing matter	x	
- There is an alternative way of dealing with the issue	x	
Is there sufficient capacity ...		
- Scrutiny Work Programme?	✓	
- Officer Resources?	✓	
Recommendation	Growth and Development Scrutiny Group	
Lead Officer	Catherine Evans	
Proposed Timescale for Scrutiny and Scrutiny Group	January 2024	



Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 6 March 2024

Connectivity and Communications

Report of the Director Growth and Economic Development

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. There have previously been reports to Growth and Development Scrutiny about the roll out of Broadband across Rushcliffe. These updates have been presented by officers from Nottinghamshire County Council as the lead authority on this area of work.
- 1.2. A scrutiny matrix has been completed requesting an update on this work as some residents still do not have or struggle with access to broadband and phone coverage.
- 1.3. Officers from the County Council will attend the Scrutiny Group and provide an update for Councillors as well as answer questions they may have.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) review the scrutiny matrix and ask questions of the expert witnesses
- b) identify if there are any areas where further work or further updates are required.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. It is increasingly important that residents and businesses have access to broadband and mobile phone coverage. Councillors would like to understand what the opportunities are in the Borough and also what the challenges are to achieving 100% coverage. The delivery of broadband and mobile phone coverage is not within the Council's control so colleagues from the County Council have been invited to the meeting to provide an update.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. A scrutiny matrix has been completed, included at Appendix A, outlining the areas of interest which will be covered by officers from Nottinghamshire County Council at the meeting. This includes:
 - Full fibre broadband and the latest upgrades

- Building Digital UK (BDUK) roll out – where are the gaps in Rushcliffe and what can we do about them
 - An update on Gigahubs
 - An update on project Gigabit
 - Broadband voucher scheme
 - Land line disconnection scheduled by 2025 leaves many reliant on Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) which needs a good Broadband connection
 - Mobile mast connectivity and opportunities for improvement. There are companies already looking for mast sites – are we/could we be engaging with these companies to ensure residents are well served.
- 4.2. Councillors will hear from officers from Nottinghamshire County Council and will have the opportunity to ask questions to understand more about what is currently being delivered in Rushcliffe.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. There are, of course, risks associated with limited/no internet or mobile phone access including health and safety risks. This report and supporting presentation are intended to provide Councillors with an update on connectivity in Rushcliffe at the moment, with the opportunity for further more focussed/detailed discussions in future.

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 potential equalities implications where a lack of/limited access to mobile phone coverage or the internet mean residents do not have access to the same level of service as others in the Borough. This can be mitigated by offering services in different ways e.g. not all online.

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

There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report

6.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no biodiversity net gain implications associated with this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	There are no links to the Council's environment priority.
Quality of Life	Providing good access to mobile phone and internet access enables residents to access services they need.
Efficient Services	As further opportunities are sought to move services online to make them more efficient/accessible this is only made possible with access for all.
Sustainable Growth	To operate effectively now businesses need access to good broadband and mobile phone coverage. It is important to support existing businesses and attract new ones that there is a good service.

8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) review the scrutiny matrix and ask questions of the expert witnesses
- b) identify if there are any areas where further work or further updates are required.

For more information contact:	Catherine Evans, Service Manager - Economic Growth and Property cevens@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	
List of appendices:	Appendix One – Scrutiny Matrix

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Rushcliffe Borough Council – Scrutiny Matrix

Councillor Request for Scrutiny	
Councillor T Combellack	
Proposed topic of scrutiny ...	Connectivity and communications
I would like to understand ... (key lines of enquiry)	<p>In this day and age our residents should have 100% mobile and broadband coverage and I think we need to ensure those working on their behalf are delivering. We still do not have 100% connectivity and as more and more use is made of the service with apps, zoom and streaming, and film download what was considered good speeds are slowly being degraded.</p> <p>Members would like to understand what NCC are doing to support digital connectivity across Rushcliffe, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full fibre broadband and the latest upgrades • BDUK roll out – where are the gaps in Rushcliffe and what can we do about them • An update on Gigahubs • An update on project Gigabit • Broadband voucher scheme • Land line disconnection scheduled by 2025 leaves many reliant on VOIP which needs a good Broadband connection. This is a health and safety issue. • Mobile mast connectivity and opportunities for improvement. There are companies already looking for mast sites – could we be engaging with these companies to ensure our residents are well served.
I think this topic should be scrutinised because ... (please tick)	* Poor Performance Identified
	* Change in Legislation or Local Policy
	* Resident Concern or Interest
	Cabinet Recommendation
	* Links to the Corporate Strategy

		Other (please state reason)
Officer Consideration of Councillor Request for Scrutiny		
Officer Feedback (please tick)		
- Issue already being addressed		Issue of a complaint investigation
- Issue has already been considered in the last 2 years?		Issue is a staffing matter
- Issue is a legal matter		There is an alternative way of dealing with the issue
Is there sufficient capacity ...		
- Scrutiny Work Programme?		
- Officer Resources?		
Recommendation		
Consideration of Request for Scrutiny at COG		
Public Involvement / engagement?		
Expert witnesses?		
Portfolio holder?		
Lead Officer?		
Proposed Timescale for Scrutiny and Scrutiny Group		

 <p>Rushcliffe Borough Council</p>	<p>Growth and Development Scrutiny Group</p> <p>Wednesday, 6 March 2024</p> <p>Work Programme</p>
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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 Communities 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 5 September 2023, 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.

July 2024 (Date TBC)

- Review of the Crematorium
- Infrastructure Delivery
- Work Programme

October 2024 (Date TBC)

- Accessible Housing
- Work Programme

January 2025 (Date TBC)

March 2025 (Date TBC)

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 plinfeld@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	None.
List of appendices (if any):	None.