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Direct dial 0115 914 8320
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Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: Monday, 3 February 2025

To all Members of the Cabinet

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Tuesday, 11 February 2025 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



Sara Pregon
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 14 January 2025 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Citizens' Questions

To answer questions submitted by citizens on the Council or its services.

5. Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

To answer questions submitted by Opposition Group Leaders on items on the agenda.

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NON-KEY DECISIONS

6. 2025/26 Budget and Financial Strategy (Pages 7 - 164)

The report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services is attached.

7. Revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA1 and 1/2011) (Pages 165 - 168)

The report of the Director – Neighbourhoods is attached.

8. Rushcliffe Play Strategy 2025-2030 (Pages 169 - 224)

The report of the Director – Neighbourhoods is attached.

9. Asset Investment Group Terms of Reference (Pages 225 - 230)

The report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services is attached.

10. Officer and Member Indemnity (Pages 231 - 238)

Report of the Monitoring Officer and Head of Chief Executive's Department is attached.

Membership

Chair: Councillor N Clarke

Vice-Chair: Councillor A Brennan

Councillors: R Inglis, R Upton, D Viridi and J Wheeler

Meeting Room Guidance

Fire Alarm Evacuation: In the event of an alarm sounding please evacuate the building using the nearest fire exit, normally through the Council Chamber. You should assemble at the far side of the plaza outside the main entrance to the building.

Toilets: Are located to the rear of the building near the lift and stairs to the first floor.

Mobile Phones: For the benefit of others please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off whilst you are in the meeting.

Microphones: When you are invited to speak please press the button on your microphone, a red light will appear on the stem. Please ensure that you switch this off after you have spoken.

Recording at Meetings

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to being open and transparent in its decision making. As such, the Council will undertake audio recording of meetings which are open to the public, except where it is resolved that the public be excluded, as the information being discussed is confidential or otherwise exempt

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET

TUESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2025

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

PRESENT:

Councillors N Clarke (Chair), A Brennan (Vice-Chair), R Inglis, R Upton, D Virdi and J Wheeler

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Chewings, Plant and J Walker

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

D Banks	Director of Neighbourhoods
P Linfield	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
K Marriott	Chief Executive
S Pregon	Monitoring Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager

33 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

34 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10 December 2024 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

35 Citizens' Questions

There were no citizens' questions.

36 Rushcliffe Design Code Supplementary Planning Document

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Councillor Upton presented the report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth, which provided an update on the Rushcliffe Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Councillor Upton confirmed that it was a legal requirement for all Council's to produce a Design Guide, and that it must reflect the local character, to carry weight in decision making, and should be produced as either part of the Local Plan or as an SPD. Councillor Upton stated that SPDs formed a material consideration in decision making and had significant weight, providing they had been prepared within statutory procedures, and been subject to public

consultation. The new SPD would replace the Rushcliffe Residential Design Guide and provide a set of rules against which planning applications would be assessed. The SPD was detailed at Appendix 1 to the report and available as an interactive web-based version, which was designed to make the code easier for everyone to navigate. Councillor Upton stated that following its publication, the draft Code would be subject to a six-week public consultation, and it was hoped that the Code would be adopted in April/May 2025. In conclusion, Councillor Upton thanked officers for their hard work and dedication, in particular the Project Manager and the Planning Policy Manager, and Harper Perry Architects for their invaluable expertise.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Brennan supported and welcomed this document and felt that it would be very useful to everyone going forward, with the web-based version being very helpful. Councillor Brennan referred to the considerable housing growth across the Borough, some of which had not being sympathetic to existing settlements, and she hoped that this SPD would help the Council to improve design quality. Councillor Brennan hoped that this would be a baseline, rather than an ambition and agreed with the idea of zones and hoped that any new development would be sympathetic to those areas.

The Leader reiterated the thanks given to officers for the immense amount of work undertaken to produce this Guide.

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) the draft Rushcliffe Design Code Supplementary Planning Document for a six-week period of public consultation be approved; and
- b) the Director – Development and Economic Growth be granted delegated authority to make any necessary minor editing changes to the Supplementary Planning Document prior to consultation.

37 Simpler Recycling Update

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Safety, Councillor Inglis presented the report of the Director – Neighbourhoods, which provided an update on 'Simpler Recycling'.

Councillor Inglis advised that the changes required were the biggest since the launch of the wheeled bin service in 2003, and that the introduction of 'Simpler Recycling' requirements was statutory and would include a weekly food waste collection and a new kerbside glass collection service. Councillor Inglis stated that whilst it had taken time for details to be finalised, officers had been working hard, and he thanked the Director – Neighbourhoods and the Head of Environment and Communities, who had played key roles in the development of the county-wide approach and the Nottinghamshire Joint Waste Management Committee. Cabinet noted that the report detailed the next steps towards the operational delivery of 'Simpler Recycling' for the Council as a Waste Collection Authority, in conjunction with Nottinghamshire County Council as the Waste Disposal Authority.

Councillor Inglis stated that the first target proposed was 31 March 2026, with details of the materials to be collected listed at Paragraph 4.2 of the report, with further national ambitions also detailed at Paragraphs 4.6 & 4.8.

Councillor Inglis confirmed that dry recycling would remain as a two-week collection, with the collection of additional materials as detailed at Paragraph 4.2. Glass recycling would switch to a kerbside service with a new wheeled bin, with a six-week collection cycle, which would be an opt out service, for residents that could not accommodate another bin, with work continuing to develop the best approach for communal bins. This new service would have financial implications, as detailed at Paragraph 4.26 and when the new service was in operation, the additional budget pressure was expected to be circa £190k per annum net of existing bring site budgets. Councillor Inglis was pleased that new technology would now allow mixed coloured glass to be separated at the reprocessing stage, which had always been an important factor for the Council, and negotiations were taking place with the glass processor, to hopefully generate an estimated income of £85k/annum.

In respect of food waste, Councillor Inglis advised that a transitional arrangement had been agreed with DEFRA across the country, which would see kerbside food waste collections starting from 1 October 2027, with details of the service highlighted in Paragraphs 4.28 and 4.29. It was noted that there would be significant capital and revenue costs and it was hoped that those costs would be covered by 'new burdens' food waste transitional grant funding in 2025/26, expected to total £1.26m. Councillor Inglis stated that in respect of green bins, there was currently no plans to allow the inclusion of food waste into the garden waste wheeled bin, with the reasons highlighted in Paragraph 4.30.

Councillor Inglis advised that Paragraphs 4.31 to 4.39 and Appendix A to the report detailed both revenue and capital financial implications, with Section 6 detailing the various risks.

Councillor Inglis concluded by confirming that the Council already had the highest recycling rate in the County of nearly 50%; however, the changes required by 'Simpler Recycling', should provide a further opportunity for residents to recycle their waste, which would increase the Council's recycling rate.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor J Wheeler welcomed kerbside glass collection, together with the increased range of materials that could be dry recycled, as he felt that residents wanted to recycle more, but were often hindered by the different packaging. Councillor Wheeler felt that the introduction of the new arrangements highlighted how important it was that the Council had not wasted money by rushing into implementing its own scheme last year. It was noted that the money allocated by the Government would be insufficient; however, given the Council's excellent financial management, funds would be available to meet the shortfall and to bring in glass recycling before it was mandatory.

Councillor Upton acknowledged that some properties would struggle to accommodate another wheeled bin for glass collection, and he hoped that

there would be discussion on whether to keep some of the larger bring to sites, to allow residents alternative options. Councillor Inglis reiterated that provisions were being considered to hopefully cater for everyone.

The Leader stated that everyone welcomed increased options to recycle; however, this would involve ongoing additional costs, as detailed in the report, together with associated risks and uncertainty, but this was an important issue.

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) the approach set out in paragraph 4.17 of the report, to align the Council's household waste collection arrangements with the 'Simpler Recycling' requirements be endorsed;
- b) the continuation of work with the Nottinghamshire Joint Waste Management Board to progress the wider operational planning for 'Simpler Recycling' implementation across the County be supported; and
- c) it be recommended that the Medium Term Financial Strategy (to be approved by Full Council) incorporates the financial implications at Appendix A to the report, and in particular the creation of a Simpler Recycling Reserve.

38 Exclusion of the Public

It was resolved that under Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

39 Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

Questions to Councillor J Wheeler were submitted by Councillor J Walker and Councillor Chewings in relation to Exempt Item 9 on the agenda – Parkwood Leisure Ltd Contract Variation.

Councillor Wheeler responded to each question.

Supplementary questions to Councillor Wheeler were asked by Councillor Walker and Chewings.

Councillor Wheeler responded to each supplementary question.

40 Parkwood Leisure Ltd Contract Variation

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Wellbeing, ICT and Member Development, Councillor J Wheeler presented the report of the Director – Neighbourhoods, which provided an update on Parkwood Leisure Ltd Contract Variation.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Wheeler and seconded by Councillor Viridi.

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) a variation of the Parkwood Leisure Contract to extend the contract to 31 July 2030 and include Edwalton Golf Course facility be approved;
- b) a further variation of the Parkwood Leisure Contract to include East Leake Leisure Centre within one consolidated leisure contract, subject to successful negotiations with Nottinghamshire County Council at the end of the current PFI arrangements be approved;
- c) the Council's Monitoring Officer be authorised to execute formal legal agreements to effect these contract variation; and
- d) the Director – Neighbourhoods be granted delegated authority to explore, in consultation with Director – Finance and Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer, alternative models of contract delivery such as an agency model, which are emerging within the leisure industry and report appropriately.

The meeting closed at 7.37 pm.

CHAIR

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 February 2025

2025/26 Budget and Financial Strategy

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance
Councillor D Viridi**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report presents the detail of the 2025/26 budget, the five-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) from 2025/26 to 2029/30, which includes the revenue budget, the proposed Capital Programme, the Transformation and Efficiency Plan, the Capital and Investment Strategy (with associated prudential indicators), and the Pay Policy Statement.
- 1.2 It should be noted that this report is based upon the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (the final settlement is due later in February 2025). Whilst no significant changes are expected in the final settlement, any changes will be covered in the final report to Full Council.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that it:

- a) adopts the budget setting report and associated financial strategies 2025/26 to 2029/30 (attached Annex) including the summarised Special Expenses budget at Appendix 1, Budget Summary at Appendix 2, changes to fees and charges regarding Garden Waste and Car Parking at Appendix 5 and Transformation and Efficiency Plan at Appendix 7;
- b) adopts the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 3;
- c) adopts the Capital and Investment Strategy at Appendix 8;
- d) sets Rushcliffe's 2025/26 Council Tax for a Band D property at £161.77 (increase from 2024/25 of £3.89 or 2.46%);
- e) sets the Special Expenses for 2025/26 for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth, Appendix 1, resulting in the following Band D Council Tax levels for the Special Expense Areas:
 - i) West Bridgford £63.93 (£59.44 in 2024/25)
 - ii) Keyworth £3.27 (£4.69 in 2024/25)
 - iii) Ruddington £3.23 (£3.29 in 2024/25);
- f) adopts the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix 6; and

- g) delegates authority to the Director – Finance and Corporate Services to make any minor amendments to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) once the final Local Government Finance Settlement is received and advise the Finance Portfolio Holder accordingly, to be reported to Full Council.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To comply with the Local Government Finance Act (1972) and ensuring the budget enables corporate objectives to be achieved. The Council is required to set a balanced budget and demonstrate that it has adequate funds and reserves to address its risks. Recent economic events highlight the importance of adequate reserves to withstand volatility.

4. Supporting Information

The Budget and Associated Strategies

4.1 The attached report and appendices detail the following:

- a. The anticipated changes in funding over the five-year period including changes to fees and charges and particularly green waste and car parking;
- b. The financial settlement for 2025/26 and the significant budget pressures the Council must address over the medium term;
- c. The budget assumptions that have been used in developing the 2025/26 budget and MTFS;
- d. The detailed budget proposals for 2025/26 including the Transformation and Efficiency Plan (TEP) (and associated programme) to deliver the anticipated efficiency and savings requirement;
- e. The recommended levels of Council Tax for Band D properties for the Council and Special Expense areas of West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth;
- f. The projected position with the Council's reserves over the medium term;
- g. Risks associated with the budget and the MTFS;
- h. The proposed Capital Programme;
- i. The proposed Pay Policy Statement; and
- j. The proposed Capital and Investment Strategy.

4.2 The salient points within the MTFS are as follows (MTFS report (Annex) references in parenthesis):

- a. It is proposed that Council Tax for 2025/26 will increase by £3.89 to £161.77 (2.46%) (Section 3.3). This still means that Rushcliffe's Council

Tax remains the lowest in Nottinghamshire and amongst the lowest in the country.

- b. Special Expenses increasing to £1.012m (£0.928m 2024/25) and taking into effect tax base changes, this results in Band D charges for West Bridgford increasing by £4.49 to £63.93 (£59.44 in 2024/25). Keyworth decreases from £4.69 to £3.27 (due to reprofiling of cemetery works to 2026/27) and Ruddington decreases from £3.29 to £3.23 as a result of the tax base increasing while costs remain the same (Section 3.5).
- c. Business Rates (Section 3.1) is still pending a national reset (not likely until 2026/27) and there has been a revised schedule of revaluations (now every three years with next one due for 1 April 2026) this may result in fluctuations in collectible rates and makes budget setting harder to predict. Reductions in leisure, retail and hospitality sector reliefs pose an additional risk for Business Rates collection rates. Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station ceased production in October 2024; however, reduced rates are payable during decommissioning and demolition. Considering these factors and using the national average for appeals, the Council has set a budget of £6.676m in 2025/26 and projections for 2026/27 of £3.578m in retained Business Rates. This reflects the expected Business Rates reset in 2026/27.
- d. The Council no longer receives Revenue Support grant (reduced to zero in 2019/20) and represents a reduction of £3.25m from 2013/14 (Section 3.6). Importantly the Council has mitigated the loss of income through its Transformation and Efficiency Plan.
- e. For 2025/26, Councils are permitted to raise Council Tax by the higher of 3% or £5. Council Tax has been based on an increase of 3% or £5.31 (including Special Expenses) and 3% each year thereafter. Rushcliffe's increase is the cumulative impact of both the Special Expense and the Borough Council's Council Tax. The tax base has been assumed to increase by 1.66% in 2025/26 and 1.8% thereafter).
- f. New Homes Bonus (NHB) was due to cease after 2024/25; however, in the provisional settlement it was announced that the Council would receive a final payment in 2025/26 of £1.478m (section 3.7) and zero from 2026/27.
- g. The budget reflects the elevated levels of inflation offset partially by the positive effect on the Council's investment returns due to higher interest rates but also the further delay in Business Rates reset, which insulates the budget in the short term. Over the five-year period the budget shows a net £0.172m deficit. The budget allows for 4% growth in staffing costs for 2025/26 (a key driver being the rising minimum national living wage impacting national wage settlements) 3% in 2026/27 and 2% per annum thereafter.
- h. Car parking charges have been reviewed, and it is proposed that fees for longer stays in West Bridgford car parks are increased, this aligns with the Council's Off-Street Car Parking Strategy (Section 3.8).

- i. Some fees and charges have been increased to offset increased costs caused by inflation and pay increases, although limiting these in areas for the more vulnerable (such as home alarms);
- j. Garden waste fees are increased annually, for 2025/26 and 2026/27 this includes an increase of £5 for second and subsequent bins in addition to inflation. There will remain a differential of £5 from 2027/28 between the first bin and two or more bins (Section 3.8).
- k. Simpler Recycling requirements for kerbside recycling (mainly glass and food waste) place pressure on both capital and revenue budgets, due to the requirement for additional vehicles and crews. The loss of recycling credits will be replaced by Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Grant; however, by 2029/30 there is a net annual budget pressure of £0.318m (Section 4.2).
- l. Taking into account resource predictions, spending plans and savings already identified, there is a Transformation Programme (Section 7) requirement of an additional £0.824m in 2025/26, a further £0.086m by 2029/30. By 2029/30, whilst there is a £0.686m deficit, the overall position over five years is £0.172m. With impending Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) there is more uncertainty over the medium term and the Transformation Plan will undergo iterative development over the coming year and the MTFS for 2026/27.
- m. Commercial investment income will now reach £2m over the period of the MTFS accounting for 11.1% of fees and charges and other income (includes interest on investments). These are continually managed and are proportionate given the risks and opportunities associated with such investments. (Appendix 8, Table 16).
- n. The Council has a number of earmarked reserves (excluding NHB Reserve), balances reduce from £11.3m to £8.4m mostly as a result of the use of the Organisation Stabilisation Reserve to balance the deficit over the period of the MTFS. The operational and financial environment remains volatile therefore sufficient reserves are essential to ensure the Council can withstand any unexpected shocks. With the Government's focus on funding focused on authorities with low deprivation levels and little external funding anticipated, the Council must continue to be efficient, maximise income and continue to grow the Borough.
- o. This MTFS reports an estimated net deficit over the five-year period of £0.172m. Whilst the Organisation Stabilisation Reserve can accommodate this overall net deficit in the short term, there is a risk that with raised inflation, uncertainty over funding reforms and LGR on the horizon, this position is vulnerable, with much uncertainty. The Transformation and Efficiency Plan (which has already delivered £5.8m to date) will be critical in ensuring a balanced budget in the medium term.
- p. Whilst there are capital pressures there is always a risk of borrowing; however, this would need to be properly funded via the budget and would only be considered if all other options for example leasing, have been exhausted.

- q. Key risks to the MTFS are highlighted, including the potential impact of the LGR, Fair Funding Review, NHB, the volatility caused by the various Business Rates issues and the impact of climate change (both on Council commitments to carbon reduction and from costs incurred from flood response). Inflationary pressures and the and rising demand in areas such as housing and homelessness, present challenges to both revenue and capital costs and income streams (Section 8); and
- r. The Capital Programme remains an ambitious programme of £27.1m over the five years. In addition to the rolling replacement schemes, the Programme focusses mainly on maintaining and enhancing our existing assets including enhancements to investment properties, West Bridgford Town Centre Regeneration and improving leisure and community facilities and play areas. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) remain a pressure with demand exceeding our grant allocation. It is projected that capital resources will be in the region of £3.4m at the end of the five-year life of the Programme. The level of Capital Receipts will be slowly rebuilt by the repayment of capital loans but will only significantly increase if major assets are identified for disposal. External borrowing is currently not anticipated in the medium term but would be considered if necessary.

4.3 The MTFS has been developed at a time of significant economic uncertainty with continued international conflict and changes in Government control, both in the UK and abroad, adding more uncertainty. The biggest immediate organisational risk follows the white paper on LGR, which may impact as early as 2027 or 2028. If organisational objectives change then inevitably finances will have to shift.

4.4 The MTFS process has been rigorous and thorough, with a Transformation and Efficiency Programme that takes into account both officers' and Members' views. Whilst the Council faces financial constraints both the revenue and capital budgets delicately balance the need for efficiency and economy with the desire for growth; and the aim of encouraging economic development in the Borough and supporting the vulnerable, to achieve the Council's Corporate Priorities.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

There are other options in terms of increasing Council Tax by a lesser amount, but this would put severe pressure on already stretched Council resources (see Section 11). For example, if the Council chose to freeze charges in 2025/26, or to increase by £5 compared to the 3% increase proposed, it would result in income forgone of £1.646m and £0.4m respectively over the five-year period.

6. Risk and Uncertainties

6.1 Section 8 of the Annex covers key risks that may impact upon the MTFS. There are a number of reviews that due to economic and political uncertainty have been further delayed such as the Fair Funding Review, Business Rates reform and NHB many of which are now unlikely to be concluded before 2026/27. Details are still emerging around Simpler Recycling and the white paper on LGR

combined with a lack of funding certainty beyond one-year settlements increase the challenge of medium to long term planning.

- 6.2 Conversely there are upside or opportunity risks such as the Freeport and Combined Mayoral Authority which should facilitate greater economic growth. The Council will continue to monitor their impact and report via its usual governance mechanism via Full Council, Cabinet and Corporate Overview Group.

7. Implications

7.1 Finance Implications

These are detailed in the attached budget report (Annex). The Council is required to set a balanced budget for the 2025/26 financial year and the proposals present a balanced budget. In the opinion of the S151 Officer, a positive assurance is given that the budget is balanced, robust and affordable. The Capital Programme is achievable, realistic, and resourced, with funds and reserves including the General Fund, adequate to address the risks within the budget.

7.2 Legal Implications

The recommendations of this report support compliance with the Local Government Finance Act 1972.

7.3 Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

7.4 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Section 17 implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

7.5 Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no Biodiversity implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Allocating resources to invest in projects that support the Council's environmental objectives.
Quality of Life	Ensuring services that residents value are maintained and enhanced.
Efficient Services	Ensuring efficient use of resources and maximising returns and the development of the Transformation and Efficiency Plan.
Sustainable Growth	Ensuring the Council supports the Economic Growth Strategy and engages in projects such as the Freeport.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that it:

- a) adopts the budget setting report and associated financial strategies 2025/26 to 2029/30 (attached Annex) including the summarised Special Expenses budget at Appendix 1, Budget Summary at Appendix 2, changes to fees and charges regarding Garden Waste and Car Parking at Appendix 5 and Transformation and Efficiency Plan at Appendix 7;
- b) adopts the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 3;
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- d) sets Rushcliffe's 2025/26 Council Tax for a Band D property at £161.77 (increase from 2024/25 of £3.89 or 2.46%);
- e) sets the Special Expenses for 2025/26 for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth, Appendix 1, resulting in the following Band D Council Tax levels for the Special Expense Areas:
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 - ii) Keyworth £3.27 (£4.69 in 2024/25)
 - iii) Ruddington £3.23 (£3.29 in 2024/25);
- f) adopts the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix 6; and
- g) delegates authority to the Director – Finance and Corporate Services to make any minor amendments to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) once the final local government finance settlement is received and advise the Finance Portfolio Holder accordingly, to be reported to Full Council.

For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Director – Finance and Corporate Services 0115 914 8439 plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) website, 2025/26 Financial settlement papers
List of Annexes and Appendices (if any):	Annex to the Budget Report Appendix 1 Special Expenses Appendix 2 Revenue Budget Service Summary Appendix 3 Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2029/30 (including appraisals) Appendix 4 Use of Earmarked Reserves 2025/26 Appendix 5 Proposed pricing schedules (car parking and garden waste) Appendix 6 Pay Policy Statement 2025/26 Appendix 7 Transformation and Efficiency Plan Appendix 8 Capital and Investment Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30

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RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL

BUDGET SETTING REPORT AND ASSOCIATED FINANCIAL STRATEGIES

2025/26-2029/30

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1 INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

The economic environment continues to be challenging, the aftereffects of the global pandemic, continued international conflict and the unprecedented levels in inflation have elevated the Council's cost base. The general election in the summer has for the first time in 14 years resulted in a change to a Labour UK Government and this has added yet more uncertainty to financing and policy, making budget setting over the Medium-Term even more challenging. Globally, political volatility is increasing with the US Presidential election outcome and further highlighted by the collapse of the French Government and turmoil in South Korea.

A white paper on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has been recently released with a focus on simpler structures and efficiency savings. This may see two tier Council's restructured from as early as 2027 or 2028. This Council despite significant uncertainty will continue to make sensible financial decisions to ensure it provides the best possible services for its residents and delivers Corporate Plan objectives. The clear message is that there are still tough choices to be made in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the Council must continue to seek efficiencies through the Transformation and Efficiency Plan (TEP) and a focus on continuing to deliver vital services to the residents and businesses of Rushcliffe.

The local government financial settlement resulted in no increase in core spending power for 2025/26 for RBC. Given ongoing inflation this continues to make balancing the budget even more challenging. New Homes Bonus (NHB) has one final year in its current form, and we expect around £1m in 2025/26 UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF). A significant risk for the Council in 2026/27 will be wider local government finance reform prior to any LGR which will focus on more funding for less deprived areas and Business Rate reforms and further consultation with regards to NHB. For Rushcliffe this represents a likely pessimistic (and prudent) outcome and is reflected in the financial projections going forward.

Employers National Insurance (NI) contributions have increased by 1.2% to 15% in addition to the lowering of the threshold at which NI becomes payable. This has a budget pressure of approximately £300k per annum to the Council although it is anticipated that this may be partially compensated by government grant. However, this compensation will only apply to Local Government and not any third parties used to deliver services. This therefore has implications for the supply chain of the Council such as Leisure Services and is likely to translate in rising support service, transport, premises costs etc for the Council.

There remain uncertainties around developing initiatives such as Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme (EPR) and Simpler Recycling (SR) which places additional responsibility on the Council, with funding and additional costs not yet fully known. There is currently an anticipated shortfall in funding to be met from the Collection Fund Reserve and a newly created Simpler Recycling Reserve. The Council will continue to make representations to the Government that the imposition of such duties should be properly funded by the Government as with any 'new burden'.

Inflation has now fallen closer to the target of 2% (2.3% as at October 2024) it is more recent higher increases that have placed significant pressure on the MTFs. Energy costs have been subject to high levels of volatility and soaring prices in the past few years, whilst costs have reduced prices are expected to rise therefore, we have assumed 10% per annum in the budget. The Government uses interest rates as a key tool to contain inflation. If inflation remains higher then interest rates will be higher. Commendably the Council remains debt free, so is not yet subject to interest costs from borrowing. Higher interest rates do mean interest earned on treasury investments is elevated. The net projected financial position over the 5 years gives a virtually balanced budget of £171,900. The impact of LGR and its timing is unknown and will be factored in as the MTFs is developed further next year.

The Council remains sustainable due to its range of income streams, including Council Tax, commercial property income and fees and charges, with a proportionate approach to generating income. Government assumes Council Tax will be maximised at the higher of £5 or 3% in its funding assessment and the Council has budgeted at the maximum of 2.99% (£5.32) increasing the total Band D equivalent (including Special Expenses) from £177.63 to £182.94 with Rushcliffe's element of the charge increasing from £157.88 to £161.77 (£3.89 or 2.46%). The Council must also consider the rising costs of discretionary services and therefore the need to increase fees and charges and/or reduce expenditure. Broadly fees for discretionary services have been increased by 4% to recover the increase in the costs to deliver these services, however this is also balanced with the demand for services (given cost of living pressures) and services used by the more vulnerable in our community.

The focus is delivering our priorities within a balanced budget for 2025/26 and ensuring the budget is robust for the future. The main pressures in addition to those posed by inflation come from the new Simpler Recycling requirements and a downward trend in planning income from reduced demand from new developments. These are somewhat offset by associated savings on planning agency and various other efficiencies such as the transition to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) in addition to supporting carbon targets. The Council's leisure contract is due to end in 2027, however a short-term extension to 2030 has been proposed which aims to align Council facilities under one contract end date and provides further budget efficiencies the

next five years. After this extended period there may be further opportunities to generate efficiencies from the Leisure Strategy as the Council looks to undertake a full review and maximise the potential from its complete leisure portfolio and if the Council has transitioned into a new authority the opportunity for further synergy with a wider leisure portfolio.

The East Midlands Development Corporation (EMDevCo) has been wound up and transferred to the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) meaning reserves of £0.2m held for future commitments have been repurposed to the Organisation Stabilisation reserve. The £1m allocated for land acquisition for travellers' site has been repatriated and partially earmarked towards the acquisition of land for planting for carbon offsetting.

Capital resources are increasingly strained, with main pressures arising from Simpler Recycling, climate change and Disabled Facilities Grants. A rising asset base demands more from replacement programmes and has a knock-on effect to the challenges of balancing the revenue budget. Despite these pressures, the Council continues to develop and enhance its facilities with a budget of £27m over the 5-year Capital Programme. Schemes include focus on upgrades to facilities, (especially leisure centres to improve energy efficiency, both to reduce expenditure and deliver green objectives); play areas; vehicle replacement and delivering Warm Home Grants.

Nationally, councils are reporting difficulties in bridging their funding gaps, forcing cuts in discretionary services and an increasing reliance on reserves. Several Councils were forced to issue Section 114 notices (effectively declaring bankruptcy), and it is suggested this could worsen with one in five Councils at risk. The Council are one of the few who are debt free with a reasonable level of reserves, which helps to protect against this eventuality, but with reserves reducing from £21.4m in 2024/25 to £15.3m by end of 2029/30 financial risk remains significant. The expectation is that at some point in this period assets and liabilities will transfer to a new authority.

One-year settlements have provided little certainty for councils in recent years and the 2025/26 budget setting period is no exception, there is some hope in sight with a further stage of the Spending Review concluding in late spring 2025 and hopefully giving certainty for at least two more financial years. Thereafter there is likely to be LGR and undoubtedly further changes to funding allocations. Given the uncertainty of LGR, and the challenges of an unstable international economy and new burdens from government legislation the fact we have a virtually balanced budget for 5 years is testament to the hard work of both Councillors and officers and we will not rest on our laurels.

Executive Summary

This report outlines the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) through to 2029/30 including the revenue and capital budgets, supported by several key associated financial policies alongside details of changes to fees and charges. Some of the key figures are as follows:

Table 1 – Five-year Budget Estimate

Year	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
Net (Surplus)/Deficit (£)	(3,549,800)	1,161,100	1,057,600	817,400	685,600	171,900

Table 2 – Key changes

	2024/25	2025/26
RBC Precept	£7.419m	£7.728m
Council Tax Band D	£157.88	£161.77
Council Tax Increase	2.55%	2.46%
Council Tax Band D with Special Expenses	£177.63	£182.94
Council Tax Increase with Special Expenses	2.90%	2.99%
Retained Business Rates	£5.463m	£6.676m
New Homes Bonus	£1.509m	£1.478m

Table 3 – Change in precepts - Special Expenses

	2024/25	2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease) £	Increase/ (Decrease) %
Total Special Expense Precept	£928,000	£1,011,600	83,600	9.01%
West Bridgford	£59.44	£63.93	£4.49	7.55%
Keyworth	£4.69	£3.27	(£1.42)	(30.28%)
Ruddington	£3.29	£3.23	(0.06)	(1.82%)

The Local Government Act 2003 introduced a requirement that the Chief Financial Officer reports on the robustness of the budget. The estimates have been prepared in a prudent manner, although it should be recognised that there are elements outside of the Council's control. Several risks have been identified in Section 8 of this report, and these will be mitigated through the budget monitoring and risk management processes of the Council.

2 BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

Table 4 – Statistical assumptions which affect the five-year financial strategy

Assumed increases/inflation	Note	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Utilities	a	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Diesel/Fuel	b	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Contracts	a	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Pay costs increase	c	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Employer's pension contribution rate	d	18.50%	18.50%	18.50%	18.50%	18.50%
Return on cash investments	e	4.06%	3.75%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%
Tax base increase	f	1.66%	1.80%	1.80%	1.80%	1.80%
Employers National Insurance	g	15.00%	15.00%	15.00%	15.00%	15.00%

Notes to assumptions

- a) Inflation peaked at 11.2% in October 2022, this has steadily fallen to 2.6% as at September 2024 but is not expected to return to the Government's target of 2% within the MTFs period. High inflation has resulted in a permanent increase in the Councils spending levels and has been built into future year budgets to ensure commitments can be met.
- b) The Council completed successful conversion of some of the Council's fleet vehicles to using HVO fuel. The 2025/26 diesel/fuel budget has been re-assessed as the price was less than anticipated in the 2024/25 budget cycle. Fuel by its nature is volatile in price but we have assumed a 2% increase in future years, but we will continue to review costs over the medium term.
- c) Payroll projections have increased due to upward pressure on National Living Wage and pay negotiations (also driven by inflation) which also include the agreed pay award for 2024/25 of the higher of £1,290 or 2.5% per employee an average of 4% compared to average 6% in 2023/24.
- d) The Council is in the third year of its triennial valuation of the pension fund with the review due next year (covering the period 2023/24 to 2025/26). There was an increase to the employer's contribution rate to 18.5% (from 17.9%) but a reduction in the estimated annual deficit payment (to meet historical pension liabilities) from £0.976m per annum to £0.84m, £0.72m, £0.6m in 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 respectively. The Council has in the past chosen

to prepay the deficit however for this triennial valuation the saving from prepaying the deficit is £125k over 3 years. As interest rates are currently high, the lost opportunity cost from investing the funds would balance out any saving from prepaying the deficit and therefore this option does not make financial sense.

- e) Cash investment returns are based on projections consistent with the Council's Capital and Investment Strategy. The Bank of England Base rate dropped from 5% to 4.75% in November 2024, and it is expected that this will continue to decline with current predictions of 3.75% by December 2025 and 3% by the end of the MTFS period, recent UK and World events may affect this and projections can change.
- f) The tax base for 2025/26 has reduced from 2% to 1.66% due to the declining trend in housing growth, this has been reduced for future years to 1.8%
- g) The increase in Employers National Insurance (1.2% to 15%) equates to approximately £300k per annum. It is expected that the Council will receive a grant towards this increase however for prudence we have assumed £130k per annum grant rather than the full £300k.
- h) A £0.3m contingency is in place to manage adverse budget variances and potential unexpected increases.

3 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- 1.1. In the Autumn spending review, The Government has reiterated its commitment to a single fiscal event each year and to holding a Spending Review every two years, setting departmental budgets for a minimum of three years. The second phase of the Spending Review will conclude in late spring 2025. It is not clear how many years the second phase will cover, but the Government's general commitment would suggest at least 2026/27 and 2027/28. However, the recently announced white paper on English Devolution brings into question whether a longer-term settlement would be issued. This uncertainty and short-term decisions make long term planning challenging.

Across local government there was an increase in Core Spending Power of 3.2%. Rushcliffe like many district councils attained no increase. This assumed also that district councils maximise their ability to raise Council Tax to referendum limits.

Government have expressed a commitment to funding reforms within the Local Government Finance Settlement by redistributing funding to ensure that it reflects an up-to-date assessment of need and local revenues. This is expected to include a review of the funding formula and reforms on business rates (BR) likely involving a 'reset' of BR growth and a potential replacement for New Homes Bonus (NHB). Rushcliffe is unlikely to see any increase in funding with a potential scenario being a reduction in overall spending power linked to removing and redistributing BR growth. It's possible this could be initially compensated by some form of grant however the Council has taken the prudent approach and not included any such assumption in the budget.

This section of the report outlines the resources available to the Council: Business Rates, Council Tax (RBC and Special Expenses), Revenue Support Grant, New Homes Bonus, Fees, Charges and Rents, and Other Income

3.1 Business Rates

In 2024/25 indexation was split creating multipliers for small and standard businesses, allowing the Government to protect smaller businesses from tax rises, whilst still getting the bulk of the additional revenues from indexation, which are paid by larger businesses. For 2025/26 the business rates standard multiplier will be indexed (1.65% increase), and the small multiplier will be frozen. From 2026-27 onwards, new sectoral multipliers will be set, with lower multipliers for Retail, Hospitality, and Leisure (RHL) properties along with a new multiplier for properties with a rateable value of over £500k.

In 2025/26 the RHL relief will be reducing from 75% to 40%, resulting in a higher risk as the Council will have £1.3m more rates to collect. Compensation for reliefs will be paid as normal.

The proposals for Local Government funding (i.e., Fairer Funding and Business Rates) which were delayed due to the forthcoming General Election are expected in 2026 with significant uncertainties and risks still ahead. The delay in the business rates reset (now not likely until at least 2026/27) means that the Council retains growth which would otherwise be removed on a reset. Whilst this is a support to the budget it is only temporary and effectively moved the pressure on by another year. Further uncertainty has arisen due to the revised schedule of regular revaluations, now to occur every three years with the next one due 01/04/2026 (previously ad hoc from 5-7 years) this may result in fluctuations in collectible rates and makes the budget harder to predict.

The Power Station ceased production in October 2024 although for 2025/26 it remains a chargeable hereditament during the decommissioning and demolition stage albeit it now makes up a much smaller proportion of total collectable rates with a charge for business rates of £833k (2.42%).

The business rates reset has been built into the budget from 2026/27 and assumes no loss due to fairer funding. From 2027/28 the budget includes the effect of a reset and some growth (2%). There is a high level of uncertainty regarding the reduction in retained BR following the reset and for prudence the budget has been set to assume that the Council will only retain baseline funding (the level of business rates that Government have determined the Council should receive) plus renewables (Business Rates collected from renewable energy hereditaments). Alternative scenarios are considered at section 3.2. The real impact of this is demonstrated in Table 5 with a significant reduction in business rates in 2026/27.

The Council ordinarily makes assumptions reflecting national experience of successful ratings appeals and for this year will continue to use the national average appeals percentage to calculate the provision required. The national average included in the settlement is 3.2% (the same as in 2024/25) and this is reflected in the Council's budget for retained Business Rates.

The Business Rates element of the Collection Fund is estimated to be in surplus by £2.1m (RBC share £0.83m) at the end of 2024/25. The balance in the Collection Fund Reserve will be repatriated to support the additional costs of Simpler Recycling (see paragraph 4.2).

The Council continues to be a partner in the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool for 2025/26 and an assumption has been that this will result in a share of the surplus whilst growth is still anticipated. This is not included in the budget forecast after 2026/27 as the anticipated Business Rates reset will likely remove all growth. From 2026/27 onwards, arrangements will need to be revisited for both potential changes to the Business Rates system to determine the relevant tier split between districts and Nottinghamshire County Council or the potential new system of Local Government if LGR is in place by then.

There remains a challenge in setting the Business Rates budget, such as the decoupling of the multiplier and closure of the Power Station and the Freeport, further complicated now by potential new BR system and LGR proposals.

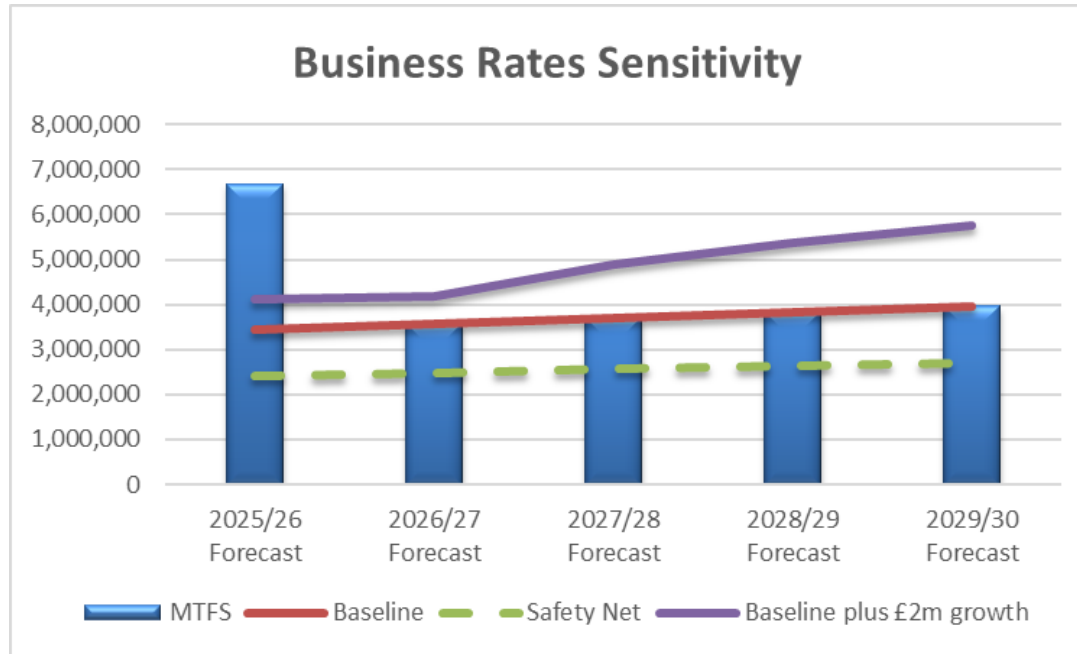
Table 5 - Forecast position for Business Rates

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Retained Business Rates £'000	(5,463)	(6,676)	(3,578)	(3,704)	(3,834)	(3,970)
Increase/(Decrease) £'000	558	1,213	(3,098)	126	130	136
Increase/(Decrease) %	11%	22%	(46%)	4%	4%	4%

3.2 Business Rates Sensitivity Analysis

As explained above, there is uncertainty surrounding Business Rates from 2026/27. The level of Business Rates baseline for Rushcliffe will be adjusted at the Business Rates reset which will determine how much growth the Council retains. It is unknown at this stage what baseline will be set and for prudence we have therefore assumed the Council will receive baseline plus renewables for the remainder of the MTFs because of the Power Station closure and the reset. However, there is an upside risk that the reset will see the baseline set at higher levels than expected meaning there would be the benefit of higher growth or alternatively transitional support. The Safety Net shown in the graph below is the minimum amount the Council could receive (in accordance with government regulations) calculated as 92.5% of the baseline set for the Council.

Chart 1 – Business Rates Sensitivity



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3.3 Council Tax

The Government has assumed in future funding projections that Councils will take up the option of increasing their Council Tax by the higher of 3% or £5 for a Council Tax Band D (maintained at 3% for a third year). The overriding Rushcliffe principle is that the Council aims to stay in the lower quartile for Council Tax. The Council acknowledges the cost-of-living challenges being faced by its residents however the Council must also consider the future delivery of services and reserves needed to withstand financial shocks. The Council is required to consider Special Expenses when assessing increases against the referendum limit and together both the Special Expenses and Borough increase totalling £5 or 3%. The total increase is £5.31 or 2.99% with Rushcliffe's element £3.89 or 2.46%. We have assumed an increase in Council Tax of 3% each year for the remainder of the MTFS. A Council Tax freeze on the RBC element of Council Tax in 25/26 would result in a reduction of £0.254m in revenue in 2025/26 and £1.6m over the 5 years.

The 2025/26 tax base has been set at 47,769.8 (an increase of 1.66%). The projections for 2025/26 have been based upon the current Council Tax base. Anticipated growth during 2025/26 has been calculated and included in the projections and thereafter we have assumed a 1.8% increase per annum. This will be reviewed as the Council looks to deliver its housing growth targets.

The overall net surplus is expected to be £63k (RBC share £6k).

Table 6 - Movement in Council Tax, the tax base, precept, and the Council Tax Collection Fund deficit

		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Council Tax Base	(a)	46,989.80	47,769.80	48,629.70	49,505.00	50,396.10	51,303.20
Council Tax	(b)	£157.88	£161.77	£165.82	£170.72	£175.68	£181.63
Annual Increase (RBC element)		£3.93	£3.89	£4.05	£4.90	£4.96	£5.95
% Increase		2.55%	2.46%	2.50%	2.96%	2.91%	3.39%
Gross Council Tax Collected	(a x b)	(7,418,700)	(7,727,700)	(8,063,800)	(8,451,500)	(8,853,700)	(9,318,200)
Increase in Precept		£326,500	£309,000	£336,100	£387,700	£402,200	£464,500
Council Tax (Surplus)/Deficit		£3,200	£6,100				

3.4 Second Homes Premium

The Council remains committed to ensuring properties are brought into use for residents. The proposal to introduce the Second Home Premium was approved by Members in March 2024, but the earliest that this could be implemented was from 1 April 2025. The Government has subsequently issued revised legislation, giving certain exceptions where a premium may not be imposed (for example if a property is actively marketed for sale). This will be incorporated into our policies.

3.5 Special Expenses

The Council sets a special expense to cover any expenditure it incurs in a part of the Borough which elsewhere is undertaken by a town or parish council. These costs are then levied on the taxpayers of that area. As with previous years, special expenses will be levied in West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth.

Appendix 1, summarised in Table 7, details the Band D element of the precepts for the special expense areas. Expenditure in West Bridgford has increased by £87.7k, this is mainly due to the new Edwalton Community Centre £30k, Bridge Field tree works and £25k capital contribution to play area works. This results in an increase in the Band D charge of £4.49 (7.55%) or 8.6p per week. Costs in Keyworth have decreased by £4.1k due to reduced annuity charge resulting from reprofiling of cemetery health and safety works from 2024/25 to 2025/26 meaning repayments via the annuity will not commence until 2026/27. This equates to a 30.03% decrease (£1.42). Special expense Band D tax amounts have remained the same. The Band D amount for Ruddington has decreased by £0.07 (-1.8%).

The budgets for the West Bridgford Special Expense area have been discussed at the West Bridgford Special Expenses and Community Infrastructure Levy group, given the more detailed nature of the budget.

Table 7 - Special Expenses

	2024/25		2025/26		
	Cost £	Band D £	Cost £	Band D £	% Change
West Bridgford	903,400	59.44	991,100	63.93	7.55
Keyworth	14,200	4.69	10,100	3.27	(30.28)
Ruddington	10,400	3.29	10,400	3.23	(1.82)
Total	928,000		1,011,600		

3.6 Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

The Council no longer receives any historical RSG and this equates to £3.25m in lost income. The Council has mitigated the impact of this loss largely through its Transformation and Efficiency Plan. There is now a small element of RSG included in the grants line of the budget however these are operational grants that had previously been included in the net cost of services and include Local Council Tax Support Administration Subsidy and Family Annex Discount (£105,374), and now also include Electoral Integrity (£10,495) and Transparency Code funding (£8,103).

3.7 New Homes Bonus

The New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme was intended to give clear incentive to local authorities to encourage housing growth in their areas. 2024/25 (£1.509m) was expected to be the final payment, however this has been extended to 2025/26. The Council will receive £1.478m funding, this will top up the NHB reserve and used towards future Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) payments to offset any impact on the revenue budget and Council Tax.

3.8 Fees, Charges and Rental Income

The Council is dependent on direct payment for many of its services. The income, from various fees, charges, and rents is a key element in recovering the costs of providing services which, in turn, assists in keeping the Council Tax at its current low level. Some fees and charges have been increased to offset increased cost caused by higher-than-normal inflation and pay increases although limiting these in areas for the more vulnerable (such as home alarms).

The Fees, Charges and Rental Income budget is shown in Table 8.

Table 8 – Fees, Charges and Rental Income

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Car Parks	(1,118)	(1,228)	(1,228)	(1,228)	(1,328)	(1,328)
Licences	(317)	(334)	(341)	(348)	(355)	(355)
Non Sporting Facility Hire	(154)	(160)	(148)	(152)	(157)	(157)
Other Fees & Charges	(733)	(966)	(971)	(979)	(988)	(992)
Planning Fees	(1,532)	(1,585)	(1,629)	(1,675)	(1,722)	(1,769)
Rents	(2,134)	(2,217)	(2,281)	(2,284)	(2,289)	(2,293)
Service Charge	(488)	(486)	(489)	(489)	(489)	(489)
Crematorium Income	(711)	(759)	(867)	(946)	(1,000)	(1,054)
Garden Waste & Bin sales	(1,688)	(1,770)	(1,939)	(2,110)	(2,285)	(2,466)
Total	(8,875)	(9,505)	(9,893)	(10,211)	(10,613)	(10,903)

Income assumptions are determined by several factors including current performance, decisions already taken and known risks and opportunities. Where possible, the MTFs has made provision for future inflationary increases in fees and charges to balance the cost of providing services whilst having regard for the local economy, service market position and the ability of residents to pay. Where possible income on discretionary fees have increased by 4%. Anticipated income from commercial property investments are budgeted to increase in-line with contractual rent reviews.

Car Parking charges have recently been introduced in Bingham, so there are currently no plans to increase charges further however it is proposed to increase charges at West Bridgford Car Parks. To protect short term visits, incremental increases are proposed to longer stays (over one hour) in alignment with the off-street car parking strategy. These are shown at Appendix 5.

The budget for Other Fees and Charges shows an increase from 2024/25, mainly due to the re-classification of some sales income which was previously classified as other income and increased income from Gresham all-weather pitch.

Statutory increases in Planning Fees came into effect December 2023 together with inflationary increases in non-statutory planning fees and charges. The Levelling Up Bill requires Councils to meet statutory deadlines for processing applications or risk refunding the fee.

Crematorium income is budgeted to rise steadily over the next five years as it is now establishing itself in the market.

Garden Waste, historically increased every three years, is now increased annually by £2 per annum to balance the additional costs incurred to deliver the service. The 2025/26 and 2026/27 budgets include an increase in charge of £5 for second and subsequent bins in addition to the annual inflationary increase. There will remain a differential of £5 from 2027/28 between first bin and two or more bins (see Appendix 5 for the current and revised charges).

3.9 Other Income

In addition to fees and charges, the Council also receives a range of other forms of income, these are summarised in Table 9 below. The majority relates to Housing Benefit Subsidy (£11.758m in 2025/26) which is the Council's reimbursement for the costs of the national housing benefit scheme. Over recent years the subsidy has reduced due to the transfer of new claimants to Universal Credits, and this is expected to continue to decline over the coming years although offset by inflationary increases to benefits.

Other Income is mainly the Leisure Services contract proposed to extend to 2030 pending further reviews of this service provision. The Transformation and Efficiency Plan includes leisure budget efficiencies of £1.732m over the next five years although the delivery contract for this service will be reviewed ahead of the extended contract end date of 2030. There may be additional budget efficiencies arising out of this exercise.

Interest on investments reflect assumptions based on balances available to invest and expected interest rates (see Appendix 8). Interest receipts have increased from the 2024/25 budget due to interest rate assumptions and balances available for investment. Interest rates are anticipated to reduce gradually over the next couple of years plateauing around the 3% rate. This, together with a drop in the amount available for investment (namely due to reserve balances and S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies declining), will see interest on investments fall by the end of 2029/30.

Recycling Credits reduce to zero from 2025/26 as Simpler Recycling comes into effect, and this is expected to be subsumed within the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding. EPR funding has been assumed to continue at the 2025/26 level of £1.407m for the remainder of the MTFs however this is a risk as future funding has not yet been confirmed and if producer habits changed then the funding may well reduce.

Other Government Grants consists of NNDR (£119k), Domestic Violence (£35k), Housing Benefits Administration (£19k) Universal Credits (£1k) and Homelessness Prevention (£360k)

Table 9 – Other Income

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000
Council Tax Costs Recovered	(236)	(305)	(305)	(305)	(305)	(305)
Council Tax/ Housing Benefit Admin Grants	(141)	(148)	(149)	(154)	(159)	(164)
Interest on Investments	(1,043)	(1,435)	(1,308)	(1,177)	(1,017)	(922)
Other Income	(1,340)	(1,517)	(1,633)	(1,641)	(1,649)	(1,656)
Recycling Credits	(200)	-	-	-	-	-
Other Government Grants	(491)	(534)	(534)	(534)	(534)	(534)
Sub Total	(3,451)	(3,939)	(3,929)	(3,811)	(3,664)	(3,581)
Housing Benefit Subsidy	(12,300)	(11,758)	(12,103)	(12,459)	(12,825)	(13,203)
Total	(15,751)	(15,697)	(16,032)	(16,270)	(16,489)	(16,784)

3.10 Income Summary

Table 10 – All Sources of Income

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000
Retained Business Rates	(5,463)	(6,676)	(3,578)	(3,704)	(3,834)	(3,970)
Business Rates Pool Surplus	(300)	(400)	-	-	-	-
Other Grant Income*	(616)	(1,761)	(1,537)	(1,537)	(1,537)	(1,537)
New Homes Bonus	(1,509)	(1,478)	-	-	-	-
Council Tax (RBC)	(7,419)	(7,728)	(8,064)	(8,451)	(8,854)	(9,318)
Council Tax (Special Expenses)	(928)	(1,012)	(1,100)	(1,157)	(1,221)	(1,245)
Collection Fund Surplus	(32)	(835)	-	-	-	-
Fees, charges and rental income	(8,875)	(9,505)	(9,893)	(10,211)	(10,613)	(10,903)
Other income	(15,751)	(15,697)	(16,032)	(16,270)	(16,489)	(16,784)
Total Income	(40,893)	(45,092)	(40,204)	(41,330)	(42,548)	(43,757)

* The majority of this budget is made up of EPR funding £1.407m announced for 2025/26 and which is assumed to continue each year going forward. Compensation for increases in NI are also included £0.13m for each year of the MTFs. It has not yet been confirmed what level of grant the Council may receive. Services Grant has been abolished with Minimum Funding Guarantee continuing albeit at a reduced level for 2025/26. For Rushcliffe this amounts to £0.1m. There is uncertainty in 2026/27 relating to potential Business Rates reform and how this will impact on the Minimum Funding Guarantee grant, for prudence nothing has been included. Revenue Support Grant of £123k includes Local Council Tax Support admin subsidy and Family Annex Discount (included in RSG in 24/25) and Electoral Integrity and Transparency Code funding which is not typical RSG.

4 2025/26 SPENDING PLANS

The Council's spending plans for the next five years are shown in Table 11 and include the assumptions in Section 2.

Table 11 – Spending Plans

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000
Employees	15,502	16,403	16,955	17,877	18,619	18,982
Premises	1,706	1,763	1,858	1,957	2,064	2,189
Transport	1,651	1,757	1,860	2,040	2,217	2,329
Supplies & Services	5,351	5,212	5,327	5,475	5,450	5,547
Transfer Payments	12,283	11,949	12,311	12,686	13,069	13,465
Third Party	1,260	1,311	1,345	1,402	1,437	1,446
Depreciation / Impairment	1,895	1,895	1,895	1,895	1,895	1,895
Capital Salaries Recharge	(240)	(175)	(73)	(32)	(30)	(28)
Gross Service Expenditure	39,408	40,115	41,478	43,300	44,721	45,825
Reversal of Capital Charges	(1,895)	(1,895)	(1,895)	(1,895)	(1,895)	(1,895)
Transfer to Reserves	1,078	2,148	1,043	809	365	339
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,178	1,174	739	174	174	174
Overall Expenditure	39,769	41,542	41,365	42,388	43,365	44,443

4.1 Explanations for some of the main movements

- Employee costs reflects both an increase in employers NI announced in the Autumn Statement (an increase of 1.2% to 15%) and salaries increase (4% budgeted increase in 2025/26, 3% 2026/27 and 2% thereafter).
- Premises costs include utilities which include future increases at 10% per annum. Within this budget line is a there is a net saving of £44k following the relocation of Customer Services to the library.
- Transport costs show an increase over the 5-year period mainly due to increased motor insurance premiums, increased maintenance costs and the additional vehicle costs related to Simpler Recycling.
- Supplies and services have dropped slightly in 2025/26 due to the completion of the digital upgrade of Home Alarm Service.
- Transfer Payments (Housing Benefits) are reducing as more people are moving to Universal Credit; however, the subsidy the Council receives does not fully cover the costs paid out. This is mainly due to rent increases in Supported Housing for which the Council only receives 60% subsidy.
- Depreciation is net zero impact on the general fund (fully offset by the reversal of capital charges line)
- Capital Salaries recharge increase in 2025/26 due to rephasing of the Capital Programme and Property staff costs in relation to investment properties such as Manvers Business Park and community buildings at Edwalton and West Park, which reduces in later years as the capital works are completed.
- The £835k Collection Fund surplus relates to Business Rates (£829k) and Council tax (£6k) both anticipated surpluses arising at outturn in 2024/25.
- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) decreases in 2026/27 to reflect the final payment in relation to the Arena which when repaid in full, causes MRP to fall further to £174k per annum as no new debt is envisaged over the medium term and the Capital Programme is fully funded.

4.2 Simpler Recycling

In October 2023 the Government announced their plans for the introduction of 'Simpler Recycling', which intends to ensure all homes in England recycle the same materials at the kerbside. In essence the Council will incur additional costs for kerbside waste collection of both glass and food. The January Cabinet report gives more detail, and the capital section of this report details the capital consequences. There is uncertainty around the costs to bring in the new scheme in addition to increased capital replacement costs in the future. The revenue budget pressures are detailed below and the respective impact on employee costs etc are within each of the budget lines in Table 11.

Table 12 Revenue Budget Pressure

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Revenue	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Glass**	40,300	129,400	157,500	185,700	189,000
Food***	0	0	613,200	1,238,100	1,261,000
Total	40,300	129,400	770,700	1,423,800	1,450,000
Loss of recycling credits (replaced by EPR grant)	231,300	275,000	275,000	275,000	275,000
EPR grant*	0	(1,407,000)	(1,407,000)	(1,407,000)	(1,407,000)
Net Budget Pressure	271,600	(1,002,600)	(361,300)	291,800	318,000

5 BUDGET REQUIREMENT

The budget requirement is formed by combining the resource prediction and spending plans. Appendix 2 gives further detail on the Council's five-year Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Table 13 Budget requirement

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000
Total Income	(40,893)	(45,092)	(40,204)	(41,330)	(42,548)	(43,757)
Gross Expenditure	39,769	41,542	41,365	42,388	43,365	44,443
Net Budget Position (Surplus)/Deficit	(1,124)	(3,550)	1,161	1,058	817	686
Planned Transfer (to)/from Reserves	(1,078)	(2,148)	(1,043)	(809)	(365)	(339)
Revised Transfer (to)/from Reserves	(2,202)	(5,698)	118	249	452	347

Table 13 shows a budget surplus of £3.55m in 2025/26, followed by deficits in the following years: £1.161m in 2026/27 rising to £1.058m in 2027/28 before dropping slightly in 2028/29 to £0.817m and £0.686m in 2029/30, due mostly to the reduction in Business Rates income from the anticipated reset. The total deficit position of £0.172m over the 5-year period will be managed using the Organisation Stabilisation Reserve to smooth the effect of variation in net budget requirement. The budget includes Transformation and Efficiency Plan savings of £1.7m over the 5-year period helping to reduce the deficit to more manageable levels.

Planned Transfer to/from reserves include items outside of the revenue budget such as the transfer from New Homes Bonus to fund Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

The significant movement in 2026/27, moving from a surplus to a deficit is due to the fall out of New Homes Bonus (NHB), the Business Rates reset and corresponding reduction in rates received. This deficit position increase further in 2027/28 as simpler recycling comes into effect offset partly by reductions in MRP due to the end of payments in relation to Rushcliffe Arena.

Section 7 covers the Transformation and Efficiency Plan - including the use of reserves, balancing the budget for 2025/26 and future financial pressures.

6 RESERVES

To comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, a review has been undertaken of the Council's reserves, considering current and future risks. This has included an assessment of risk registers, pressures upon services, inflation, and interest rates.

Table 14 details the estimated balances on each of the Council's specific reserves over the 5-year MTFS. This also shows the General Fund Balance. Total Specific Reserves reduce from £20.9m to £15.3m (2024/25 – 2029/30). Appendix 4 details the movement in reserves for 2025/26 which also includes capital commitments. This shows that the balance increases from £21.4m to £23.2m. The in-year movement reflects the release of £1.2m from NHB to offset the MRP charged in the year and the in-year NHB receipt of £1.478m. Other significant movements include topping up the Organisation Stabilisation reserve by the estimated surplus £3.5m and the receipt and use of EPR government grant for Simpler Recycling Reserve, as discussed at Section 4.2. What the reserves do not yet show is any commitment with regards to potential Local Government Reorganisation. Future MTFS will be updated when more information is available.

The Climate Change Action Reserve remains despite the economic pressures. The reserve supports projects that contribute to the Council's ambitions to protect and enhance the environment including the reduction of its carbon footprint. A projected balance of £0.918m is available from 2025/26. It should be noted that a provision of £1.5m was made in 24/25 to acquire land for carbon offsetting. Any unspent balance will be carried forward to 25/26. Allocations from the Climate Change Reserve will be made as projects get approved. Existing capital schemes are assessed for any carbon reduction measures and funding from the reserve allocated. A new Simpler Recycling Reserve has been created to hold EPR government grants for use on both capital and revenue Simpler Recycling schemes – glass and food waste. The Council continues to look at avenues of external funding to support carbon reduction initiatives (such as at its leisure centres); and if successful these will be reported via Cabinet and Corporate Overview Group in their financial updates. Capital funding is not sufficient to meet the anticipated capital pressures of £3.31m for both food waste and glass kerb recycling collection, therefore an appropriation from the current Collection Fund Reserve is proposed of £0.746m.

A Vehicle Replacement Reserve exists to support the acquisition of new vehicles, plant, and equipment arising from Streetwise insourcing. This will be actively used to support the capital programme where there are insufficient capital receipts.

The Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve (currently £1.2m) exists to mitigate the potential losses of reductions in the capital value of the Council's multi-asset investments. These assets provide a considerable proportion of the Council's total investment income but are however at-risk fluctuations on market value linked to adverse impacts on the economy of the Covid pandemic and the continued war in Ukraine. There is currently a statutory override in place until March 2025. The override is currently subject to consultation.

A new Flood Grant and Resilience Reserve was created, with an allocation of £28k from part of Guaranteed Funding Grant awarded for 2024/25. This reserve commenced to be used for flooding in 2024/25. It is allocated for grants of £120 for properties with integral or stand-alone garages flooded and to top up the existing flood resilience store grant scheme. Its future balance will depend on the extent of future floods and claims against the reserve.

It is important that the level of reserves is regularly reviewed to manage future risks. All the reserves have specifically identified uses including some of which are held primarily for capital purposes: Investments Reserve, Vehicle Replacement Reserve, and Regeneration and Community Projects Reserve (to meet special expense and other economic growth-related capital commitments). The release of reserves will be constantly reviewed to balance funding requirements and the potential need to externally borrow to support the Capital Programme. Being prudent, we need to ensure we do have future funds to deliver capital projects, and we aim to top up reserves from any in-year revenue efficiencies identified.

It should be noted that in the professional opinion of the Council's Section 151 Officer, the General Fund Reserve position of £2.6m is adequate given the financial and operational challenges (and opportunities) the Council faces.

Table 14 – Specific Reserves

£ 000's	Balance 31.03.24	Balance 31.03.25	Balance 31.03.26	Balance 31.03.27	Balance 31.03.28	Balance 31.03.29	Balance 31.03.30
<i>Investment Reserves:</i>							
Regeneration and Community Projects	3,226	3,506	3,046	2,452	2,308	2,104	1,215
Sinking Fund - Investments	795	810	644	324	524	639	839
<i>Corporate Reserves:</i>							
Organisation Stabilisation	3,262	4,533	7,710	6,031	4,955	4,138	3,452
Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve	1,173	1,173	1,173	1,173	1,173	1,173	1,173
Collection Fund S31	1,085	-	-	-	-	-	-
Climate Change Action	201	918	818	533	233	158	158
Flood Grant & Resilience	-	22	22	22	22	22	22
Freeport Reserve	200	-	-	-	-	-	-
Simpler Recycling Reserve	-	1,020	445	1,448	1,366	1,074	756
Vehicle Replacement Reserve	770	605	460	345	230	115	-
Risk and Insurance	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Planning Appeals	349	349	349	349	349	349	349
Elections	51	101	151	201	51	101	151
<i>Operating Reserves:</i>							
Planning	56	131	75	75	75	75	75
Leisure Centre Maintenance	28	-	-	15	30	45	60
Total Excluding NHB Reserve	11,296	13,268	14,993	13,068	11,416	10,093	8,350
New Homes Bonus	9,652	8,131	8,185	7,446	7,272	7,098	6,924
Total Earmarked Reserves	20,948	21,399	23,178	20,514	18,688	17,191	15,274
<i>General Fund Balance</i>	2,604	2,604	2,604	2,604	2,604	2,604	2,604
TOTAL	23,552	24,003	25,782	23,118	21,292	19,795	17,878

7 THE TRANSFORMATION AND EFFICIENCY PLAN

Since 2010, the Council has successfully implemented a Transformation and Efficiency Plan (TEP), to drive change and efficiency activity to deal with the scale of the financial challenges the Council faces, currently inflation pressures and potential changes to the system of local government finance. An updated TEP (and dovetails with previous Government requirements for a Productivity Plan) is provided in Appendix 7. The Executive Management Team, alongside budget managers, have undertaken a review of all Council budgets resulting in savings which have been fed into the MTFS. The TEP focuses on the following themes:

- Transformation of services to make better use of resources e.g. Service Efficiencies and Asset Reviews
- Take advantage of advances in technology e.g. the Digital By Design Programme
- Reduce wasteful spend within systems or for example on consultants (as part of member/management challenge)
- Barriers preventing activity that the Government can help to reduce

This Programme will form the basis of how the Council meets the financial challenge summarised at Appendix 7 reducing the gross deficit position. The below demonstrates that by 2029/30 with £1.762m of efficiencies their remains an annual deficit of £0.686m.

Table 15 – Savings targets

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross Budget Deficit excluding Transformation Plan	3,107	8,133	8,248	8,326	8,281
Cumulative Savings in Transformation Plan	(5,833)	(6,658)	(6,972)	(7,189)	(7,509)
Gross Budget Deficit/(Surplus)	(2,726)	1,475	1,276	1,137	772
Additional Transformation Plan savings	(824)	(314)	(218)	(320)	(86)
Net budget Deficit/(Surplus)	(3,550)	1,161	1,058	817	686
Cumulative additional Transformation savings	(824)	(1,138)	(1,356)	(1,676)	(1,762)

The Council's budget for 2025/26 and beyond includes the impact of inflationary increases whilst also being restricted by Government policy on commercial activity to generate additional income, limiting borrowing for wider projects dependent upon capital spending proposals, and excluding borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) where capital spend is solely for commercial gain. The Council has continued to review its services and processes and, where possible, identify efficiencies and increase income. The impact of the above pressures will result in a need to draw on reserves from 2026/27 onwards with 2025/26 temporarily supported by additional business rates due to the delay in the Business Rates reset.

The Council must continue to review its existing transformation projects on an on-going annual basis. In recent years, the Transformation plan has included large projects such as Bingham Arena and Enterprise Centre and Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium, it will be a challenge to continue to identify projects against the backdrop of the cost-of-living challenge and higher levels of inflation and now LGR. Increasingly transformation will focus upon transitioning to a potential new authority and the limited capacity within the Council to do much more. Going forward, the plan includes service efficiencies and income generation, Officers continue to seek efficiencies wherever possible and look for wider projects to improve value for money, this is becoming increasingly difficult in already lean budgets. Both the officers and Members have worked together to identify £1.762m of expected efficiencies over the 5-year period, The current transformation projects and efficiency proposals which will be worked upon for delivery from 2025/26 are given in Appendix 7. Particularly a focus on greater leisure contract efficiencies and generating more income as the Council's cost base increases, such as in relation to green bins, car parking and the crematorium.

8 RISK AND SENSITIVITY

The following table shows the key risks and how we intend to treat them through our risk management practices. Further commentary on the higher-level risks is given below the table.

Table 16 – Key Risks

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action
Central Government policy changes e.g., Fairer Funding, ceasing NHB and Business Rates reset leading to reduced revenue; or increased demand on resources for example environmental policy changes with regards to waste will create future financial risk (Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and weekly food collections).	Medium	Medium	Engagement in consultation in policy creation and communicating to senior management and members the financial impact of changes via the MTFS. Budget at baseline plus renewables for business rates in years of uncertainty. Inclusion of demand and/or income in the MTFS and Capital Programme and calculations to understand the impact of any proposals.
Impact on resources to transition to a new authority as part of LGR	High	High	Engage in relevant working groups and report back to Cabinet or Full Council.
Lifespan of this MTFS likely to be curtailed, for example 2027/28 could be the last year for this Borough Council's budget	High	High	To update the MTFS in future years and report to Full Council
Environmental carbon reduction and bio-net diversity gain (BNG) commitments leading to greater pressure on revenue and capital budgets.	High	Medium	Climate Change Reserve being replenished (including for potential land acquisition for carbon reduction), ongoing review of significant projects and outcome of scrutiny review. A vehicle replacement reserve which will help fund, for example, electric vehicles. Apply for external funding where possible.
The Council is unable to balance its budget, and the budget is not sustainable in the longer term as a result of increased inflation (largely driven by pay and utility cost increases) and	Medium	Medium	Going concern report presented to Governance Group to confirm that the Council has sufficient reserves to withstand the short-term financial shocks. Budget set to include latest assumptions on inflationary increases. Further

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action
government funding reductions with uncertainty due to one-year settlement.			plans for the transformation strategy to mitigate risk over the longer term. Budget reporting processes and use of budget efficiencies and reserves. Maintain reserves at a sufficient level. With LGR the Council will cease to be an entity in its current form, to be referenced in future reports.
Increased demand for services such as homelessness and migration or general housing growth.	Medium	Medium	Additional government funding and internal resources provided.
Risk of increased capital programme costs due to either increased demand (e.g., DFGs, Traveller's site) or inflation.	High	High	Continuation of the waiting list for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). Working with Nott's authorities on a more equitable distribution of resources. Further resource in capital reserves to be appropriated if efficiencies are identified.
Insufficient capital resources to fund the capital programme.	Medium	Medium	Ongoing cashflow management. The Council has the ultimate recourse to borrow or lease. Review of Capital Programme to prioritise.
Opportunity for additional business rates from the Freeport or risk of liabilities if it does not progress.	Medium	Medium	Continue to monitor progress and inform business rate assumptions through Officer working Groups/Board.
Risk of financial loss resulting from the decline in the capital value of pooled investments.	Medium	Medium	Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve to mitigate any losses. Regular monitoring of environment and fund values. Seek advice from Treasury Advisors on strategy going forward.
The ongoing impact of flooding in the borough linked to climate change.	Medium	Medium	The Council continues to deliver flood relief schemes and bears the impact of the Internal Drainage Board levy. Contingency budget maybe utilised if the levy continues to rise. New Flood Resilience Reserve created.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action
Understanding the impact on RBC of the Combined Mayoral Authority.	Medium	Medium	Continue to play a role in the inaugural year of the authority, and going forward, and report implications back to Council through its usual governance processes.
Unknown impact of further year of UKSPF on the budget and on staffing resources	Medium	Medium	Estimate potential revenue and capital budget allocations and prepare potential schemes in advance to be reported to future Cabinet

The Council recognises there are upside risks in maximising opportunities. The risks above can change depending on changes in the services as a result of TEP projects or other changes to the environment that the Council operated in such as the Freeport and Combined Mayoral Authority. The Council maximises income generating opportunities and efficiencies wherever possible, so it remains self-sufficient and continues to grow the Borough and provide excellent services.

The MTFs presents a net deficit of approximately £172k over the 5-year period and this will be funded using the Organisation Stabilisation Reserve or by identifying other business efficiencies or further income. There is a budgeted surplus arising in 2025/26 due to the delay in Business Rates reset and this will be used to fund the deficits arising from 2026/27 onwards. Reserves are necessary to ensure the Council can continue to deliver services to its residents and to protect the Council from risks in relation to funding uncertainty and rising costs. The expectation is LGR will be within the lifespan of this MTFs and any year prior to 2029/30 given a budget surplus over the period. Any upfront costs of LGR are yet to be assessed.

9 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

9.1 Setting the Capital Programme

Officers submit schemes to be included in a draft Capital Programme, which also includes on-going provisions to support Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and investment in Social Housing. This draft programme is discussed by Executive Management Team (EMT) along with supporting information and business cases where appropriate with the big projects and the overall fiscal impact reported to Councillors in budget update sessions. The draft Capital Programme continues to be further refined and supported by detailed appraisals as set out in the Council's Financial Regulations. These detailed appraisals are included at Appendix 3 along with the proposed five-year capital programme which is summarised at Table 17. This remains an ambitious programme totalling £27.1m for 5 years, although the programme is diminishing as resources reduce and therefore the likelihood of borrowing increases.

9.2 Significant Projects in the Capital Programme

The Council's five-year capital programme shows the Council's commitment to deliver more efficient services, improve its leisure facilities, enable economic development and be more environmentally sustainable. Against a background of financial challenge, with both inflation pressures and the perilous state of public finances, the strength of the Council's financial position is such that it continues to support economic growth and sustainable excellent services in the Borough. The Programme is approved for the five-year period and allows flexibility of investment to enhance service delivery, provide widened economic development to maximise business and employment opportunities. The programme is reviewed by Full Council as part of the budget setting process. A major focus of the Capital Programme is to improve services, be transformative and generate revenue income streams to help balance the Council's MTFS. Significant projects in the Capital Programme include:

- a) £0.971m is included in the programme for enhancements to the Council's portfolio of Investment Properties. This investment ensures that we have high quality lettable retail and business units capable of delivering a robust revenue income stream thereby supporting economic development. Cost of works on Investment Properties are met from the Investment Property Reserve.
- b) A provision of £500k has been included for West Bridgford Town Centre Regeneration, to help 'pump prime' a larger initiative with public sector partners, such as pedestrianisation of Central Avenue.

- c) The on-going vehicle replacement programme totals £6.9m in the programme over 5 years. This includes provision for investment in new vehicles/bins/caddies to accommodate new legislation to provide kerbside glass and food recycling – estimated expenditure £3.3m with expected government grants totalling £2.564m, the balance to be met from the Simpler Recycling Reserve (topped up by transfer from the Collection Fund Reserve). The vehicle replacement programme will be subject to future review as consideration is given to transitioning to electric/hybrid vehicles.
- d) The provision for Support to Registered Housing Providers has benefitted significantly from Planning Agreements monies arising from Land North of Bingham £3.8m. This sum, together with the balances of other Planning Agreement monies and capital receipts set aside for Affordable Housing gives a total provision available of £4.8m. Options for commitment of these monies continue to be assessed and has therefore been profiled to the last three years of the programme.
- e) £2.7m over the 5 years for investment in the upgrade of facilities at Keyworth and Cotgrave Leisure Centres and other Leisure Facility Sites. There are planned refurbishments to changing villages; floor replacement; roof enhancements; and upgrades for plant and lighting. Schemes are considered in the light of the Leisure Strategy and are aimed at maintaining excellent standards of leisure provision.
- f) £840k has been included in the programme for the development of Edwalton Community Facility. The costs for this new facility have increased since its inception. It is planned to fund this from: £250k New Homes Bonus and £590k as a Special Expense Annuity. An appraisal is included in Appendix 3.
- g) Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) provision of £4.5m has been provided in the 5-year programme. Funding has become extremely tight to meet the statutory spending requirement and Rushcliffe had to take the unusual step of allocating £0.7m of its own resources to support spending pressures, this is not sustainable. Cabinet and Senior Officers will continue to actively lobby Central Government and Local Authorities across Nottinghamshire for additional and redistributed Better Care Fund (BCF) grant allocations. An additional allocation of £113k was made for 24/25 and this increased level of support is confirmed for 25/26 (total £939k including the Handy Persons Scheme which is operated by Nottinghamshire County Council). Rushcliffe's BCF spending plans are no longer able to support DFGs, Assistive Technology (Home Alarms) or the Warmer Homes on Prescription scheme. This will be reviewed in the light of additional grant monies made available. Much welcomed additional grant funding has been announced for 25/26 however it is not yet clear how much Rushcliffe will receive.
- h) A new government grant has been awarded £2.550m for the Warm Homes Scheme. This will greatly assist residents to improve the energy efficiency of their properties.

- i) Rolling provisions for the Information Systems Strategy (£1.178m across the 5 years) will ensure that the Council keeps pace with innovative technologies, protects itself against cyber-attacks and continues to modernise services and deliver 'channel shift' in an increasingly virtual world.
- j) £450k has been included across the 5 years to enhance Play Areas in West Bridgford on a rolling programme. These costs are subject to the West Bridgford Special Expense.
- k) A Contingency sum of £0.15m - £0.1m has been included each year, to give flexibility to the delivery of the programme and to cover unforeseen circumstances.
- l) Given the projected level of the Council's cash balances at March 2025 and future years and LGR, external borrowing is unlikely to be needed in the medium term. The cash flow balances are strongly underpinned by the holding of Developer Contributions: S106s and CIL monies. It is anticipated that the Council will not need to borrow internally either to finance the Capital Programme. The projected Capital Financing Requirement (CFR - the Council's underlying need to borrow) reduces from is £7.7m at the end of 2024/25 to £5.2m at the end of 2029/30. These figures will be subject to amendment upon completion of the work needed to implement IFRS16 – the new leasing standard. The impact is not expected to be significant. The timing and incidence of internal/external borrowing will be affected by any slippage in, or additions to, the capital programme, delayed capital receipts, and cash balances and this is reflected in the CFR shown at table 2 of the Capital and Investment Strategy (Appendix 8).

9.3 Table 17 – Five-year capital programme, funding and resource implications

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2029/30

	2025/26 Indicative Estimate	2026/27 Indicative Estimate	2027/28 Indicative Estimate	2028/29 Indicative Estimate	2029/30 Indicative Estimate	5 years TOTAL
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure Summary						
Development and Economic Growth	761	1,230	-	115	-	2,106
Neighbourhoods	7,065	4,031	5,107	3,235	3,855	23,293
Finance and Corporate	518	220	330	330	330	1,728
Total	8,344	5,481	5,437	3,680	4,185	27,127
Funded By						
Usable Capital Receipts	(2,719)	(295)	(246)	(178)	(795)	(4,233)
Government Grants	(1,650)	(2,640)	(1,997)	(840)	(840)	(7,967)
Use of Reserves	(3,919)	(2,546)	(1,577)	(1,045)	(1,570)	(10,657)
Grants and Contributions	(56)	-	-	-	-	(56)
Section 106 Monies	-	-	(1,617)	(1,617)	(980)	(4,214)
Borrowing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	(8,344)	(5,481)	(5,437)	(3,680)	(4,185)	(27,127)
Resources Movement						
Opening Balances:	16,419	12,110	10,189	7,695	5,789	
Projected Receipts:	4,035	3,560	2,943	1,774	1,779	
Use of Resources:	(8,344)	(5,481)	(5,437)	(3,680)	(4,185)	
Balance Carried Forward	12,110	10,189	7,695	5,789	3,383	

9.4 Capital Funding Resources

The Council's capital resources are slowly being depleted to fund the Capital Programme. It is projected that capital resources will be in the region of £3.4m at the end of the five-year life of the Programme. This comprises: £2.7m Earmarked Capital Reserves; £0.4m Capital Receipts; and £0.3m S106 contributions. The level of Capital Receipts will slowly be replenished by repayment of loans by third parties but will only significantly increase if major assets are identified for disposal in the future. The Council has committed to undertaking a review of all assets held.

There are no significant capital receipts expected over the course of the MTFS:

- £0.559m in repaid loan principal from Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club
- An estimated £50k per year from the Right to Buy Clawback agreement which gives the Council a share of Preserved Right to Buy arrangements following Large Scale Voluntary Stock Transfer in 2003

The capital resources position should be viewed in the context of funding the completed redevelopment of the Rushcliffe Arena. This scheme was part funded by use of the Council's reserves and the remainder through internal borrowing. It is planned to repay this 'internal debt' in 2026/27 (10 years on from completion) from the income stream provided by New Homes Bonus.

The following significant capital grants and contributions will be used to support the funding of the proposed capital programme:

- £4.2m from Planning Agreements for off-site affordable housing. £3.8m of this comes from a new S106 for Land North of Bingham
- £2.564m government grant awards under EPR to fund Simpler Recycling: glass and food waste.
- £2.550m funding via the East Midlands Net Zero Hub to deliver Warm Home Grants.
- An estimated £0.840m per annum from the Better Care Fund to deliver Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants
- UKSPF funding is covered in section 9.6.

9.5 Future Capital and Principles

Last year we projected forward to 2033/34 the impact on capital resources of spend on core capital such as property, vehicle and ICT replacement and ongoing DFG pressures. Given prospective LGR future capital spend will be the preserve of a new local authority.

The Council has always been mindful of the fundamental principles of good capital and treasury management namely ensuring we remain prudent, and it is both affordable and sustainable (i.e. the revenue consequences are built into our plans). This in line with the CIPFA Codes on Treasury and Capital management. The Council is not afraid to borrow but this must be done in a sensible and manageable way and not put Rushcliffe's future financial and operational future at risk. Before we borrow, we will always look at utilising the Council cash balances, external funding and capital receipts as more sensible options and other factors such as the timing of loans and prevailing interest rates. If a capital scheme is required that does not pay for itself and this is a corporate objective, then financial budget will be required from elsewhere, and this must be demonstrated prior to any approval. We will continue to be sensible even with the spectre of LGR and continue to adopt good professional practice and governance. The following are guiding principles that we are now following regarding the budget, to ensure the risk of the budget being unsustainable is reduced:

- *Where possible individuals that use facilities should pay for them*
- *Maximise income where we can and ensure costs are recovered*
- *Focus on reducing discretionary expenditure*
- *Those that own assets are responsible for their maintenance*
- *Continue to identify budget expenditure efficiencies*
- *Maximise the use of Council assets*
- *Defer borrowing for as long as possible and ensuing costs (using cash, balances, reserves, additional capital receipts and external funding where possible), with individual schemes having robust business cases*

9.6 Shared and Rural Prosperity Funds

In April 2022, Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). This was a £2.6bn fund and in September 2022, the Government also announced a Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) of which Rushcliffe's allocation was £0.6m.

The UKSPF and REPF funding has been fully allocated to capital and revenue projects, and it is anticipated that it will be fully spent by 31 March 2025 which is the deadline. Notification has been received that we can expect a new allocation of UKSPF funding for 2025/26 although allocations have not yet been confirmed although it is expected to be circa £1m. Officers are currently working on potential schemes for the additional year's funding. As the programme develops, capital and revenue updates will be provided to both Cabinet and Corporate Overview Group (COG) through usual budget quarterly reporting.

10 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

Attached at Appendix 8 is the Capital and Investment Strategy (CIS) which integrates capital investment decisions with cash flow information and revenue budgets. The key assumptions in the CIS are summarised in the following table:

Table 18 – Treasury Assumptions

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Anticipated Interest Rate	4.06%	3.75%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%
Expected Interest from investments (£)	1,434,900	1,307,700	1,176,600	1,016,700	922,000
Total interest (£)	1,434,900	1,307,700	1,176,600	1,016,700	922,000

The CIPFA Treasury Management and Prudential Codes includes guidance on existing commercial investments, reference to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) in the Capital Strategy, quarterly monitoring of Prudential Indicators, Investment Management Practices (IMPs) and the Liability (or Asset) Benchmark.

The CIS covers the Council's approach to treasury management activities including commercial assets. It documents the spreading of risk across the size of individual investments and diversification in totality across different sectors. The Council primarily focusses on maximising the returns from its existing portfolio with no new commercial investments included in the Capital Programme. The Council undertakes regular performance reviews on its commercial assets with the next review due to be reported to Governance Scrutiny Group in February 2026 and there is also a wider review of other Council fixed assets to be reviewed in the summer of 2025 by the Corporate Overview Group.

11 OPTIONS

As part of its consideration of the budget, the Council is encouraged to consider the strategic aims contained within the Corporate Strategy and, in this context, to what extent they wish to maintain existing services, how services will be prioritised, and how future budget shortfalls will be addressed.

Instead of increasing Council Tax by 3% as per the proposals in section 3.4, the Council could choose to increase by a lower amount of £5 or the Council could freeze its Council Tax. Table 19 provides details of the impact on budgets of the recommended option of a 3% increase each year (Rushcliffe's element £3.89 (2.46%) increase in 2025/26) against the scenarios of a tax freeze (2025/26 only and £5 thereafter) or £5 each year. If the Council chose to freeze its Council Tax in 2025/26, the income foregone in is approximately £0.25m per annum and over the 5-year period £1.646m when compared to the 3% per annum increase. If the Council chose to increase by £5 this would decrease income by £0.4m over the 5-year period. The difference between a freeze in 2025/26 and £5 all years being £1.24m over the 5-year period.

Table 19 – Alternative Council Tax Levels

Total council tax income £'000	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
Band D £182.94 (Rushcliffe element £161.77) in 2025/26 and 3% per annum thereafter	(8,739)	(9,163)	(9,608)	(10,074)	(10,564)	(48,148)
Total for Freeze (Band D £177.63 or Rushcliffe element £157.88) and £5 thereafter	(8,485)	(8,881)	(9,289)	(9,708)	(10,139)	(46,502)
Total for £5 increase each year	(8,724)	(9,124)	(9,536)	(9,960)	(10,396)	(47,740)

Difference (£'000)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
Freeze vs £5	(239)	(243)	(248)	(252)	(256)	(1,238)
3% vs £5	(15)	(39)	(72)	(114)	(168)	(408)
Freeze vs 3%	(254)	(282)	(319)	(367)	(424)	(1,646)

Other than the above options for Council Tax increases there are no alternate proposals concerning the Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy or Transformation Strategy

12 APPENDICIES

12.1 Appendix 1 - Funding Analysis for Special Expenses Areas

Funding Analysis for Special Expense Areas

	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	Change %
West Bridgford			
Parks & Playing Fields	486,700.00	496,000.00	
West Bridgford Town Centre	115,100.00	117,400.00	
Community Halls	101,300.00	131,300.00	
Repayment of revenue deficit	7,300.00	16,000.00	
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	75,000.00	100,000.00	
Annuity Charges	98,000.00	110,400.00	
Sinking Fund	20,000.00	20,000.00	
Total	903,400.00	991,100.00	
Tax Base	15,199.40	15,503.40	
Special Expense Tax	59.44	63.93	7.55%
Keyworth			
Cemetery	9,600.00	9,600.00	
Annuity Charges	4,600.00	500.00	
Total	14,200.00	10,100.00	
Tax Base	3,030.20	3,090.80	
Special Expense Tax	4.69	3.27	(30.28%)
Ruddington			
Cemetery	10,400.00	10,400.00	
Annuity Charges	0.00	0.00	
Total	10,400.00	10,400.00	
Tax Base	3,156.40	3,219.50	
Special Expense Tax	3.29	3.23	(1.82%)
Total Special Expenses	928,000.00	1,011,600.00	9.01%

12.2 Appendix 2 – Revenue Budget Service Summary

	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £
Chief Executive	1,523,900	1,612,700	1,685,500	1,895,100	1,717,600	1,749,700
Finance and Corporate Services	4,952,200	4,892,300	5,255,400	5,589,300	5,999,400	6,338,500
Development and Economic Growth	482,400	469,400	474,100	500,200	502,500	519,900
Neighbourhoods	7,823,600	7,937,100	8,137,100	8,833,400	9,399,300	9,529,200
Net Service Expenditure	14,782,100	14,911,500	15,552,100	16,818,000	17,618,800	18,137,300
Reversal of Capital Charges	(1,894,600)	(1,894,600)	(1,894,600)	(1,894,600)	(1,894,600)	(1,894,600)
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	1,077,700	2,148,000	1,043,000	809,000	365,000	339,000
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,178,000	1,174,000	739,000	174,000	174,000	174,000
Total Net Service Expenditure	15,143,200	16,338,900	15,439,500	15,906,400	16,263,200	16,755,700
Funding						
Other Grant Income	(615,800)	(1,761,000)	(1,537,000)	(1,537,000)	(1,537,000)	(1,537,000)
Business Rates	(5,463,200)	(6,676,000)	(3,578,100)	(3,703,900)	(3,834,400)	(3,969,800)
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	(32,100)	(835,000)	-	-	-	-
Business Rates Pool Surplus	(300,000)	(400,000)	-	-	-	-
Council Tax Income						
- Rushcliffe	(7,418,700)	(7,727,500)	(8,063,700)	(8,451,400)	(8,853,700)	(9,318,200)
- Special Expenses Areas	(928,000)	(1,011,600)	(1,099,600)	(1,156,500)	(1,220,700)	(1,245,100)
New Homes Bonus	(1,509,000)	(1,477,600)	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	(16,266,800)	(19,888,700)	(14,278,400)	(14,848,800)	(15,445,800)	(16,070,100)
Net Budget (Surplus) / Deficit	(1,123,600)	(3,549,800)	1,161,100	1,057,600	817,400	685,600

12.3 Appendix 3 – Capital Programme

	Scheme	2025/26 Indicative	2026/27 Indicative	2027/28 Indicative	2028/29 Indicative	2029/30 Indicative
Development and Economic Growth						
1	The Point Enhancements	25	400	-	-	-
2	Rushcliffe Tourism/Signage	70	-	-	-	-
	6F Boundary Court	-	-	-	35	-
	Cotgrave Business Hub	70	-	-	-	-
3	Manvers Business Park Enhancements	200	70	-	50	-
	Bingham Arena	-	-	-	30	-
4	Streetwise Depot	100	60	-	-	-
	Bridgford Park Kiosk	25	-	-	-	-
5	Colliers BP Enhancements	16	50	-	-	-
	Walkers Yard 1a/b and 3	30	-	-	-	-
	Highways Verges: Cotgrave/Bingham/CB	200	-	-	-	-
	Wilwell Cutting Bridge	-	50	-	-	-
	Devonshire Road Railway Bridge Special Exp	-	100	-	-	-
6	WBTC Regeneration	-	500	-	-	-
	Keyworth Cemetery	25	-	-	-	-
	Sub total	761	1,230	-	115	-
Neighbourhoods						
7	Vehicle Replacement and Recycling	2,511	496	2,075	603	1,288
	Support for Registered Housing Providers	-	-	1,617	1,617	1,617
8	Hound Lodge - Enhancements	-	395	-	-	-
	Discretionary Top Ups	56	-	-	-	-
	Disabled Facilities Grants	1,040	840	840	840	840
	Toot Hill Sports Centre Enhancements	100	-	-	-	-
9	CLC & KLC - Enhancements	1,200	-	125	-	-
10	ELLC Enhancements	-	75	50	-	-
11	Rushcliffe Arena Enhancements	-	50	175	-	35
	EGC Enhancements	-	100	-	-	-
	Car Park Resurfacing	18	-	-	-	-
12	Play Areas - Special Expense	100	100	100	75	75
	West Park Enhancements Special Expense	425	-	-	-	-
	Gresham Sports Pavilion	-	150	-	-	-
13	Rushcliffe CP - Enhancements	-	25	-	25	-
14	Rushcliffe CP - Play Area	25	-	-	-	-
	Lutterell Hall Special Expense	-	-	125	75	-
15	Edwalton Community Facility Special Expense	840	-	-	-	-
	Warm Homes Grants	750	1,800	-	-	-
	Sub total	7,065	4,031	5,107	3,235	3,855
Finance and Corporate Services						
16	Information Systems Strategy	368	120	230	230	230
	Contingency	150	100	100	100	100
	Sub total	518	220	330	330	330
PROGRAMME TOTAL		8,344	5,481	5,437	3,680	4,185

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: The Point Enhancements	Cost 0360	Centre:	Ref: 1
Project Lead: Property Services' Manager			
Request for Project from: Property Services' Manager			
Detailed Description: £25k provision has been slipped from 2024/25 to 25/26 for improvements to automatic entrance doors and controls, which are at end of useful life. £400k has been included in 26/27 for replacement of office comfort heating and cooling systems which are end of useful life. Operational reliability will become less predictable and obtaining replacement parts will become increasingly difficult and expensive.			
Location: The Point	Executive Manager: Economic Growth and Development		
Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives: Corporate Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient Services – operational efficiency of existing equipment is less certain and more expensive compared to modern technology. • The Environment – replacement equipment is more energy efficient reducing carbon emissions. Strategic Commitments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible income generation and prudent borrowing where deemed appropriate, to facilitate the delivery of services. • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. • Bringing new business to the Borough and nurturing our existing businesses, helping them to grow and succeed. • Working to achieve a carbon neutral status for the Council's operations. • 			
Community Outcomes: Upgrade works will enhance the efficiency of the premises, improve reliability of equipment and maximise the comfort of users whilst maximising use of resources.			
Environmental Outcomes Committing to enhancing the operational and thermal performance of the facility will ensure that ongoing carbon emissions are mitigated which aligns with corporate ambitions to be net zero by 2030.			
Other Options Rejected and Why: Do not carry out upgrade works – this would put at risk operational certainty of the facility, negatively impact customer/tenant comfort and safety and fail to minimise			

operational costs. Effective maintenance and replacement are essential to uphold property asset values and ensure high levels of occupation/income.			
Procurement route proposed and stage:			
External door upgrade – detailed design will commence early 2025 with site installation during Summer of 2025. Procurement will be via restricted process.			
Office heating/cooling equipment – detailed cost estimates and design will commence early 2026 with site installation during the Summer of 2026 – procurement will be via open tender or Framework.			
Project Management Office support required: Yes/No			
Start Date: to be determined		Completion Date:	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
£425,000	£25,000	£400,000	
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:			
Works £23,000	Equip £396,000	Other	Fees £6,000
Revenue cost per annum:	Year 1: 25/26 Not quantifiable at this stage, but should see revenue spend on repairs reduce	Year 2: 26/27 As for 25/26	
Year 3: 27/28 As for 25/26	Year 4: 28/29 As for 25/26	Year 5: 29/30 As for 25/26	
Proposed Funding			
External:		Internal: Investment Properties Reserve	

Useful Economic Life (years): 15	New/Replacement: Replacements
Depreciation per annum: N/A	Capital Financing Costs: £17k p.a. as opportunity cost of lost interest.
Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Investment Property

IFRS New Lease Checklist Completed	N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A
Approval Required from:	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

<p>Project Name: Rushcliffe Tourism and Signage</p>	<p>Cost Centre: 0512</p>	<p>Ref: 2</p>
<p>Project lead:</p>	<p>Head of Economic Growth and Property</p>	
<p>Request for project from:</p>	<p>Request from Cabinet (Cabman)</p>	
<p>Detailed Description:</p> <p>RBC will work with Nottinghamshire County Council and National Highways to install 'Welcome to Rushcliffe' signage on key routes into the Borough.</p> <p>Locations have been identified for 8 signs (3 on National Highways roads and 5 on NCC roads). Final sign design is yet to be agreed but options have been explored and high-level costs obtained from NCC and National Highways.</p>		
<p>Location: Across the Borough</p>	<p>Executive Director: Economic Growth and Development</p>	
<p>Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Sustainable Growth • <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working to create great communities to live and work in • Improvements to tourism and the visitor economy to sustain economic development and growth. 		
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism and the visitor economy is a key priority within the Council's new economic growth strategy and the installation of signage assists with this, helping to promote the Borough as a destination for residents and visitors. 		
<p>Environmental Outcomes:</p> <p>N/A</p>		
<p>Other Options Rejected and Why:</p>		

The option not to instal signage and promote tourism was rejected as it would not align to the new economic growth strategy.

Procurement route proposed and stage:

High level costs provided by NCC and National Highways. Neither quote includes potential traffic management as this will only be available when site assessments have been carried out.

Indicative costs for preferred signage style have also been sought but these could change.

Project Management Office support required: No

Start Date: to be determined		Completion Date:	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1:25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
£70,000	£70,000		

Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:

Works	Equipment	Other	Fees
Approx. £33,000	£3,800 (signs)	Nothing included for possible traffic management which would increase costs significantly. Approx. £33,200 allocated	

Additional Revenue cost/ (saving) per annum:	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27
		Likely some ongoing cleaning/maintenance cost
Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29	Year 5: 29/30

Proposed Funding	
External:	Internal: Organisation Stabilisation Reserve/ Potential to use new UKSPF allocation.

Useful Economic Life (years): 25 years	New/Replacement: New
Depreciation per annum: £2,800	Capital Financing Costs: £2,800
Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Equipment
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed	N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A

Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting
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PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

<p>Project Name: Manvers Business Park Enhancements</p>	<p>Cost Centre: 0206</p>	<p>Ref: 3</p>
<p>Project Lead: Property Services' Manager</p>		
<p>Request for Project from: Property Services' Manager</p>		
<p>Detailed Description:</p> <p>£200k 25/26 reprofiled from 24/25. Existing roof coverings, fascias and rainwater goods to early phases of the development are in excess of 20 yrs old and showing signs of deterioration. Proposal is to refurbish roof coverings to extend life by application of accredited/warranted liquid roofing compounds and upgrade fascias and rainwater goods.</p> <p>£70k 26/27 to improve the EPC rating - upgrade LED lighting/extractor fans</p>		
<p>Location: Manvers Business Park</p>	<p>Executive Manager: Economic Growth and Development</p>	
<p>Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver economic growth to ensure a sustainable, prosperous and thriving local economy. • Transforming the Council to enable the delivery of highly efficient high-quality services. <p>Strategic Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain commercial viability of existing business units and protect income stream. Capital enhancement works to roof areas will improve the visual appearance of the site and extend the useful life of the structure, whilst also minimising likelihood of reactive maintenance work. • The energy efficiency improvements will ensure that the premises comply with forecast MEES standards, a requirement for letting. • Examine the future viability of all Council owned assets including property and equipment. • Improve efficiency and reliability of service and reduce operating costs. 		
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital enhancement works to roof areas will improve the visual appearance of the site. The Borough is more attractive and prosperous if business units are well maintained helping to sustain on-going employment opportunities and protect thriving local businesses 		
<p>Environment Outcomes:</p> <p>Improvements to the EPC rating will support the Council's aim to be carbon neutral by 2030.</p>		
<p>Other Options Rejected and Why:</p>		

<p>Do not carry out refurb works – this would result in further deterioration of the fabric and shortening of the life span of the roof covering to a point where wholesale replacement would become necessary. Visual impact of poorly maintained assets would reflect poorly on tenant/customer perception and ultimately rental yields. Effective maintenance and replacement are essential to uphold property asset values and ensure high levels of occupation/income. Failure to achieve relevant MEES standard will render the premises unlettable.</p>				
<p>Procurement route proposed and stage:</p> <p>Proposed roofing scheme cost estimate review to be carried out early in 2025. This will be followed by detailed design and site delivery in late Spring – procurement will be either open tender or via Framework route.</p> <p>Energy efficiency enhancements – budget review in early 2026 followed by scheme design in Spring 2026.</p>				
<p>Project Management Office support required: Yes/No</p>				
<p>Start Date: to be determined</p>			<p>Completion Date:</p>	
<p>Capital Cost (Total):</p>	<p>Year 1: 25/26</p>	<p>Year 2: 26/27</p>		
<p>£270,000</p>	<p>£200,000</p>	<p>£70,000</p>		
<p>Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:</p>				
<p>Works £182,000</p>	<p>Equipment £64,000</p>	<p>Other</p>	<p>Fees £24,000</p>	
<p>Additional Revenue cost/ (saving) per annum:</p>	<p>Year 1: 25/26</p>		<p>Year 2: 26/27</p>	
<p>Year 3: 27/28</p>	<p>Year 4: 28/29</p>		<p>Year 5: 29/30</p>	
<p>Proposed Funding</p>				
<p>External:</p>			<p>Internal: Investment Property Reserve</p>	
<p>Useful Economic Life (years): 15</p>			<p>New/Replacement: Replacement</p>	
<p>Depreciation per annum: N/A Investment Property</p>			<p>Capital Financing Costs: £10,800 p.a.</p>	
<p>Residual Value: N/A</p>			<p>Category of Asset: Investment Property</p>	
<p>IRFS New Lease Checklist Complete</p>			<p>N/A</p>	

VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A
Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Streetwise Depot Operational and Energy Efficiency Enhancements	Cost Centre: 0208	Ref: 4
Project Lead: Property Services' Manager/Streetwise Manager		
Request for Project from: Property Services' Manager/Streetwise Manager		
Detailed Description: £100k reprofiled from 24/25 to 25/26 for improvements to vehicle wash facilities, in addition to enhancement of PPE store and alterations to improve pedestrian safety. £60k 26/27 for building fabric thermal improvements to enhance energy efficiency and reduce operational heating costs.		
Location: Bingham	Executive Manager: Economic Growth and Development/Neighbourhood	
Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives: Corporate Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient Services – improvements planned will help to control operational costs. • The Environment – improvements will help to minimise environmental operational impacts Strategic Commitments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources to support efficient service delivery. • Reviewing service delivery approach to ensure compliance with environmental standards. • Working to achieve a carbon neutral status for the Council's operations. 		
Community Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents believing that the Council delivers Value for Money • Council has a clear road map to achieving carbon neutral status. 		
Environmental Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned improvement to vehicle wash will ensure compliance with environmental standards. • Fabric thermal enhancements will help to minimise site energy usage, carbon emissions and wider carbon management ambitions. 		
Other Options Rejected and Why: Doing nothing – in terms of the vehicle wash facility, this would potentially leave the Council open to challenge in terms of environmental legislation. In terms of rationalising storage and pedestrian safety, it could give rise to operational difficulties and potential		

H&S issues. In terms of thermal fabric insulation, it would impact the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030 in its own operations.			
Procurement route proposed and stage:			
Scheme design for vehicle wash, storage and pedestrian safety has begun, procurement will take place early 2025 and site works in Spring 2025 – procurement will be via individual works packages and restrictive tender.			
Scheme design for thermal fabric improvements will commence early in 2026 with site delivery Summer 2026. Procurement will be via restrictive tender or Framework.			
Project Management Office support required: Yes/No			
Start Date:		Completion Date:	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1:25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
£160,000	£100,000	£60,000	
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:			
Works £146,000	Equipment	Other	Fees £14,000
Additional Revenue cost/(saving)per annum:	Year 1: 25/26		Year 2: 26/27
Year 3: 27/28 Gas consumption will be reduced from this point onwards but unable to predict at this point	Year 4: 28/29		Year 5: 29/30
Proposed Funding			
External:		Internal: Climate Change Reserve and Capital Receipts	

Useful Economic Life (years): 15	New/Replacement: New and Replacement
Depreciation per annum: £10,600	Capital Financing Costs: £6,400 p.a.

Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Operational Land and Buildings
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?	N/A
VAT treatment assessed	N/A
Approval Required from:	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

<p>Project Name: Colliers Business Park Enhancements</p>	<p>Cost Centre: 0210</p>	<p>Ref: 5</p>
<p>Project Lead: Property Services' Manager</p>		
<p>Request for Project from: Property Services' Manager</p>		
<p>Detailed Description: £16k reprofiled from 24/25 to 25/26 for enhancements to site perimeter security for Phase 2 units. £50k 26/27 – energy efficiency and roof covering improvements to Phase 1 units.</p>		
<p>Location: Colliers Business Park</p>	<p>Executive Manager: Economic Growth and Development</p>	
<p>Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives: Corporate Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver economic growth to ensure a sustainable, prosperous and thriving local economy. • Transforming the Council to enable the delivery of highly efficient high-quality services. <p>Strategic Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain commercial viability of existing business units and protect income stream. Capital enhancement works to roof areas will improve the visual appearance of the site and extend the useful life of the structure, whilst also minimising likelihood of reactive maintenance work. • The energy efficiency improvements will ensure that the premises comply with forecast MEES standards, a requirement for letting. • Examine the future viability of all Council owned assets including property and equipment. • Improve efficiency and reliability of service and reduce operating costs. 		
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital enhancement works to roof areas will improve the visual appearance of the site. Perimeter security improvements will help to safeguard against criminal activity. The Borough is more attractive and prosperous if business units are well maintained helping to sustain on-going employment opportunities and protect thriving local businesses. 		
<p>Environmental Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The energy efficiency improvements will support the Council's aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. 		
<p>Other Options Rejected and Why: Do not carry out refurb works – this would result in further deterioration of the fabric and shortening of the life span of the roof covering to a point where wholesale replacement would become necessary. Visual impact of poorly maintained assets</p>		

would reflect poorly on tenant/customer perception and ultimately rental yields. Effective maintenance and replacement are essential to uphold property asset values and ensure high levels of occupation/income. Failure to achieve relevant MEES standard will render the premises unlettable.

Procurement route proposed and stage:

Proposed roofing scheme cost estimate review to be carried out early in 2025. This will be followed by detailed design and site delivery in late Spring – procurement will be either open tender or via Framework route.

Energy efficiency enhancements – budget review in early 2026 followed by scheme design in Spring 2026.

Project Management Office support required: Yes/No

Start Date: to be determined

Completion Date:

Capital Cost (Total):

Year 1: 25/26

Year 2: 26/27

£66,000

£16,000

£50,000

Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:

Works
£23,000

Equipment
£37,500

Other

Fees £5,500

Additional Revenue cost/ (saving) per annum:

Year 1: 25/26

Year 2: 26/27

Year 3: 27/28

Year 4: 28/29

Year 5: 29/30

Proposed Funding

External:

Internal: Investment Property Reserve

Useful Economic Life (years):
15

New/Replacement: Replacement

Depreciation per annum: N/A
Investment Property

Capital Financing Costs: £2,600 p.a.

Residual Value: N/A

Category of Asset: Investment Property

IRFS New Lease Checklist Complete

N/A

VAT Treatment Assessed

N/A

Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting
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PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

<p>Project Name: WBTC Regeneration</p>	<p>Cost Centre: 0665</p>	<p>Ref: 6</p>
<p>Project lead:</p>	<p>Head of Economic Growth and Property</p>	
<p>Request for project from:</p>	<p>Included in the Economic Growth Strategy which was endorsed by Cabinet in October 2024.</p>	
<p>Detailed Description:</p> <p>£500k included in 26/27 to support the pedestrianisation of Central Avenue in West Bridgford.</p> <p>The project will require additional funding from other sources as costs will exceed the £500k.</p>		
<p>Location: WBTC</p>	<p>Executive Director: Economic Growth and Development</p>	
<p>Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Sustainable Growth • The Environment <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with our partners to create great, safe, and clean communities to live and work in • Recognising opportunities to create vibrant town centres which are attractive and accessible to all, as well as providing a pleasant retail experience • Improving accessibility and specifically pedestrianising Central Avenue in West Bridgford are key priorities and actions included in the Economic Growth Strategy. 		
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <p>Our town centres are about more than economic growth, they play a fundamental role in good quality of life in the Borough. Giving residents access to amenities and services as well as providing space for community and leisure activities.</p>		

This project, if delivered, will support and enhance West Bridgford town centre, helping support local businesses as well as improving the environment for local residents.			
Environmental Outcomes:			
Pedestrianising the Avenue will reduce vehicle movement in the centre of Bridgford and it is intended will encourage more people to travel in on foot or bikes.			
Other Options Rejected and Why: The scope of the work to Central Avenue is yet to be agreed and will include some options: e.g. leave as is; restrictions on bus movements; full pedestrianisation etc. The preferred option will depend on the outcome of studies and consultation that needs to be carried out ahead of any work.			
Procurement route proposed and stage:			
This has not been progressed yet, an SLA with NCC to enable them to award to ViaEM may be an option.			
Project Management Office support required: Yes/No			
If the project progresses, PM support may be required, and this will be discussed with the team as the detail is worked up.			
Start Date: to be determined		Completion Date:	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1:25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
£500,000		£500,000	
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:			
Works	Equipment	Other £500,000 grant	Fees
Additional Revenue cost/ (saving) per annum:	Year 1: 25/26		Year 2: 26/27
Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29		Year 5: 29/30
Proposed Funding			
External:		Internal: Organisation Stabilisation Reserve	
Useful Economic Life (years): 30		New/Replacement: New	

Depreciation per annum: N/A	Capital Financing Costs: £20,000 p.a.
Residual Value:	Category of Asset: Revenue Expenditure funded from Capital Under Statute
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed	N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A

Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting
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PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Vehicle Replacement	Cost 0680	Centre:	Ref: 7
Project Lead: Fleet and Vehicle Infrastructure Manager/Service Manager Neighbourhoods			
Request for Project from: Rolling Vehicle Replacement Programme. Government Directive for Glass Recycling.			
<p>Detailed Description:</p> <p>The authority owns vehicles ranging from large refuse freighters to small vans and items of mechanical plant. As these vehicles and plant age and become uneconomic to maintain and run, they are replaced on a new for old basis. Although there is a programme for replacements for the next ten years, each vehicle or machine is assessed annually, and the programme continually adjusted to take account of actual performance. This provision will be used to acquire new vehicles and plant, undertake refurbishments to extend vehicle life and value and to purchase second-hand vehicles and plant as and when appropriate. There is beginning to be a concentration of focussing on newer cleaner technology as we replace existing fleet vehicles in line with the Council's Carbon management agenda, exploring alternatives such as electric and hydrogen cell technology as well as alternative fuel use to look at cutting down on emissions whilst ensuring the vehicles remain operationally viable and offer value for money.</p> <p>The 25/26 provision includes £1.710m for Glass Recycling comprising £460k vehicles and £1.250m containers.</p>			
Location: Eastcroft Depot		Executive Manager: Neighbourhoods	
<p>Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Efficient Services • The Environment <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with our partners to create great, safe, and clean communities to live and work in. • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. • Reviewing our policies and ways of working to protect natural resources, and to implement environmentally beneficial infrastructure changes. To reduce waste and increasingly reuse and recycle to protect the environment for the future. • Working with key partners to respond to any proposals from the new Environment Act and any changes or directives from central government regarding what wastes should be collected and how. • Delivering a high-quality waste and recycling collection service. • Delivering a high-quality street cleansing, grounds maintenance and arboriculture service • A commitment to look at cleaner vehicles in line with our commitment to protect the environment, in particularly alternative fuel vehicles. 			

- Working to achieve a carbon neutral status for the Council's operations

The replacement of vehicles is critical to the performance of the front-line services. Regular vehicle and plant replacement with new updated engines help to meet climate change and national indicator targets for emissions and helps maintain a cleaner air quality within the Borough.

Community Outcomes:

- To address climate change and the need to reduce carbon emissions. The introduction of new euro standard engines will lower emissions. The new vehicles will also reduce maintenance costs on the vehicles they replace however it should be noted that the remainder of the fleet ages and therefore the fleet profile and maintenance costs overall remain stable.
- Glass Recycling – the addition of a kerbside glass recycling service should see a high take up from residents and increased resident satisfaction with waste and recycling services. Data suggest that take up rates are high for such services, preventing the need to travel and visit recycling bring sites and increasing recycling rates.

Environmental Outcomes:

- The Council is actively looking at newer cleaner technologies and is committed to working with others to consider options and procure newer vehicles that will help commit to our carbon management plan. Whilst larger HGV electric vehicles may not be an option for Rushcliffe due to the range and geographical nature of our Borough, we continue to explore the use of and practicalities of alternative fuel such as the use of Hydro generated Vegetable Oil (HVO) following a trial in late 2021 and are considering the impact of the trial with potential 90% reduction in emissions and the operational logistics and infrastructure arrangements as well as the costs of fuelling our vehicles utilising HVO. Smaller fleet vehicles such as small vans, etc could be replaced by electric vehicles which are readily available, and this option will be considered as and when such vehicles are due for replacement in line with the replacement programme.
- Glass Recycling – it is likely we will see an increase on overall tonnage collected and further diversion of glass from the residual waste bin. Glass is colour separated and fully recycled back into glass bottles and jars and an increase in the overall recycling rate will also be seen.

Other Options Rejected and Why:

An historic review was undertaken to consider the leasing and hiring in of vehicles. Due to the level of capital resources, it was concluded that it was uneconomical to do either of these two options but as resources are reduced, these options may need to be revisited again. However, there are also distinct advantages in direct purchase: -

- a) The authority has control over the maintenance of the vehicles.
- b) It is difficult to change the terms and conditions of a lease.
- c) High performing vehicles can have their lifespan lengthened.
- d) Poor performing vehicles can have their lifespan shortened.

Not being tied into lengthy lease/hire contracts means the service can react and adapt to change quickly.

It should be noted that the transition of Streetwise back to an in-house service sees some vehicles used, tied into current lease arrangements which continue to be assessed for outright purchase.

The Council now actively looks at the possible purchase of 2nd hand vehicles and will refurbish vehicles to extend their life and value.

Glass Recycling – whilst the Council has previously collected glass from a range of bring sites, the new Simpler Recycling legislation places a statutory service for collection of glass from the kerbside.

Procurement route proposed and stage:

Vehicles likely to be procured through existing vehicle procurement frameworks as part of the wider Nottinghamshire Transport Group contracts. Containers required will be through frameworks in place working in conjunction with Nottinghamshire County Council procurement team.

Project Management Office support required: No

Start Date: Ongoing		Completion Date: Ongoing	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1: 24/25	Year 2: 25/26	
£3,007,000 (2 years)	£2,511,000	£496,000	
Capital Cost (Breakdown)			
Works	VPE	Other	Fees
£0	£3,007,000	£0	£0
Additional Revenue cost Glass Recycling/ (saving) per annum:	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
	£40,300	£129,400	
Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29	Year 5: 29/30	
£157,500	£185,700	£189,000	

As each vehicle replaces an existing vehicle, there is no increase in the overall revenue costs. Whilst newer vehicles can lead to less expenditure on breakdown and repair, older vehicles will cost more. The overall fleet profile remains relatively constant and therefore service budgets remain the same. However, with property growth and the

potential impact on waste collections as a result of the Environment Act, there is the likelihood moving forward that additional revenue expenditure may be incurred, and this will need to be considered for future budget years. The introduction of mandatory weekly food waste collections (due October 2027) will have a significant effect on the number of vehicles required and whilst we have an indicative figure and potential central government funding this is likely to change as and when the implementation date gets closer.

Glass Recycling revenue costs for vehicles only estimated to be 2025/26 £5,500, 2026/27 £27,200 and then £37,200 for future years. These figures are included in the additional revenue costs section above. All of the costs are expected to be covered by EPR Government Grant.

Proposed Funding:	
External: N/A	Internal: Capital Receipts, Vehicle Replacement Reserve, and Simpler Recycling Reserve
Useful Economic Life (years): Various	New/Replacements: New and Replacements
Depreciation per annum: Various	Capital Financing Costs: £96k p.a. in year 1 plus £20k p.a. in year 2 as opportunity cost of lost interest on outlay of capital resources
Residual Value: Various	Category of Asset: Vehicle and Plant
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?	
N/A	
VAT treatment assessed?	
N/A	
Approval Required from:	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Hound Lodge Enhancements	Cost Centre: 0308	Ref: 8
Project Lead: Property Services' Manager/Strategic Housing Manager		
Request for Project from: Property Services' Manager		
<p>Detailed Description:</p> <p>Hound Lodge provides temporary accommodation for families who find themselves unintentionally homeless; providing accommodation in this circumstance is a statutory function of the Council. The building has existed in broadly its current form since the 1990s when the Council acquired and carried out conversion works which included the addition of a single storey rear extension. The original areas of the building are circa 100 years old.</p> <p>The building requires enhancement not only to improve how it can be operated and managed in terms of residents, but also from an energy consumption and efficiency perspective.</p>		
Location: West Bridgford	Executive Manager: Economic Growth and Development/Neighbourhoods	
<p>Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life – the enhancements will create a more comfortable living environment for residents. • Efficient Services – the enhancements will help to minimise operational energy/utility costs. • The Environment – the enhancements will help to mitigate carbon emissions. <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our residents' health and facilitating healthier lifestyle choices • Providing high quality facilities which meet the needs of our residents • Creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential • Protecting the most vulnerable in our communities 		
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council fulfils its statutory duties for the provision of suitable temporary accommodation and avoids the need to use B& B accommodation at an additional cost • Residents of the Borough continue to receive the council services they require 		
<p>Environmental Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committing to reviewing and enhancing the operational and thermal performance of the facility will ensure that ongoing carbon emissions are mitigated which aligns with corporate ambitions to be net zero by 2030. 		

Other Options Rejected and Why:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not reviewing and enhancing the operational and thermal performance of the facility will allow current shortcomings to continue, this in turn will put strain on resources and limit the Council's overall ambitions to achieve net zero by 2030. 			
Procurement route proposed and stage:			
Detailed scheme design and the obtaining of any statutory approvals will take place through 25/26; the procurement and delivery of the improvements will take place through 26/27 – any interruptions to space heating etc will be targeted to take place outside of heating season. Procurement will either be via open tender or Framework.			
Project Management Office support required: Yes/No			
Start Date: to be determined		Completion Date:	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1:25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
£395,000		£395,000	
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:			
Works £173,000	Equipment £205,000	Other	Fees £17,000
Additional Revenue cost/(saving)per annum:	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
Year 3: 27/28 (gas consumption will be reduced from this point onwards, but unable to predict at this point)	Year 4: 28/29	Year 5: 29/30	
Proposed Funding			
External:		Internal: Capital Receipts £110k and Climate Change Reserve £285k	
Useful Economic Life (years): 25		New/Replacement: New and Replacement	

Depreciation per annum: £15,800	Capital Financing Costs: £15.8k p.a. in lost interest	
Residual Value:	Category of Asset: Operational L & B	
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?		N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed		N/A
Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting	

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Cotgrave Leisure Centre and Keyworth Leisure Centre - Enhancements	Cost 0402	Centre:	Ref: 9
Project Lead: Team leader Leisure Contract, Sport and Health/Communities' Manager			
Request for Project from: Team leader Leisure Contract, Sport and Health/Communities' Manager			
Detailed Description: The scheme was approved as part of the 23/24 Budget Setting Report - appraisals 6 and 7. £1m has been reprofiled from 24/25 to 25/26 to complete the works at Cotgrave and undertake the enhancement works at Keyworth. An additional £200k has been included in the 25/26 Capital Programme for additional works at Keyworth. It is planned to extend the scope of refurbishment works to include regrouting of pool tiles in both tools, additional cosmetic refurbishment to walls in the pool hall and the pool surrounds currently not in scope, replacement pool covers and a new pool hoist alongside enhanced graphics, vinyls and café fit out to enhance the finished centre.			
Location: Cotgrave Leisure Centre and Keyworth Leisure Centre		Executive Manager: Neighbourhoods	
Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives: Corporate Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Efficient Services • The Environment • Sustainable Growth Strategic Commitments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our residents' health and facilitating healthier lifestyle choices. • Provide high quality community facilities which meet the needs of our residents and contribute towards the financial independence of the Council. • Ensuring well maintained facilities to support growing populations and increased usage • Creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential. • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. • Working to achieve carbon neutral status for the Council's operations. • 			
Community Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the provision of high-quality community facilities which meet community need. • To protect our residents' health and facilitate healthier lifestyle choice. 			
Environmental Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material selection, wherever possible locally sourced, carbon efficient production, longevity of materials will be considered when selecting finishes 			

- Upgrades to lighting and mechanical building elements will look to use low energy technology wherever feasible

Other Options Rejected and Why:

Do not carry out refurb works – this would result in further deterioration of the fabric/fixtures/finishes which will potentially increase revenue maintenance/operating costs and with worsening visual appearance, diminish customer experience/satisfaction.

This may also lead to loss of customers resulting in a less efficient service and not be in line with the commitments made in the Leisure Strategy refresh which was adopted by Cabinet in December 2022.

Procurement route proposed and stage:

The contractor is already appointed and delivering decarbonisation and refurbishment works at Cotgrave leisure centre whilst completing the design and pricing of Keyworth leisure centre refurbishment works. The Keyworth works are currently costed at £586K. Any additional works funded by the additional £200k will be logged as contract variation, with quotes and cost verified by the council’s employed Cost Management (Quantity Surveyor) Consultant.

Project Management Office support required: Yes/No

The scheme is being delivered through internal project management through the Team leader, Leisure Contract, Sport and Health and external project Management Consultants. The cost of these services is already accounted for.

Start Date: 2023		Completion Date: 2025	
Capital Cost (TOTAL):	Previous Years:	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27
£5.521m	£4,321,000	£1,200,000	
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £: to be determined			
Works	Equipment	Other	Fees
Additional Revenue cost/(saving)per annum:	Year 1: 25/26		Year 2: 26/27
Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29		Year 5: 29/30
Proposed Funding:			

External: Government Grants £1.875m S106/CIL £1.149m	Internal: Capital Receipts £1.576m Reserves £0.921m
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Useful Economic Life (years): Tiling ad poolside works 25 years, hoist and pool covers 10 years, café fit out and vinyl's 7 years	New/Replacement: New and Replacement
Depreciation per annum: will vary	Capital Financing Costs: £100k p.a. as opportunity cost of lost interest on use of own resources.
Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Operational Land & Buildings/Equipment/Plant
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed	N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A
Approval required from	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: ELLC Enhancements	Cost Centre: 0686	Ref: 10
Project lead: Team Leader Leisure Contracts, Sport and Health		
Request for project from:	Team Leader Leisure Contracts, Sport and Health/ Communities' Manager	
Detailed Description: This scheme is a ring-fenced sum to be drawn on and used to enhance East Leake Leisure Centre when the PFI arrangement ends. Whilst the PFI requires the centre to be handed back with a determined lifespan remaining on assets, mechanical & electrical installations and fixtures and fittings, it is anticipated that some cosmetic enhancement to aid with rebranding from the incumbent operator Mitie to bring the centre in line with other RBC leisure facilities will be required. The precise use of the funds will be better understood as the PFI dilapidation and handover surveys are completed in Summer 2026 and there is clarity on the standard of assets being handed back. Works may include decoration, flooring, replacement lighting, new signage, enhanced audio-visual equipment and public realm items to improve the attractiveness of the centre.		
Location: East Leake	Executive Director: Neighbourhoods	
Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives: Corporate Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Efficient Services • The Environment • Sustainable Growth Strategic Commitments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our residents' health and facilitating healthier lifestyle choices. • Provide high quality community facilities which meet the needs of our residents and contribute towards the financial independence of the Council. • Ensuring attractive and well-maintained facilities to support growing populations and increased usage • Creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential. • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. • Working to achieve carbon neutral status for the Council's operations. • 		
Community Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the provision of high-quality community facilities which meet community need. 		

- To protect our residents' health and facilitate healthier lifestyle choice.
-

Environmental Outcomes:

- Material selection, wherever possible locally sourced, carbon efficient production, longevity of materials will be considered when selecting finishes
- Upgrades to lighting and mechanical building elements will look to use low energy technology wherever feasible

Other Options Rejected and Why:

Do not carry out any enhancement and accept the centre exactly as passed back – this would fail to optimise ability to rebrand to the community and modernise the offer to attract new customers, thus limiting the financial success of the centre. Failure to invest may be detrimental to the visual appearance and diminish customer experience/satisfaction.

Procurement route proposed and stage:

Once the works packages are known the services/products will be procured either as a series of small lots/individual items, or as a single enhancement package, in line with the council's procurement policy and financial regulations, through seeking 3 quotes or tender as appropriate.

Project Management Office support required: Yes/No

These works will be managed by the Team Leader Leisure Contracts, Sport and Health

Start Date: August 2026

Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27
£75,000		£75,000

Capital Cost (Breakdown) £: to be determined

Works	Equipment	Other	Fees
Additional Revenue cost/ (saving) per annum:	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29	Year 5: 29/30	


Proposed Funding

External:	Internal: Regeneration and Community Projects Reserve
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Useful Economic Life (years): 10	New/Replacement: New and replacement
Depreciation per annum: £7,500	Capital Financing Costs: £3,000 p.a.
Residual Value:	Category of Asset: Operational Land & Building
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed	Checked
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A

Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting
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PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Rushcliffe Arena Enhancements	Cost 0415	Centre:	Ref: 11
Project lead: Communities' Manager			
Request for project from: Communities' Manager			
<p>Detailed Description: Scheme to remove the Studio 3(Former Bowls Hall) parapet wall to make the space more inclusive and functional for events.</p> <p>The former bowls green is covered with wood flooring, leaving a gully around the perimeter and a parapet wall around the entire hall with only 4 access points in the four corners of the space which is less than ideal for inclusion and event set up.</p> <p>Since the decision to stop providing bowls due to declining demand, the space has gone from strength to strength, hosting fitness classes, extreme Air, Boxing events and Council activity such as the Celebrating Rushcliffe Awards and Council Elections</p>			
			



The business case has now been proven, and bowls will not return. Therefore, to improve the user experience even further, the removal of the parapet wall would allow flat level access throughout the space and improve functionality for users.

To provide flat level access removing the parapet wall may also require some door alterations to the access doors and emergency exits which is yet to be determined at this time and requires detailed surveys to define the scope of the scheme

Location: Rushcliffe Arena

Executive Director: Neighbourhoods

Contribution to the Council’s aims and objectives:

Corporate Priorities:

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

Strategic Commitments:

- Protecting our residents’ health and facilitating healthier lifestyle choices.
- Provide high quality community facilities which meet the needs of our residents and contribute towards the financial independence of the Council.
- Ensuring well maintained facilities to support growing populations and increased usage
- Creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential.
- Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations.
- Working to achieve carbon neutral status for the Council’s operations.

Community Outcomes:

- To ensure the provision of high-quality community facilities which meet community need.
- To protect our residents’ health and facilitate healthier lifestyle choice.

Environmental Outcomes:

The works will aim to use local contractors where possible to minimise miles travelled. The waste material such as brick will be recycled, and replacement materials or carpets will be sourced with the lowest carbon footprint.

Other Options Rejected and Why:

The council could decide to do nothing and maintain the status quo; however, this does nothing to address the users experience and limits opportunities to maximise revenue opportunities in the space

Procurement route proposed and stage:

This will be designed and procured with the internal property and estates department in conjunction with Nottinghamshire County Council's procurement team.			
Project Management Office support required: Yes/No			
It is proposed that this project managed internally by the Team Manager for Health and Leisure Contracts in conjunction with Property and Estates and Parkwood Leisure.			
Start Date: May/June 2026 Post Elections although none are planned for 2026 currently so an ideal time window to do these improvement works		Completion Date: July 2026	
Capital (Total):	Cost	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27
£50,000			£50,000
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £:			
Works £47,500	Equipment	Other	Fees £2,500
Additional Revenue cost/ (saving) per annum:	Year 1: 25/26 Additional income expected, not yet quantified.	Year 2: 26/27 as 25/26	
Year 3: 27/28 as 25/26	Year 4: 28/29 as 25/26	Year 5: 29/30 as 25/26	
Proposed Funding			
External:		Internal: Regeneration and Community Projects Reserve	

Useful Economic Life (years): remaining life of Arena building	New/Replacement: Replacement
Depreciation per annum: will form part of Arena building depreciation	Capital Financing Costs: £2,000 p.a.

Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Operational Land & Building
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed	N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A

Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting
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PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

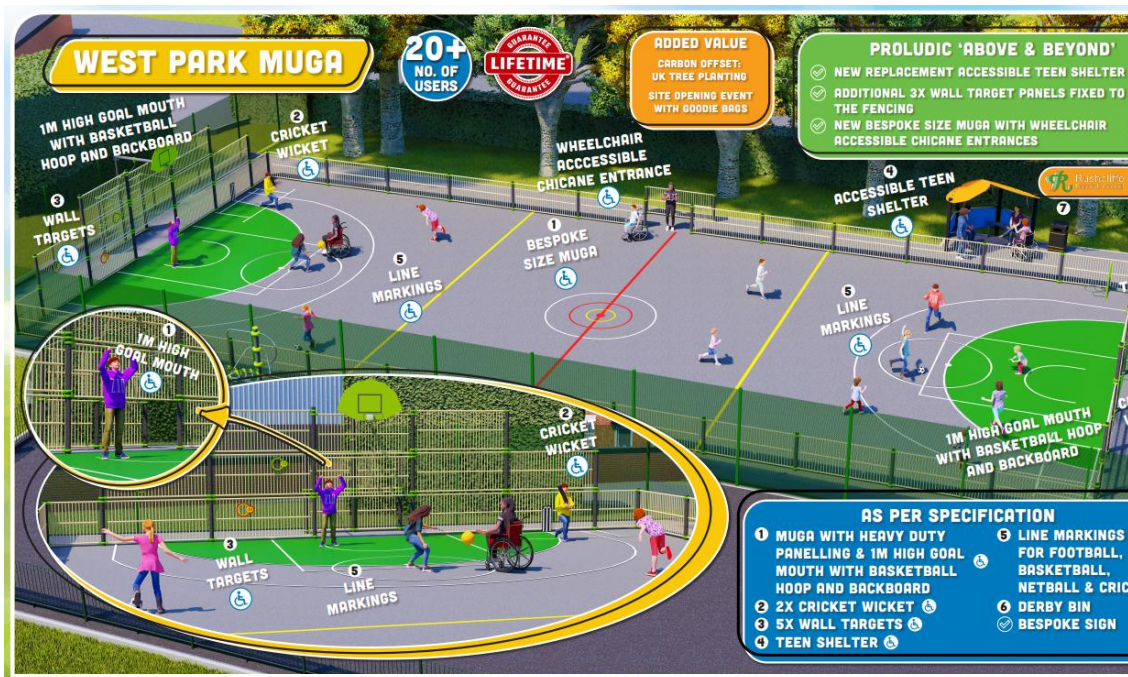
<p>Project Name: Play Areas W.B. (Special Expense)</p>	<p>Cost 0664</p> <p>Centre:</p>	<p>Ref: 12</p>
<p>Project Lead: Communities' Manager</p>		
<p>Request for Project from: Rushcliffe Play Strategy</p>		
<p>Detailed Description:</p> <p>The priority project for 2025/26 is West Park Children's Play Area and Teen facility, this will include some accessible improvements.</p> <p>For 2026/27, it is hoped will be looking at individual pieces of play equipment and safety surfacing across all the West Bridgford play sites to replace end of life equipment and safety surfacing with new equipment and surfacing to improve including and accessibility aligned with our play strategy.</p> <p>West Park Play area and Teen Area</p> <p>In 2025/26 financial year we will look to refurb the existing play area by replacing the wet pour safety surfacing and some refurbished or replaced equipment on the Junior Play and then replacing the existing half ball court and dynamic equipment with a standard MUGA to improve the surface and reduce ongoing maintenance to bark area.</p> <p>West Park site</p>		



Play area



The below MUGA will replace the half ball court and dynamic play equipment area, the works would also include a refurbishment of the existing Teen Shelter.



2026/2027

The 2026/2027 programme will not necessarily focus on a one out and one in project but will instead be informed by undertaking a full audit of all the special expenses play provision and safety surfacing across all sites and aim to replace end of life equipment and surfacing across multiple sites instead of focussing on one of the lesser used sites. The replacement equipment and surfacing will aim to be more inclusive following the refreshed play strategy guidance and will also take pressure off the revenue repairs budget over the financial year.

Location: West Bridgford	Executive Manager: Neighbourhoods
<p>Contribution to the Council’s aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Efficient Services • The Environment <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our residents’ health and facilitating healthier lifestyle choices. • Provide high quality community facilities which meet the needs of our residents. • Creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential. • Delivering a scheme refurbishment identified within the Rushcliffe Play Strategy • Working to achieve carbon neutral status for the Council’s operations. 	

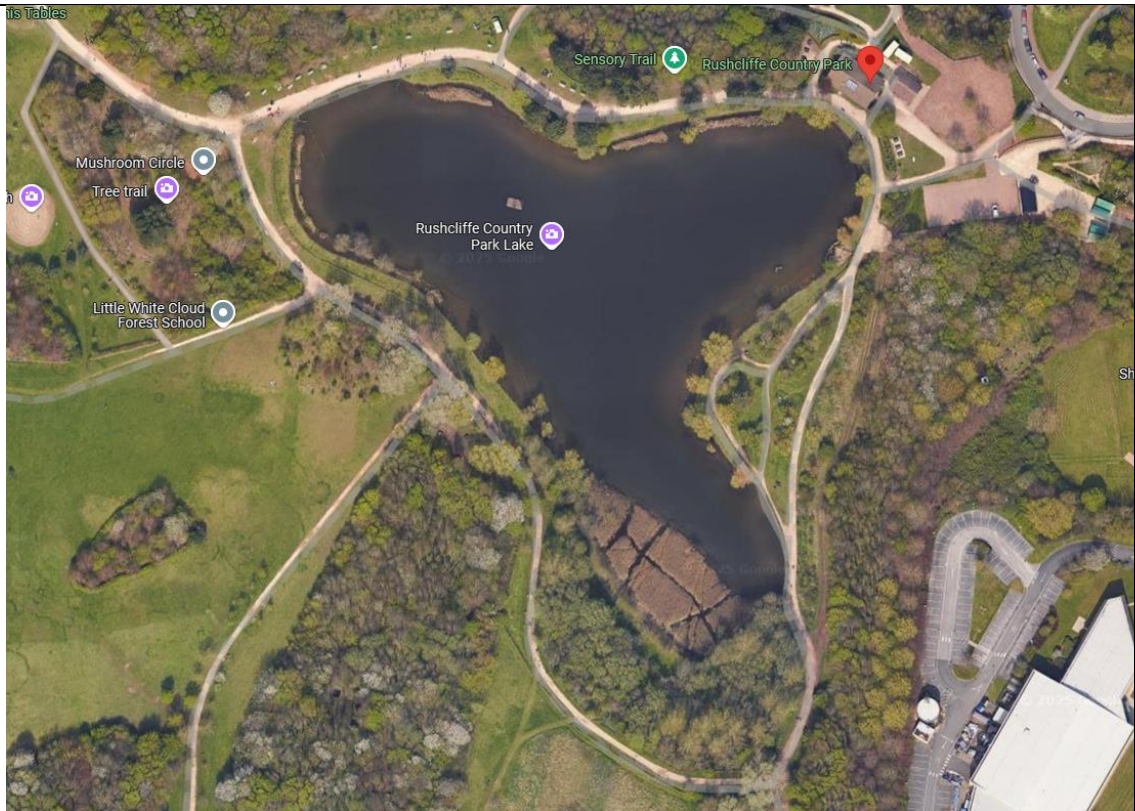
Community Outcomes:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the provision of high-quality community facilities which meet community need. To protect our residents' health and facilitate healthier lifestyle choice. To provide a facility to engage with young people who may otherwise not take part in formal sports or physical activity. 			
Environmental Outcomes:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tender process will take into consideration supply chain, Carbon reduction measures from the supplier use of materials to procure the most sustainable play facility for the community. 			
Other Options Rejected and Why:			
<p>Doing nothing would result in increased maintenance costs for ageing equipment, reduced appeal of the play areas leading to lower levels of use and be inconsistent with the vision of high-quality parks and leisure facilities. A lack of replacement programme would over time lead to an increased health and safety risk.</p>			
Procurement route proposed and stage:			
<p>ESPO Framework tender for larger schemes that has the 12 leading play manufacturers on it. The procurement will be supported by Nottinghamshire Councils procurement team and project managed by VIA East Midlands</p>			
Project Management Office support required: Yes			
<p>Due to lack of internal capacity or expertise within the property and Estates team we propose to use the tried and trusted project management relations established with VIA East Midlands over the last 5 years, who provide procurement and project management support through to completion</p>			
Start Date: April 2025		Completion Date: March 2027	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
£200,000	£100,000	£100,000	
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £: split of equipment costs to be determined			
Works	Equipment	Other	Fees
£182,000			£18,000
Additional Revenue cost/ (saving) per annum:	Year 1: 25/26		Year 2: 26/27
Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29		Year 5: 29/30

External:	Internal: Regeneration and Community Projects Reserve (Special Expense)
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Useful Economic Life (years): 15	New/Replacement: Replacement and new
Depreciation per annum: £6,700 25/26 plus £6,700 26/27	Capital Financing Costs: Nil as funds raised through WB Special Expense
Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: L & B/Equipment
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?	N/A
VAT treatment assessed?	N/A
Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Rushcliffe Country Park Enhancements	Cost 0504	Centre:	Ref: 13
Project Lead: Communities' Manager			
Request for project from: Neighbourhoods Feedback/Communities' Manager			
<p>Detailed Description: Rushcliffe Country Park Footpath rolling investment programme.</p> <p>Rushcliffe Country Park will be 32 years old in 2026 and up to 2022 had a passive management of the paths, by filling potholes and spreading some material in worn areas over the last 30 years.</p> <p>In 2022 the council began to proactively manage the 8km of paths by undertaking some path resurfacing work. This has enabled a specialist contractor to tackle the poorest and most heavily trafficked paths sections in the park in priority order to improve the overall quality and longevity of these sections. It also as re-instated the camber in the paths to support rainwater runoff and tackled stretching in sections where the path appears bigger than intended so the path return to its original intended state.</p> <p>The works in 2026/27 will amongst other areas focus on the orbital path around the lake with the aim to provide as inclusive a surface as possible for those visiting the park with mobility issues and compliment the café areas and Changing Places toilet provision.</p>			



<p>Location: Rushcliffe Country Park</p>	<p>Executive Manager: Neighbourhoods</p>
<p>Contribution to the Council’s aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Efficient Services <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our residents’ health and facilitating healthier lifestyle choices. • Provide high quality community facilities which meet the needs of our residents and contribute towards the financial independence of the Council. • Creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential. • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. 	
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the provision of high-quality community facilities which meet community need. • To protect our residents’ health and facilitate healthier lifestyle choice. 	
<p>Environmental Outcomes:</p>	

- The tender process will take into consideration supply chain, Carbon reduction measures from the supplier use of materials to procure the most sustainable outdoor facility for the community.

Other Options Rejected and Why:

Doing nothing would put at risk the operational performance and efficiency of the facility, reducing customer experience/satisfaction and, in turn, reduce revenue income.

Procurement route proposed and stage:

We would aim to get three quotes for the surfacing but have struggled in the past with getting three companies to quote.

Project Management Office support required: No

It is envisaged that this project will be managed by the Country Park Manager with the support of the Communities' Manager in house.

Start Date: April 2026

Completion Date: April 2026

Capital (Total):	Cost	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27
£25,000			£25,000

Capital Cost (Breakdown) £: to be determined

Works	Equipment	Other	Fees
£23,000			£2,000

Additional Revenue cost/(saving)per annum:	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27
	Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29
		Year 5: 29/30

Proposed Funding

External:

Internal: Capital Receipts

Useful Economic Life (years): 15	New/Replacement: Replacement section
Depreciation per annum: £1.6kpa	Capital Financing Costs: £1k p.a. as opportunity cost of lost interest.
Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Infrastructure
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?	N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A
Approval required from:	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Rushcliffe Country Park Play Area	Cost Centre: 0412	Ref: 14
Project Lead: Communities' Manager		
Request for project from: Neighbourhoods feedback/Rushcliffe Play Strategy		
<p>Detailed Description: Rushcliffe Country Park Play Area Inclusive Enhancements</p> <p>The scheme will complement the recent play development with additional inclusive elements aligned with the Council's Play Strategy to make the Country Park, which is the Council's destination NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play) Play area, the most inclusive and development centred provision in the Borough.</p> <p>Our aim is to capture the imagination of every visitor through inventive designs and inclusive play.</p>		
Location: Rushcliffe Country Park	Executive Manager: Neighbourhoods	
<p>Contribution to the Council's aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Efficient Services <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our residents' health and facilitating healthier lifestyle choices. • Provide high quality community facilities which meet the needs of our residents and contribute towards the financial independence of the Council. • Creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential. • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. 		
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the provision of high-quality community facilities which meet community need. • To protect our residents' health and facilitate healthier lifestyle choice. 		
<p>Environmental Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tender process will take into consideration supply chain, Carbon reduction measures from the supplier use of materials to procure the most sustainable play facility for the community. 		
Other Options Rejected and Why:		

Doing nothing would put at risk the operational performance and efficiency of the facility, reducing customer experience/satisfaction and, in turn, reduce revenue income.

Procurement route proposed and stage:

Given the relatively low values, it is proposed to do direct awards for the playground equipment to the play manufacturer who did the substantive play area to maintain consistency of equipment and path works to the surfacing company that has done the other path in the park and has a strong working relationship with the borough and have proven best value on recent tender exercises.

The scheme aims to spend approximately:

£10k on inclusive equipment;

£10k on Porus Macadam surfacing including a small section of new path to provide a closer link to the toilets for those users with additional needs which then can have thermoplastic ground graphics applied for visual inclusion;

£1k on an additional inclusive gate;

£2k on a linking path; and

£2k on fees.

Project Management Office support required: /No

To save costs, it is proposed that this work will be project managed directly between the Country Park Manager and the Communities' Manager.

Start Date: April 2025		Completion Date: April 2025	
Capital Cost (Total):	Year 1:25/26	Year 2: 26/27	
£25,000	£25,000		
Capital Cost (Breakdown) £: to be determined			
Works	Equipment	Other	Fees
£23,000			£2,000
Additional Revenue cost/(saving)per annum:	Year 1: 25/26		Year 2: 26/27

Year 3: 27/28	Year 4: 28/29	Year 5: 29/30
Proposed Funding		
External:	Internal: Capital Receipts	

Useful Economic Life (years): 15	New/Replacement: Replacement/New
Depreciation per annum: £1.6k	Capital Financing Costs: £1k p.a. as opportunity cost of lost interest.
Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Equipment
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?	N/A
VAT Treatment Assessed	N/A
Approval required from	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Edwalton Community Facility – Special Expense	Cost 0643	Centre:	Ref: 15
Project Lead: Communities' Manager			
Request for Project from: Council's Corporate Strategy			

Detailed Description: Edwalton Community Facility

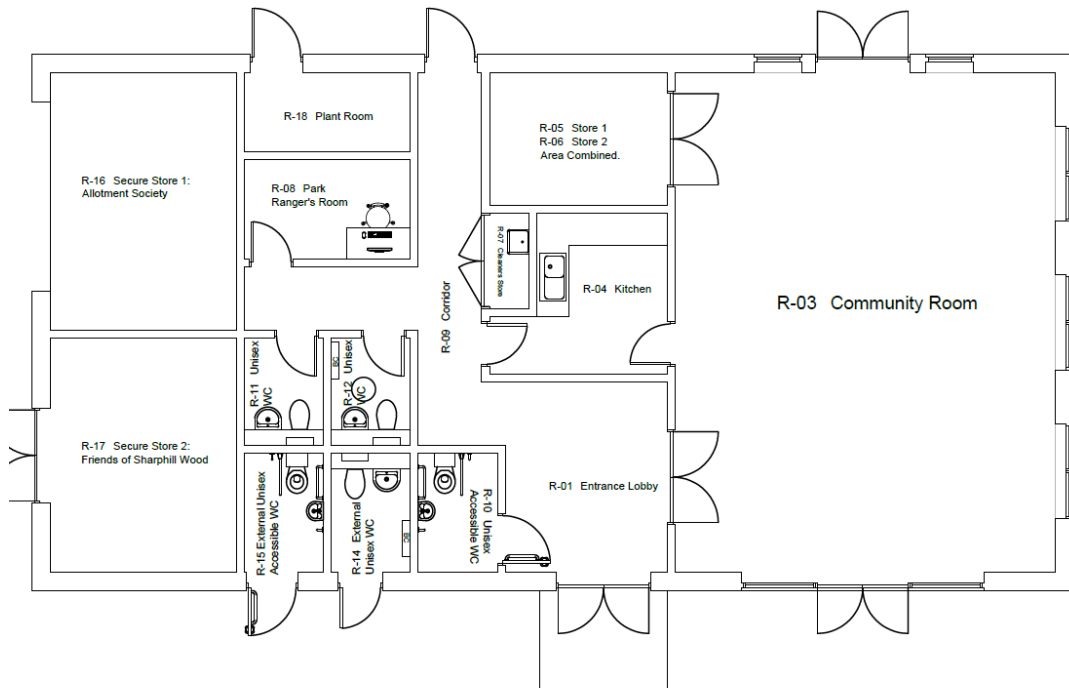
The Edwalton Community Hall proposals will form part of a new community focal point for the area as part of the Sharpbill Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE). They will provide connections to the community parks and woods supporting environmental conservation projects, community groups and volunteers. Shown below as item 3 with its associated car parking, community orchard and allotments.



The community hall will complement existing community infrastructure, including the newly opened Rosecliffe Spencer Academy Primary School which would cater for larger group gatherings.

The proposed development will have a meeting room serving groups with a capacity of up to 40 people. The building will also include rangers/facilities office, storage, toilets, and kitchen facilities. It is also proposed to have externally accessed toilets for working parties using the woods and community groups that can be accessed when the main

building is closed. The building will also have externally accessed storage for the allotment holders and Friends of Sharpill Wood to store materials which will improve co-ordination and the delivery of environmental based projects.



The Standard specifications we would like to see incorporated are:

External Standard Specification:

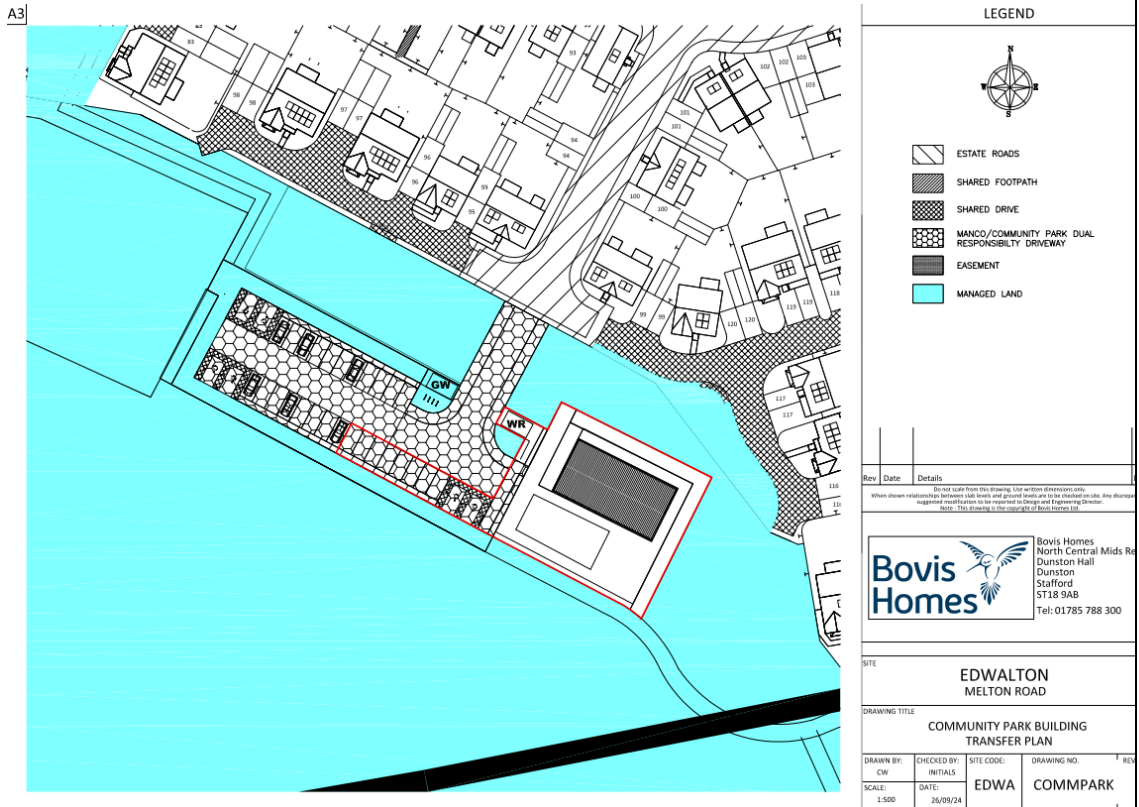
- Traditional masonry cavity external walls with brick work outer leaf and block work inner leaf
- Eaves height to be 3m to soffit minimum
- Truss rafter roof construction with Decra pan tiled effect roof finish
- Windows powered coated aluminium
- Roller shutters to all glazed openings (Doors and windows)
- External doors to the toilets and store rooms to be steel door sets.
- PV panels to the southern roof slope
- Paved area surrounding the building
- Anti vandal rain water pipes
- Anti vandal wall mounted bulk head fittings.

Internal Standard Specification:

- Solid floor construction, either a ground bearing slab or a beam and block solution
- Internal Walls, Plaster boarded ceilings with suitable paint finish
- Non-Slip vinyl flooring throughout. Polyflor Safety
- Entrance Matting. Burmatex
- Lighting, LED lighting throughout with PIR controls
- Air source heat pump for space heating and domestic hot water

<p>-Ventilation to the kitchen and toilets -All domestic water services to be mains fed except for the hot water calorifier.</p>	
<p>Location: Edwalton</p>	<p>Executive Manager: Neighbourhoods</p>
<p>Contribution to the Council’s aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Efficient Services • The Environment <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality community facilities which meet the needs of our residents and contribute towards the financial independence of the Council. • Responsible income generation where deemed appropriate, to facilitate the delivery of services. • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. • Reviewing our policies and ways of working to protect natural resources, and to implement environmentally beneficial infrastructure changes. • Working to achieve carbon neutral status for the Council’s operations. 	
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide additional community infrastructure. • Ensuring we are maximising our property holdings and aligning them with the needs of residents. Properties may be held for operational purposes, for community use, or for investment purposes. 	
<p>Environmental Outcomes:</p> <p>The Edwalton Community building would be built to the latest building regulations and environmental standards, it is postposed to have solar PV to its southern roof elevation and an air source heat pump to ensure it is minimising its Carbon Footprint.</p> <p>One of the key objectives of the building is to support community projects and groups to conserve and protect Sharphill Woods and the associated community parkland that will be created.</p>	
<p>Other Options Rejected and Why:</p> <p>The Authority could decide not to progress the project, but this would not address the community need identified in the area.</p>	
<p>Procurement route proposed and stage:</p> <p>It is proposed the project will be split into two elements: one which is the land transfer and then a direct award JCB build contract.</p>	

Please see below the proposed transfer plan



Project Management Office support required: Yes

Yes, full project Management support will be required for the newly established Project Corporate Project team and also provided by the Communities' Manager

Start Date: to be determined		Completion Date:	
Capital (Total):	Cost	Year 1:25/26	Year 2: 26/27
£840,000		£840,000	

Capital Cost (Breakdown) £: to be determined

Works £750,000 Additions to building spec £25,000 = £775k	Equipment	Other Awaiting formal advice on Stamp Duty. Liability not expected but would be approx. £32k	Fees: £65k = Legal £25k Clerk of works £20k External advice £20k
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Additional Revenue cost/(saving)per annum:	Year 1: 25/26 £30k	Year 2: 26/27 30K
	Year 3: 27/28 30K	Year 4: 28/29 30K
		Year 5: 29/30 30k
Proposed Funding		
External:	Internal: £250k New Homes Bonus; £590k Capital Receipts in the first instance repayable by annuity. Climate Change elements to be determined and assessed for funding from the specific reserve.	

Useful Economic Life (years): 40 years	New/Replacement: New
Depreciation per annum: £21,000	Capital Financing Costs: £33,600
Residual Value: N/A	Category of Asset: Operational Land and Buildings Special Expense
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?	To be assessed
VAT Treatment Assessed	Yes, exercise Option to Tax
Approval Required from:	Council Budget Setting

PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM

Project Name: Information Systems Strategy	Cost Centre: 0596	Ref: 16
Project Lead: Strategic ICT Manager		
Request for Project from: Rolling Capital Programme		
<p>Detailed Description:</p> <p>An emerging strategy will therefore exist enabling an agile approach to operational delivery, taking advantage of new proven developments. The ICT Technical Delivery Plan details all technical projects, and the schedule for implementation, during the lifetime of the ICT Strategy.</p>		
Location: Rushcliffe Arena	Executive Manager: Finance and Corporate	
<p>Contribution to the Council’s aims and objectives:</p> <p>Corporate Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient Services • Quality of Life • Protecting the Environment • Digital-by-Design <p>Strategic Commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources linked to growth aspirations. • Include digital principles in our communications and ways of undertaking business. • Working to achieve carbon neutral status for the Council’s operations. • Continue to invest in Cloud Services to enhance the Councils Business Continuity Plans and provide support for ‘Smarter Ways of Working’ policies. • People and Technology working together to provide efficiencies and remove barriers to simplify the Council’s operations. 		
<p>Community Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that we make best use of digital development where appropriate to deliver better services and operate more efficiently. • To enable residents to do business with us in a digital way if that is their preference. • To use public spend in an efficient and economical way. <p>The ICT Strategy is closely aligned to the Council’s “Four Year Plan” reviews and ICT will be instrumental in delivering the outcomes identified during these reviews. The Strategy will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Smarter Ways of Working. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With a focus on people and their experience when accessing Council services. Investing time to find the correct and appropriate solution, which provides efficient and economic systems across the Council. To bring people along the journey and promote flexible, remote and agile solutions, and digital transformation programmes that take advantage of self-service initiatives, intelligent automation (IA), and artificial intelligence (AI). Key elements are 		

<p>people and the use of technology as an enabler and improving customer service and experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Continuity, Cloud Services and Hybrid Technologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to improve business continuity arrangements and underpin other strategic objectives and their success. Seek opportunities to use cloud services to improve access and resilience for our residents and staff accessing Council services. Recognising when Hybrid technologies can be used to accommodate for complex and flexible solutions. • Information Management and Governance, and Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To safeguard Council data by ensuring legislative, central government security standards are followed and using security and privacy by design principles. • Think Green <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To be aware of and help achieve local net zero targets from energy efficiency savings when upgrading existing or implementing new systems. To report on energy usage and seek out opportunities to provide positive impact on carbon reduction. • Collaboration and Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to work closely with other authorities, establishing effective partnerships to share common challenges for efficient outcomes. 				
<p>Environmental Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When new infrastructure or ICT equipment is procured, power consumption forms part of the decision making when assessing quality of products. The supplier is also reviewed to see what their carbon footprint is and will add to the Council's. 				
<p>Other Options Rejected and Why:</p> <p>Every project is the subject of a proposal or business case to be presented to, and approved by, the Executive Manager for the corresponding Service Area to ensure that the most appropriate IT solution is chosen, having due regard to the alignment of technologies already in use across other local authorities, value for money and resilience. The option of not doing so would lead to outdated or incompatible technology, which would result in lower performance, higher maintenance costs and hinder the drive for greater efficiencies.</p>				
<p>Proposed Procurement route and stage: schemes will be procured in line with procurement rules, utilising the Framework where possible, with open tenders where necessary.</p>				
<p>Project Management Office support required: No</p>				
<p>Start Date: On-going</p>			<p>Completion Date: On-going</p>	
<p>Capital Cost (Total):</p>		<p>Year 1:25/26</p>	<p>Year 2: 26/27</p>	
<p>£488,000 (2 years)</p>		<p>£368,000</p>	<p>£120,000</p>	
<p>Capital Cost (Breakdown):</p>				
<p>Works</p>	<p>Equipment £448,000</p>		<p>Other £40,000</p>	<p>Fees</p>

Additional Revenue (saving) annum:	cost/ per	Year 1: 25/26	Year 2: 26/27
Year 3: 27/28		Year 4: 28/29	Year 6: 29/30
Proposed Funding			
External: N/A		Internal: Regeneration and Community Projects Reserve and Organisation Stabilisation Reserve	

Useful Economic Life (years): 3	New/Replacement: New and Replacement
Depreciation per annum: £123k 24/25 plus £40k 25/26	Capital Financing Costs: £19,500
Residual Value: Nil	Category of Asset: Intangible Assets and Equipment
IFRS16 New Lease Checklist Completed?	N/A
VAT treatment assessed?	N/A
Approval Required	Council Budget Setting

12.4 Appendix 4 – Use of Earmarked Reserves in 2025/26

Use of Earmarked Reserves in 2025/26	Projected Opening Balance	Projected Income	Projected Expenditure	Net Change in Year	REF	Projected Closing Balance
Investment Reserves						
Regeneration and Community Projects	3,506	333	(793)	(460)	1	3,046
Sinking Fund - Investments	810	200	(366)	(166)	2	644
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	8,131	1,478	(1,424)	54	3	8,185
Corporate Reserves						
Organisation Stabilisation	4,533	3,550	(373)	3,177	4	7,710
Treasury Capital Depreciation Reserve	1,173	0	0	0		1,173
Collection Fund S31	0	0	0	0		0
Climate Change Action	918	0	(100)	(100)	5	818
Flood Grant & Resilience	22	0	0	0		22
Freeport Reserve	0	0	0	0		0
Simpler Recycling Reserve	1,020	1,407	(1,982)	(575)	6	445
Vehicle Replacement Reserve	605	185	(330)	(145)	7	460
Risk and Insurance	100	0	0	0		100
Planning Appeals	349	0	0	0		349
Elections	101	50	0	50	8	151
Operating Reserves						
Planning	131	29	(85)	(56)	9	75
Leisure Centre Maintenance	0	15	(15)	0	10	0
Total Earmarked Reserves	21,399	7,247	(5,468)	1,779		23,178

Notes

1. Income - £168k from Special Expenses and Annuity Charges; £165k to create sinking funds for: Skateparks, Gresham Pitches, Crematorium, and Edwalton Golf Course. **Expenditure** - £283k IT; £200k KLC; Play Areas £100k; Contingency £150k; Highways Verges £60k.

2. Income - £200k from profit to create sinking funds for Investment Properties including Bridgford Hall. **Expenditure** - £200k Manvers BP Enhancements; £70k Cotgrave business Hub; £30k Walkers Yard 1a/b and 3; £25k Bridgford Kiosk; £25k the Point; and £16k Colliers Business Park.

3. Income - £1.478m NHB in year. **Expenditure** - £1.174m to offset MRP in year and £250k Edwalton Community Facility.

4. Income - £3.55m estimated surplus in year. **Expenditure** - £200k DFGs; £70k Tourism/Signage; £85k IT; and £18k IT App Guard.

5. Expenditure - £100k Streetwise Depot decarbonisation works.

6. Income £1.407m EPR Government Grant. **Expenditure** - £1.710m Kerbside Glass Recycling Capital; £272k Revenue

7. Income - £185k to top up Vehicle Replacement Reserve; **Expenditure** - £330k to fund Vehicle Replacements.

8. Income - £50k to top up Elections Reserve.

9 Income - £29k to top up the reserve. **Expenditure** - £85k to meet Local Plan Costs.

10. Income - £15k sinking fund for Athletics Track/Hockey Pitch old BLC; **Expenditure** - £15k Athletics Track/Hockey Pitch.

12.5 Appendix 5 – Proposed pricing schedules (Car Parking and Garden Waste)

Car Parking

West Bridgford	Current Charges £	Revised Charges £	% increase
Up to 30 minutes	0.70	0.70	0%
Up to 1 hour	1.20	1.20	0%
Up to 1.5 hours	1.70	2.00	18%
Up to 2 hours	2.50	2.80	12%
Up to 2.5 hours	3.00	3.50	17%
Up to 3 hours	3.50	4.00	14%
Over 3 hours	30.00	30.00	0%

Garden Waste

	Current £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2028/29 £	2029/30 £
First Bin	45	47	49	51	53	55
Second and subsequent bin	30	37	44	46	48	50

External Appendices

12.6 Appendix 6 – Pay Policy

12.7 Appendix 7 – Transformation and Efficiency Plan (TEP)

12.8 Appendix 8 – Capital and Investment Strategy

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Rushcliffe Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2025-2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement sets out the Council's policies in relation to the pay of its workforce, particularly its Senior Officers, in line with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The Statement is approved by full Council each year and published on the Council's website demonstrating an open and transparent approach to pay policy.
- 1.2 This Statement draws together the Council's policies relating to the payment of the workforce particularly:
- Senior Officers
 - Its lowest paid employees; and
 - The relationship between the pay of Senior Officers and the pay of other employees
- 1.3 For the purposes of this statement 'pay' includes basic salary, pension and all other allowances arising from employment.

2. Objectives of this Statement

- 2.1 This Statement sets out the Council's key policy principles in relation to pay evidencing a transparent and open process. It does not supersede the responsibilities and duties placed on the Council in its role as an employer and under employment law. These responsibilities and duties have been considered when formulating the Statement.
- 2.2 This Statement aims to ensure the Council's approach to pay attracts and retains a high performing workforce whilst ensuring value for money. It sits alongside the information on pay that the Council already publishes as part of its responsibilities under the Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency. Further details of this information can be found on the Council's website at the following address: <https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/about-us/about-the-council/senior-officers/>

3. Senior Officers

- 3.1 For the purposes of this Statement, Senior Officers are defined as those posts with a salary above £50,000 in line with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. Using this definition Senior Officers within Rushcliffe currently consists of 11 posts out of an establishment of 317. The posts are as follows:-
- Chief Executive
 - Director – Finance and Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer)
 - Director – Development and Economic Growth
 - Director - Neighbourhoods
 - Head of Service Chief Executive's Department and Monitoring Officer

- Head of Service – Finance
- Head of Service - Economic Growth and Property
- Head of Service – Planning
- Head of Service – Neighbourhoods
- Head of Service – Public Protection
- Head of Service – Corporate Services

4 The Policies

- 4.1 The Council consults when setting pay for all employees. The Council will meet or reimburse authorised travel, accommodation and subsistence costs for attendance at approved business meetings and training events. The Council does not regard such costs as remuneration but as non-pay operational costs.

5. Pay of the Council's Lowest Paid Employees

- 5.1 The total number of Council employees is presently 317 The Council has defined its lowest paid employees by taking the average salary of five permanent staff on the lowest pay grade the Council operates, who are not undergoing an apprenticeship. On this basis the lowest paid full-time equivalent employee of the Council earned £23,556 The Council currently pays £12.21 per hour for its lowest paid employees.

- 5.2 The Council does not explicitly set the pay of any individual or group of posts by reference to a pay multiple. The Council feels that pay multiples cannot capture the complexity of a dynamic and highly varied workforce in terms of job content, skills and experience required. In simple terms, the Council sets different levels of basic pay to reflect differences in levels of responsibility. Additionally, the highest paid employee of the Council's salary does not exceed 10 times that of the lowest paid group of employees.

- 5.3 The Head of Paid Service, or their delegated representative, will give due regard to the published Pay Policy Statement before the appointment of any Officers. Full Council will have the opportunity to discuss any appointment of Statutory Officer roles before an offer of appointment is made, in line with the Council's Officer Employment procedure rules within Part 4 of the Council's Constitution. Appointment to Director level is via a member employment panel.

6 Additional Payments Made to Chief Officers – Election Duties

- 6.1 The Chief Executive is nominated as the Returning Officer. In accordance with the national agreement, the Chief Executive is entitled to receive and retain the personal fees arising from performing the duties of Returning Officer, Acting Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer or Deputy Acting Returning Officer and similar positions which they perform subject to the payment of pension contributions thereon, where appropriate.

- 6.2 The role of Deputy Returning Officer may be applied to any other post and payment may not be made simply because of this designation. Payments to the Returning Officer are governed as follows:

- for national elections, fees are prescribed by legislation;
- for local elections, fees are determined within a local framework used by other district councils within the county. This framework is applied consistently and is reviewed periodically by lead Electoral Services Officers within Nottinghamshire. This includes proposals on fees for all staff employed in connection with elections. These fees are available for perusal on the Council's website.

6.3 As these fees are related to performance and delivery of specific elections duties, they are distinct from the process for the determination of pay for Senior Officers. The fees have been reviewed for 2025/26 and agreement made that the fees will increase annually in line with the national pay award.

Appendix to the Pay Policy Policies on other aspects of pay

Process for setting the pay of Senior Officers

The pay of the Chief Executive is based on an agreed pay scale which is agreed by Council prior to appointment. Changes to this are determined by the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Opposition, who are advised by an agreed external professional and the Strategic Human Resources Manager.

The pay of all Officers including Senior Officers is determined by levels of responsibility, job content and the skills and experience required. Consideration is also given to benchmarking against other similar roles, market forces and the challenges facing the authority at that time and to maximise efficiency. The pay of these posts is determined through the Chief Executive, or their nominated representative, in consultation with the Strategic Human Resources Manager and in line with the Council's pay scales and its agreed scheme of delegation.

The Council moved away from the national conditions of service in 1990 and pay scales are set locally.

As with all employees, the Council would look to appoint on the best possible terms to secure the best candidate for the job. However, there are factors that could influence the rate offered to an individual, including the relevant experience of the candidate, their current rate of pay and market forces.

All Senior Officers are expected to devote the whole of their service to the Authority and are excluded from taking up additional business, ad hoc services or additional appointments without consent as set out in the Councils code of conduct.

Terms and Conditions – All Employees

All employees are governed by the local terms and conditions as set out in the Employee handbook available on the intranet.

Local Government Pension Scheme

Every employee is automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme. Employer and employee contributions are based on pensionable pay, which is salary plus, for example, shift allowances, bonuses, contractual overtime, statutory sick pay and maternity pay as relevant.

For more comprehensive details of the local government pension scheme see: www.lgps.org.uk and www.nottspf.org.uk

Neither the scheme nor the Council adopt different policies with regard to benefits for any category of employee and the same terms apply to all staff. It is not normal Council policy to enhance retirement benefits but there is flexibility contained within the policy for enhancement of benefits and the Council will consider each case on its merits.

Car Allowances

The Council pays mileage rates at HMRC recommended rates.

Pay Increments

Where applicable pay increments for all employees are paid on an annual basis until the maximum of the scale is reached. The Chief Executive, or their nominated representative, has the discretion to award and remove increments of officers' dependant on satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance.

Relocation Allowance

Where it is necessary for a newly appointed employee to relocate to take up appointment, the Council may make a contribution towards relocation expenses. The same policy applies to Senior Officers and other employees. Payment will be made against a range of allowable costs for items necessarily incurred in selling and buying a property and moving into the area. The costs include estate agents' fees, legal fees, stamp duty, storage and removal costs, carpeting and curtains, short term rental etc. The Council will pay 80% of some costs and 100% of others or make a fixed sum available. If an employee leaves within two years of first employment, they may be required to reimburse a proportion of any relocation expenses.

Professional fees

The Council currently meets the cost of professional fees and subscriptions for employees where it is a requirement of their employment or their contract.

Returning Officer Payments

In accordance with the national agreement the Chief Executive is entitled to receive and retain the personal fees arising from performing the duties of returning officer, acting returning officer, deputy returning officer or deputy acting return officer and similar positions which they performs subject to the payment of pension contributions thereon, where appropriate.

Fees for returning officer and other electoral duties are identified and paid separately for local government elections, elections to the UK Parliament and other electoral processes such as referenda. As these relate to performance and delivery of specific elections duties, they are distinct from the process for the determination of pay for Senior Officers.

Managing Organisational Change Policy

The Council has a Managing Organisation Change Policy which was originally agreed by Council in March 2007 and is regularly reviewed. The Council also has policies related to redundancy payments which is based on the length of continuous local government service, which is used to determine a multiplier, which is then applied to actual pay.

The policy provides discretion to enhance the redundancy and pension contribution of the individual and each case would be considered taking into account individual circumstances. Copies of the policies are available on the Council's website.

Payments on termination

The Council does not provide any further payment to employees leaving the Council's employment other than in respect of accrued leave, which by agreement is untaken at the date of leaving, or payments that are agreed or negotiated in line with current employment law practices.

Publication of information relating to remuneration of Senior Officers

The Pay Policy Statement will be published annually on the Council's website following its approval by full Council each year.

Gender Pay gap reporting

The Council publishes its Gender Pay Gap information annually on the Council's website and on the Governments website.

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Transformation Strategy and Efficiency Plan 2025/26 – 2029/30

Introduction

The council has had a transformation Plan since 2010 and widened this to incorporate other efficiencies. The purpose of the Transformation and Efficiency Plan (TEP) is a measured approach to meeting the emerging financial challenges. The plan was written to identify cost efficiencies, increase income opportunities and develop transformational alternatives for the future delivery of services. This Transformation and Efficiency Plan also constitutes what was the previous Government's requirements for a Productivity Plan. This plan covers four key themes:

- Transformation of services to make better use of resources
- Take advantage of advances in technology
- Reduce wasteful spend within systems or, for example, on consultants
- Barriers preventing activity that the Government can help to reduce or remove

The Transformation Programme since its inception and going forward aims to support the delivery of over £7.6m in efficiencies. The following are guiding principles used, to identify ways to make efficiencies through the TEP:

- Where possible individuals that use facilities should pay for them
- Maximise income where we can and ensure costs are recovered
- Focus on reducing discretionary expenditure
- Continue to identify budget expenditure efficiencies
- Maximise the use of Council assets
- Digital by design programme and other innovations

The aim is to achieve this without significantly impacting on service quality or resident satisfaction. Our latest resident polling data shows us that 82% of residents are satisfied with Rushcliffe as a place to live and 61% of residents are satisfied with the way the Council runs its services. (2024).

The TEP is updated each year and sets out the Council's approach to making further savings between now and 2029/30, projects are summarised in Appendix B. It also explains our approach to identifying and working with partners, recognising and maximising opportunities, and leading the way in delivering high quality services that match the needs of residents. It is clear that as the organisation becomes leaner, it will become increasingly challenging to find further savings. Achieving the increased targets requires a bolder and more strategically focussed way of thinking. However with the Local Government Reorganisation expected within the five-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period, the focus of transformation, and the resources required, are likely to switch to transitioning to a new authority. The plan will evolve when we know more.

Addressing the funding gap

The most significant achievement of the TEP in recent years is the delivery in 2023 of both the Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium and the Bingham Arena and Enterprise Centre. Despite the challenges on Council resources as a result of Covid and international conflict, these projects were delivered on time and with savings against budget and will continue to make a significant contribution to the growing financial pressures during this MTFS period and help to deliver socio-economic benefits.

The Council continues to constrain spending and increase income where possible but also continues to review how it delivers its services for potential efficiency savings and to investigate opportunities for further transformation projects. Already lean budgets coupled with Inflation, National Insurance increases and policy changes such as Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility places pressure on costs, making this a more challenging endeavour.

The Council has identified additional service efficiencies and income generating opportunities for 2025/26 onwards, see Appendix B. Decisions which help to reduce the budget requirement include; a review of the Council's leisure contract, the relocation of the Customer Contact Centre in 2024 with savings on rent and running costs, the home alarms digitalisation project, increases in garden waste charges and long stay car parking changes. A collaboration with Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club to increase the use of leisure facilities at West Park is set to deliver additional income from 2026/27.

The impact of high inflation rates and reduced funding, means that the council has a need to draw on reserves, however due to savings identified this has been mitigated to a value of £k0.172 over the five-year period to 2029/30 (subject to risks outlined in the MTFS).

Savings targets

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross Budget Deficit excluding Transformation Plan	3,107	8,133	8,248	8,326	8,281
Cumulative Savings in Transformation Plan	(5,833)	(6,658)	(6,972)	(7,189)	(7,509)
Gross Budget Deficit/(Surplus)	(2,726)	1,475	1,276	1,137	772
Additional Transformation Plan savings	(824)	(314)	(218)	(320)	(86)
Net budget Deficit/(Surplus)	(3,550)	1,161	1,058	817	686
Cumulative additional Transformation savings	(824)	(1,138)	(1,356)	(1,676)	(1,762)

Partnering arrangements are pursued where this results in efficiencies. Existing examples are; Building Control partnership with South Kesteven and Newark & Sherwood, Payroll with Gedling Borough Council, Procurement provision by Nottingham County Council and Eastcroft Depot premises shared with Nottingham City Council, the insourcing of Streetwise in 2022 and part-outsourcing of the IT help desk in 2024 to the Cutter Group.

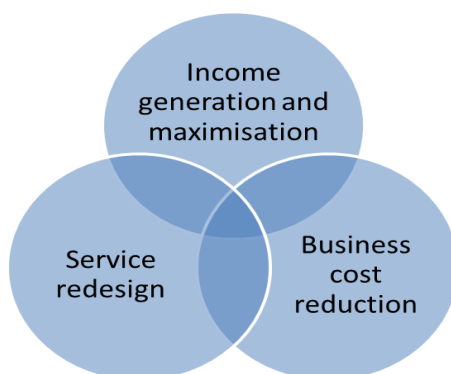
In March 2024 Nottinghamshire set up the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) with a directly elected Mayor covering Derbyshire, Derby, Nottinghamshire and Nottingham. This was formed to improve the region through local funding and decision making, as a result there may be additional opportunities for collaboration and funding to deliver

efficiencies not yet included in the budget. In the coming years the advent of LGR will result in a whole new collaboration.

This Strategy can be revised at any time by Full Council and as part of our Capital and Investment Strategy reporting we must show the impact on our prudential indicators.

Rushcliffe's core operating principles

Rushcliffe has three core principles which underpin its approach to transformation – income generation and maximisation, business cost reduction and service redesign. Transformation has been achieved to date by focusing on a 'one' Council approach and great teamwork between Councillors and officers to limit the impact upon residents. However, we recognise to be successful in bridging the remaining funding gap it may be necessary to consider and implement large scale transformational change which can generate a large fiscal impact.



The TEP is an evolving document and although it essentially covers the next five years it should not be bound by time or scope. To this end and within the emerging complex environment, three partnership models have been identified to provide a framework to generate further efficiencies. These are covered in more detail in [Appendix A](#).

An Integrated Approach to Transformation

This Strategy formalises the Council's integrated approach to transformation. It highlights the work that has been, and continues to be, done to deliver over £7.6m by 2029/30 in efficiencies and formalises the Council's principles of partnership working (detailed at [Appendix A](#)). At a strategic level it highlights the important relationship between:

- The Council's Corporate Strategy – which provides the overall direction of the Council, its core values and its four key priorities,
- The Medium-Term Financial Strategy – a defined plan of how the authority will work towards a balanced budget and maintain viability,
- The Transformation and Efficiency Plan/Productivity Plan – a document providing direction in respect of the strategically focussed streams of work to meet the financial targets whilst fulfilling the Council's corporate priorities.



Rushcliffe's Integrated Approach to Transformation

The diagram above also shows how this trio of documents can be influenced by external factors such as central government, public expectation, and other stakeholders.

The Transformation and Efficiency Plan (TEP)

This document details the different areas of work Officers and Councillors will focus upon to meet the stretching financial targets and requirements of the Productivity Plan whilst continuing to fulfil our corporate priorities. The diagram below highlights the different work streams and shows how they fit together over the next five years. Underpinning the work we do undertake is a commercial culture. Impending LGR is a 'thinking big' item and will take-up significant council resource going forward.



Management Responsibility with Member Challenge

Each year, officers undertake an internal programme of investigations looking specifically at improving efficiency through different ways of working. We also challenge our budgets every year to drive out further savings whilst minimising the impact of front-line services. We have a strong leadership focused on corporate priorities using regular performance clinics to manage performance and budgets. We also ensure that every large-scale project (where there is deemed to be a significant impact on residents, staff, or budgets) has its own project board and governance structure. Activities are challenged through Leader and Portfolio Holder briefings and constituted and established processes such as Member Groups. Reports on policy changes are passed through the Cabinet, and our Corporate Overview Group and other scrutiny groups regularly scrutinise review findings. Additional Member Groups are created by Cabinet and Scrutiny Groups when required.

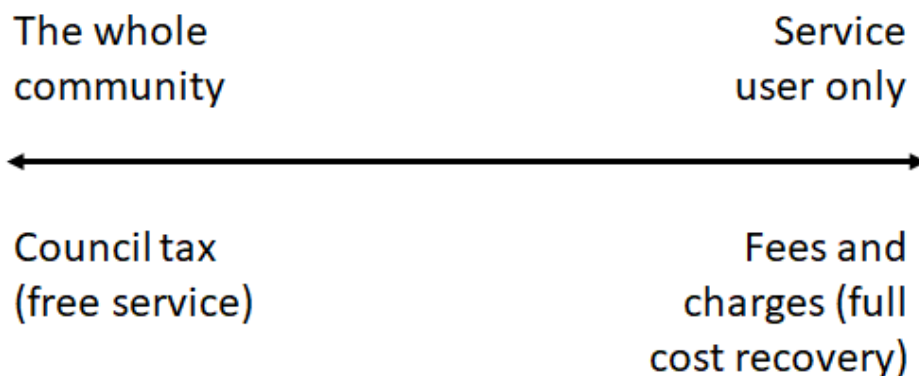
Service Efficiencies/Transformation of Services

The culture at Rushcliffe has been to ensure different services are reviewed regularly to make sure they are as focused upon the customer and as streamlined as possible, any identified inefficiency removed from the system and where appropriate services are moved online. The way the service is delivered is also investigated and consideration is given to potential partnership opportunities or alternative methods of delivery to protect the services that residents value without a pre-determined view. Headline efficiency targets have been identified for each area of the Council and these are illustrated at Appendix .

Process Reviews/Technology

The Council introduced its digital by design strategy in 2019 with the objective of understanding the Council's digital needs and delivering a programme of planned improvements. This strategy promoted four areas; Digital Culture, Efficiencies, Customer Satisfaction, and Security and Privacy, and successfully delivered a total of 18 projects. A cumulative savings of approx. £74k has been achieved in efficiencies per annum due to initiatives such as the 'My Account' portal for our residents, the Councillors portal for our elected Members, improved website, new booking system, new workflow and automation, and Hybrid Mail. There will continue to be an improvement plan; however, future developments will be based on the new ICT Strategy 2025–2028.

The Council has a Fees and Charges Policy which aims to ensure that fees are set in a transparent and consistent manner. In the current economic climate, fees and charges offer an opportunity for the Council to maximise its financial position, and to achieve policy objectives, for example by encouraging or discouraging the use of a service or to alter patterns of behaviour. The corporate charging policy covers: Which services should be subject to full cost recovery, and which should be met from the General Fund; Which services should be eligible for concessions within a broader equality and fairness framework; How charges relate to and support wider corporate priorities; and the impact of any competition and whether the Council is or should be competing with local businesses in the economy. Ultimately the balance between taxpayer and service user should be aligned. The diagram below demonstrates this principle.



Management Challenge/Reducing Waste

The Service Efficiencies are strengthened by on-going management of the services through regular performance clinics and a management challenge as part of the annual budget setting process – each Director is charged with scrutinising their budget to identify any additional savings or remove unused budget. Again, top level targets have been identified where appropriate, and these are illustrated in the table at Appendix B.

Members and Officers Working Together

The upper area of the diagram above focuses on activities where Members and officers work together to identify further savings and different ways of working. These aspects of the Strategy have been arrived at through our budget proposals which have continued to be radical and challenging as we look at ways of bridging the financial gap by 2029/30. Budget update sessions (both this year and in the past), incorporating Members from all political groups, have looked at what has been achieved so far, policy changes that can be made immediately to save money in the coming year, different ways of delivering services in the future, and more long-term options that could significantly change the face of the Council and the services it delivers.

Immediate savings

Each year, Members are presented with several policy changes which hit one or more of our core principles of income generation and maximisation, business cost reduction or service redesign. These operational changes form part of the budget setting process each year and generally result in savings or additional income for the following year(s).

Transformational Projects 2025-2030

As has already been mentioned above, this Strategy is a continuation of the Council's original Transformation Programme and consequently, several key projects which influence service delivery and finances over the next few years are already in progress. Good progress has been made with new Transformational Projects as mentioned above.

Going forwards, two major transformation and efficiency projects are:

- Leisure strategy review
- Additional income from garden waste and car parking charges

These schemes are embedded in the Corporate Strategy and fully embrace the Council's four priorities:

- Quality of Life
- Efficient Services
- Sustainable Growth
- The Environment.

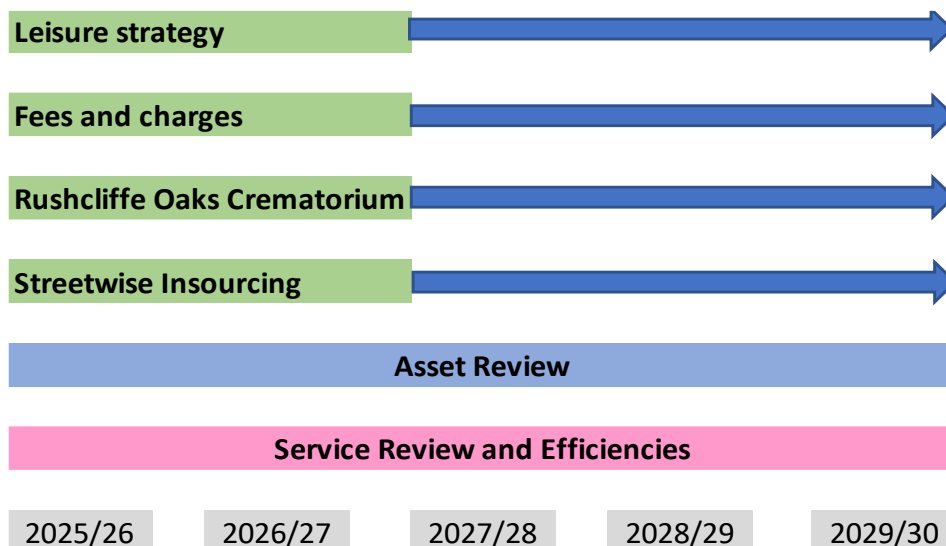
The Leisure strategy review will continue to ensure the Council provides high quality leisure facilities across the borough, that are affordable and accessible for residents whilst maximising the return to the Council to support its budget position and continue to provide such services. Additional income from fees and charges for garden waste and car parking to ensure that efficient services continue to be delivered whilst meeting rising costs.

Leisure Strategy Activation

The new Bingham Arena and Enterprise Centre opened in February 2023 giving even more added value for the taxpayer and the offices providing opportunities for small and growing businesses. Leisure Services continue to be improved, Keyworth and Cotgrave leisure centres during 2024 and 2025, to improve carbon efficiency through green technology measures, further supporting the Council's targets to be carbon neutral by 2030. The council has secured £1.2m external funding from SALIX to support these improvements. A short term extension to the Leisure Centre Management Contract to 2030 has been agreed and will deliver savings as per appendix B and will allow aligned of all of the Councils Leisure offering which may present opportunities to secure further efficiencies.

Summary of the Transformation Plan Work Programme

The diagram below summarises the Transformation and Efficiency Plan Work Programme for the next five years and provides a framework within which the required efficiencies will be delivered.



Governance

Whilst this strategy establishes a framework and timeframe for the individual projects within the programme, arrangements are flexible to allow for unforeseen circumstances and redirection of resources to maximise opportunities as they arise. It is anticipated that these same principles of agile working will apply to the 2025-2030 rolling Transformation Programme.

Each project within the programme has appropriate governance arrangements depending on the size, complexity, and risk. Overall, monitoring of the Strategy ultimately is reported Finance and Performance reports to both Cabinet and Corporate Overview Group and as necessary a relevant Scrutiny Group will take place quarterly by the Chief Executive and the Executive Management Team. Where it is required by individual projects, consultation, and engagement with members of the public will take place.

The following risks have been identified and will be monitored accordingly.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation
Reviews do not achieve anticipated savings	Probable	>£250k	Individual reviews where there is underachievement may be offset by others with higher savings. Regular reporting in budget papers.
Programme slippage	Possible	>£250k	Monitoring of programme and taking early corrective action
Insufficient capacity to undertake the programme	Possible	>£250k	Procure extra resources – i.e., consultancy
Insufficient interest from alternative providers	Possible	Negative	Find appropriate savings from direct service provision by quality reduction (probably)
Delay in anticipated savings or a reduction or removal of current savings due to external factors	Possible	>£250k	Accurate profiling of efficiencies. Close monitoring of the environment (e.g., rising prices) that may affect the feasibility of projects and regular reviews on the commercial market (e.g., rental demand) to assess likelihood of income falling.

Conclusion

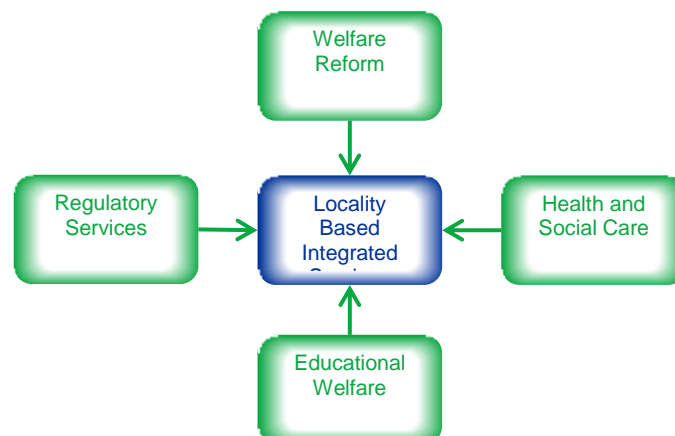
The above sets out Rushcliffe's plans over the next five years and the Council's commitment towards delivering these plans. This plan supports the Council's MTFs and is the vehicle upon which the Council will achieve a balanced budget. The Council is required to produce and publish a Productivity Plan and approval of this Strategy by Council satisfies this requirement.

Appendix A - Rushcliffe's Accepted Models of Partnership Working

Localised Integrated Working Partnerships

These types of integrated delivery partnerships involve working with other agencies and organisations whose services are delivered to Rushcliffe Borough residents. These partnerships are aimed at improving the connectivity of public services, public regulation, reducing the need to cross-refer people and issues.

The Government has recognised and begun to embrace the value of partnerships of scope and is increasingly looking to realise both financial and customer benefits from these. Central Government policies around community safety, health outcomes, welfare reform and community budget pilots, all demonstrate recognition of the importance of different agencies working together in a single locality to benefit their residents.



The Council's Customer Services Team operates in locations across the Borough on a remote access basis in buildings operated by partners such as libraries and health centres. The main Customer Service Centre is in West Bridgford library, the largest of the towns in Rushcliffe.

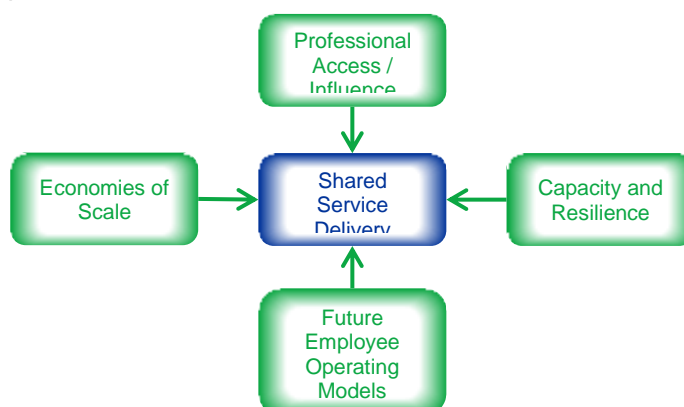
The service is delivered in Bingham where an integrated delivery service model has been deployed and is being delivered from its Health Centre. In addition, there are contact points in Cotgrave and East Leake located in libraries, supporting extended opening times of these facilities and providing increased remote access for the Customer Services Team.

There are also a range of projects underway involving our locality partners, which embed these principles and take services out into the community, including Positive Futures, Lark in the Park and Business Partnership events and networking.

Partnerships of Scale

This term describes two or more organisations joining together largely to benefit from economies of scale. These partnerships can, like localised integrated working partnerships, drive efficiencies but they may not, in themselves, directly improve the way in which the service is delivered to Rushcliffe Borough residents. Opportunities exist in this area to share back-office services, such as payroll, reducing costs and removing duplication whilst maintaining and improving capacity and resilience.

If scale partnerships are to be successful, previous experience has shown that there is a greater chance for success if they cover a broad range of services but are focussed and aligned on a small number of culturally similar and willing partners. It is possible to develop these partnerships organically – that is, as opportunities arise.



As mentioned above, to date partnerships of scale have developed organically – the Council has been successful in developing several such partnerships in the past, of which the following, mostly back-office services, have come to fruition: payroll services (Gedling), building control (South Kesteven, Newark & Sherwood), procurement (Nottinghamshire County Council), and emergency planning (Nottinghamshire County Council).

Following continued encouragement from Central Government, there has been an increased willingness and determination from the Leaders within Nottinghamshire to forge closer partnerships of scale – agreement with Nottingham City Council to relocate Depot Services to operate out of Eastcroft, now housing a shared depot for refuse fleet maintenance. Further opportunities will be assessed as opportunities arise. The Council is actively involved with the East Midlands County Combined Authority (EMCCA) which may present opportunities for collaboration.

Partnerships for Governance

There has been a growth of place-based and themed partnership arrangements. These have largely been designed to implement and administer arrangements within defined areas focussed upon common objectives including: The Joint Planning and Advisory Board (Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire County Council, Broxtowe BC, Gedling BC, Erewash DC, and Rushcliffe BC).

The Council is also working with partners on the power station site as part of the now approved East Midlands Freeport. along with East Midlands Airport and East Midlands Intermodal Park in South Derbyshire. To support the development of the site the Council worked with Uniper and others to adopt a Local Development Order for Ratcliffe on Soar, this is intended to accelerate the planning process to meet the challenging timescales of the EMF incentives.

The emergence and growth of other forums has restricted the representation and influencing role of individual districts. The Health and Wellbeing Boards is a prime example of where representation is restricted to one district or borough council. However, Officers ensure that regular updates are received and sent between district and borough councils to keep colleagues informed and good relationships are maintained with these organisations so we remain aware of opportunities as they arise. However, to further combat this, other supporting arrangements are in place. For example, the Council has created the Strategic Growth Board, Development and Community Boards and task and finish groups focused on particular areas or themes to either facilitate local economic growth or deal with the challenges growth creates. There is also the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee to drive future investment in growth and jobs in the City and County. At a regional level there is a Development Corporation Board which focuses on, for example agreeing joint objectives, allocating resources and monitoring outcomes which will impact regionally.



As these develop, there will be an increasing reliance upon forging relationships which can influence outcomes for Rushcliffe residents; for example, agreeing key infrastructure requirements which benefit not only Rushcliffe but neighbouring boroughs, districts, and the City. These models of partnership working provide a framework within which officers can be swift to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. They build upon our existing core principles model highlighted above and provide a clear map for the future. Going forward LGR will lead to a reset of relationships when a newly constituted local authority corporate entity is created.

Appendix B – Transformation and Efficiency Plan – Productivity Plan

Efficiency	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
TRANSFORMATION OF SERVICES						0
LEISURE STRATEGY	(385)	(33)	17	(5)	(5)	(411)
CREMATORIUM	(61)	(70)	(64)	(40)	0	(235)
WEST PARK NCCC (SPECIAL EXPENSE)	0	(36)	1	1		(34)
CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE	(50)	(1)	(1)	(1)		(53)
ADDITIONAL INCOME						0
CHARGING FOR NEW BINS	50					50
CAR PARKING	(15)			(100)		(115)
GREEN BIN SCHEME	(98)	(100)	(100)	(100)		(398)
GREEN BIN SCHEME (2ND AND SUBSEQUENT PRICE INCREASE)	(34)	(69)	(71)	(75)	(81)	(330)
BINGHAM ENTERPRISE		(8)				(8)
COTGRAVE PHASE 2	(1)	(6)				(7)
EDWALTON GOLF COURSE	21					21
CAR PARKING BINGHAM	(11)					(11)
CAR PARKING	(84)					(84)
TECHNOLOGY						0
HOME ALARMS DIGITALISATION	(97)	26				(71)
MARKETING SERVICES	10	(10)				0
REDUCING WASTE						0
PUBLIC CONVENIENCES	(15)	(1)				(16)
CIVIC DINNER	(11)					(11)
POSITIVE FUTURES	(25)					(25)
DIGITAL BIN CALENDAR		(6)				(6)
RUSHCLIFFE REPORTS (2 PAPER COPIES)	(18)					(18)
TOTAL	(825)	(314)	(218)	(320)	(86)	(1,762)
CUMULATIVE SAVINGS TO DATE	(5,833)	(6,658)	(6,972)	(7,189)	(7,509)	
CUMULATIVE SAVINGS CARRIED FORWARD	(6,658)	(6,972)	(7,189)	(7,509)	(7,595)	

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CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2025/26 – 2029/30

Introduction

1. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to comply with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities when carrying out capital and treasury management activities.
2. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has issued Guidance on Local Council Investments that requires the Council to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year.
3. This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the MHCLG Guidance.

The Capital Strategy

4. The Council's capital expenditure plans are summarised below and forms the first of the prudential indicators. Capital expenditure needs to have regard to:
 - Corporate Priorities (e.g., strategic planning)
 - Stewardship of assets (e.g. asset management planning)
 - Value for money (e.g. option appraisal)
 - Prudence and sustainability (e.g. implications for external borrowing and whole life costing)
 - Affordability (e.g. implications for council tax)
 - Practicability (e.g. the achievability of the Corporate Strategy)
 - Proportionality (e.g. risks associated with investment are proportionate to financial capacity); and
 - Environmental Social Governance (ESG) (e.g. address environmental sustainability in a manner which is consistent with our corporate policies. This is now a requirement of the Treasury Management (TM) Code)
5. Each year the Council will produce a Capital Programme to be approved by Full Council in March as part of Council Tax setting.
6. Each scheme is supported by a detailed appraisal (which may also be a Cabinet Report), as set out in the Council's Financial Regulations. The capital appraisals will address the following:
 - a) A detailed description of the project
 - b) How the project contributes to the Council's Corporate Priorities and Strategic Commitments (particularly the Council's environmental and carbon policies)
 - c) Anticipated outcomes and outputs
 - d) A consideration of alternative solutions
 - e) An estimate of the capital costs and sources of funding

- f) An estimate of the revenue implications, including any savings and/or future income generation potential
- g) A consideration of whether it is a new lease agreement
- h) How the project affects the Council's Environmental targets
- i) Any other aspects relevant to the appraisal of the scheme as the S151 Officer may determine.

The appraisal requirement applies to all schemes except where there is regular grant support and if commercial negotiations are due to take place and further reporting to Cabinet or Full Council is therefore required.

7. From time-to-time unforeseen opportunities may arise, or new priorities may emerge, which will require swift action and inclusion in the Capital Programme. These schemes are still subject to the appraisal process and the Capital Programme will contain a contingency sum to allow such schemes to progress without disrupting other planned capital activity.

Capital Prudential Indicators

a) Capital Expenditure Estimates

8. Capital expenditure can be financed immediately through the application of capital resources, for example, capital receipts, capital grants or revenue resources. However, if these resources are insufficient or a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need. Table 1 summarises the capital expenditure projections and anticipated financing. The detail behind the schemes are included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) presented to Full Council.

Table1: Projected Capital Expenditure and Financing

	2024/25 Estimate £'000	2025/26 Estimate £'000	2026/27 Estimate £'000	2027/28 Estimate £'000	2028/29 Estimate £'000	2029/30 Estimate £'000
Capital Expenditure	12,095	8,344	5,481	5,437	3,680	4,185
Less Financed by:						
Capital Receipts	2,571	2,719	295	246	178	795
Capital Grants/ Contributions	6,434	1,706	2,640	3,614	2,457	1,820
Reserves	3,090	3,919	2,546	1,577	1,045	1,570
Total Financing	12,095	8,344	5,481	5,437	3,680	4,185
Underlying need to Borrow	0	0	0	0	0	0

9. The key risks to the capital expenditure plans are that the level of grants estimated is subject to change, anticipated capital receipts are not realised/deferred or spend is more than expected in the medium term. There is uncertainty surrounding the future of New Homes Bonus which has impacted on

the level of capital grants received going forward. The provisional allocation for 2025/26 is £1.478m with nothing anticipated in future years.

b) The Council's Underlying Need to Borrow and Investment position

10. The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) which remains a key indicator under the Prudential Code. The CFR increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and capital receipts used to replace debt. In addition, the CFR will reduce with any voluntary contributions (VRP) made, because of financing requirements in relation to the Rushcliffe Arena development.
11. The Council also holds usable reserves and working capital which represent the underlying resources available for investment. The Council's current strategy is to use these resources, by way of internal borrowing, to avoid the need to externalise debt.
12. Table 2 below summarises the overall position regarding borrowing and available investments. It shows a decrease in CFR as the final residual MRP payment in relation to the Arena is made in 2026/27.

Table 2: CFR and Investment Resources

	2024/25 Estimate £'000	2025/26 Estimate £'000	2026/27 Estimate £'000	2027/28 Estimate £'000	2028/29 Estimate £'000	2029/30 Estimate £'000
Opening CFR	9,889	7,689	6,515	5,776	5,602	5,428
CFR in year	-	-	-	-	-	-
Less: MRP etc	(1,200)	(1,174)	(739)	(174)	(174)	(174)
Less: Capital Receipts Applied	(1,000)	-	-	-	-	-
Closing CFR	7,689	6,515	5,776	5,602	5,428	5,254
Less: External Borrowing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Borrowing	7,689	6,515	5,776	5,602	5,428	5,254
Less:						
Usable Reserves	(32,267)	(31,516)	(28,730)	(25,197)	(22,058)	(18,524)
Working Capital	(50,020)	(48,020)	(46,020)	(44,020)	(42,020)	(40,020)
Available for Investment	(74,598)	(73,021)	(68,974)	(63,615)	(58,650)	(53,290)

13. The Council is currently debt free and the assumption in the capital expenditure plan is that the Council will not need to externally borrow over the period of the MTFS predominantly due to Community infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 monies. Available resources (usable reserves and working capital) gradually reduce with usable reserves being used over the medium term to finance both capital and revenue expenditure. Working capital is projected to steadily reduce as S106 monies in relation to education are no longer paid to the Council and monies from developers are released.
14. Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above). Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the CFR, except in the short term. As

can be seen from table 3, the Council expects to comply with this. A reducing CFR is also positive as the Council's underlying need to borrow reduces.

Table 3 – Prudential Indicator: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement

	2024/25 Forecast £'000	2025/26 Forecast £'000	2026/27 Forecast £'000	2027/28 Forecast £'000	2028/29 Forecast £'000	2029/30 Forecast £'000
Debt (incl. PFI & leases)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Financing Requirement	7,689	6,515	5,776	5,602	5,428	5,254

15. The new accounting standard IFRS16 came into force on 1st April 2024. IFRS 16 affects how leases are measured, recognised, and presented in the accounts and essentially means that some leases may have to be classified as capital expenditure. The full impact of this change is to be determined but it is thought that it is unlikely to impact significantly on the CFR.

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

16. DLUHC Regulations require the Governance Scrutiny Group to consider a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement in advance of each year. Further commentary regarding financing of the debt is provided in paragraphs 28-33. A variety of options are provided to Councils, so long as there is prudent provision. The Council has chosen the Asset Life Method (Option 3 within the Guidance) with the following recommended MRP Statement:

MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with Option 3 of the regulations. Estimated life periods within this limit will be determined under delegated powers, subject to any statutory override. (MHCLG revised guidance states maximum asset lives of 40 and 50 years for property and land respectively)

As some types of capital expenditure incurred by the Council are not capable of being related to an individual asset, asset lives will be assessed on a basis which most reasonably reflects the anticipated period of benefit that arises from the expenditure. Also, whatever type of expenditure is involved, it will be grouped together in a manner which reflects the nature of the main component of expenditure and will only be divided up in cases where there are two or more major components with substantially different useful economic lives.

This option provides for a reduction in the borrowing need over approximately the asset's life.

17. As well as the need to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund borrowing requirement, used to fund capital expenditure each year (the CFR), through a revenue charge (the MRP), the Council is also allowed to make

additional voluntary contributions (VRP). In times of financial crisis, the Council has the flexibility to reduce voluntary contributions. Once payments in relation to the Arena finish (2026-27) the Council does not envisage making VRP contributions on any other scheme. Table 2 (paragraph 12) includes the use of capital receipts to bring the CFR down by funding capital expenditure.

Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30

18. The CIPFA Treasury Management Code (2021) defines treasury management activities as:

“The management of the organisation’s borrowing, investments and cash flows, including its banking, money market and capital market transactions, the effective control of the risks associated with those activities, and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

The code also includes non-cash investments which are covered at paragraph 71 to 78 below. Under the revised Prudential code, investments are separated into categories for Treasury Investment, Service Investment and Commercial Investment.

19. The CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services (the “CIPFA Treasury Management Code”) and the CIPFA Prudential Code require local authorities to produce a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year.
20. This Strategy includes those indicators that relate to the treasury management functions and help ensure that the Council’s capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable, while giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. TMP 1 (Treasury Management Practices) sets out the Council’s practices relating to Environmental Social Governance (ESG) and is a developing area.

The Current Economic Climate and Prospects for Interest Rates

21. The impact on the UK from the government’s Autumn Budget, slower interest rate cuts, modestly weaker economic growth over the medium term, together with the impact from President Trump’s second term in office and uncertainties around US domestic and foreign policy, will all influence the UK economy and ultimately impact on the performance of the Council’s treasury management strategy for 2025/26.
22. The Bank of England’s (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reduced the Bank Rate to 4.75% at its meeting in November 2024 (since maintained at this level at the December meeting), having previously cut it by 25 basis points from the 5.25% peak at the August MPC meeting. The Council’s treasury management adviser Arlingclose forecasts that interest rates will continue reducing through 2025, taking the Bank Rate to around 3.75% by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. The effect from the Autumn Budget on economic growth

and inflation has reduced expectations in terms of the pace of interest rate cuts as well as pushing up the rate.

23. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 2.6% in the 12 months to November 2024, up from 2.3% in October. However, a shock release showed the December year-on-year figure was 2.5% slightly lower than expected. The outlook for CPI inflation in the November Monetary Policy Report (MPR) showed it rising above the MPC's 2% target from 2024 into 2025 and reaching around 2.75% by the summer 2025. This is due to the ongoing impacts from higher interest rates and the Autumn Budget. Over the medium-term, once these pressures ease, inflation is expected to stabilise around 2% target.
24. The unemployment rate in the UK rose slightly from 4% in October to 4.3% November 2024. The BoE MPR showed the unemployment rate is expected to increase modestly, rising to around 4.5%, the assumed medium term equilibrium level.
25. Table 4 below shows the assumed average interest (which reflects a prudent approach) that will be made over the next five years for budget setting purposes.

Table 4: Budgetary Impact of Assumed Interest Rate Going Forward

	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Anticipated Interest Rate	4.06%	3.75%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%
Expected interest from investments (£)	1,375,900	1,248,800	1,117,600	957,700	863,000
Other interest (£)	59,000	59,000	59,000	59,000	59,000
Total Interest (£)	1,434,900	1,307,800	1,176,600	1,016,700	922,000
Sensitivity:	£	£	£	£	£
- 0.25% Interest Rate	80,800	73,500	72,500	59,600	56,800
+ 0.25% Interest Rate	(80,800)	(73,500)	(72,500)	(59,600)	(56,800)

26. In the event that a bank suffers a loss, the Council could be subject to bail-in to assist with the recovery process. The impact of a bail-in depends on the size of the loss incurred by the bank or building society, the amount of equity capital and junior bonds that can be absorbed first and the proportion of insured deposits, covered bonds and other liabilities that are exempt from bail-in.
27. The Council has managed bail-in risk by both reducing the amount that can be invested with each institution to £10 million and by investment diversification between creditworthy counterparties.

Borrowing Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30

Prudential Indicators for External Debt

28. Table 2 above identifies that the Council will not need to externally borrow over the MTFS instead choosing to internally borrow. Whilst this means that no

external borrowing costs (interest/debt management) are incurred, there is an opportunity cost of using internal borrowing by way of lost interest on cash balances.

29. The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- UK Municipal Bond Agency and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues
- HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility
- Any other public sector body
- UK public and private sector pension funds
- Any other bank or building societies authorised to operate in the UK
- Capital market bond investors
- National Wealth Fund (formerly UK Infrastructure Bank)
- Any institution approved for investments
- Retail investors via a regulated peer-to-peer platform

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing is at Gilts +80bps (certainty rate). If applying, there is the need to categorise the capital programme into 5 categories including service, housing and regeneration. If any Council has assets that are being purchased 'primarily for yield' anywhere in their capital programme they will not be able to access PWLB funding.

Other sources of debt finance, in addition to the above, that are not borrowing but may be classed as other debt liabilities are listed below. These options would be subject to due diligence in the event that any are proposed methods to finance Council debt.

- Hire purchase
- Leasing
- Sale and leaseback
- Private Finance Initiative

a) Authorised Limit for External Debt

30. The authorised limit is the "affordable borrowing limit" required by section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003 and represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited. It shows the maximum amount the Council could afford to borrow in the short term to maximise treasury management opportunities and either cover temporary cash flow shortfalls or use for longer term capital investment. It should be set higher than the CFR (see table 3) plus a safety margin of £10m to £15m. The limits below satisfy this requirement.

Table 5: The Authorised Limit

	2024/25 Estimate £'000	2025/26 Estimate £'000	2026/27 Estimate £'000	2027/28 Estimate £'000	2028/29 Estimate £'000	2029/30 Estimate £'000
Authorised Limit	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000

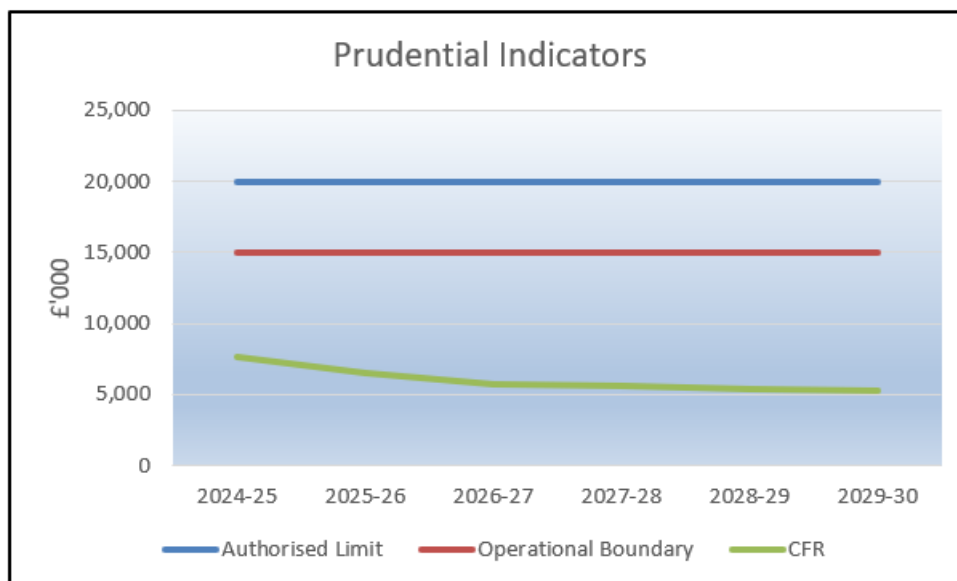
b) Operational Boundary for External Debt

31. The operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. The operational boundary is not a limit and actual borrowing can be either below or above the boundary subject to the authorised limit not being breached. The Operational Limit has been set at £15m (Table 6) and, whilst the Council is not expected to externally borrow over the period of the MTFS, this provides a cushion and gives flexibility should circumstances significantly change..

Table 6: The Operational Boundary

	2024/25 Estimate £'000	2025/26 Estimate £'000	2026/27 Estimate £'000	2027/28 Estimate £'000	2028/29 Estimate £'000	2029/30 Estimate £'000
Operational Boundary	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000

Chart 1 below shows the prudential indicators graphically



32. The Council's is required to show the maturity structure of borrowing. The Council had no debt and is unlikely to need to borrow over the medium term and if it did, it would only be for small amounts so there is no significant refinancing risks and therefore the limits in the strategy do not need to be restrictive (see Table 7).

Table 7 – Prudential Indicator: Refinancing Risk Indicator

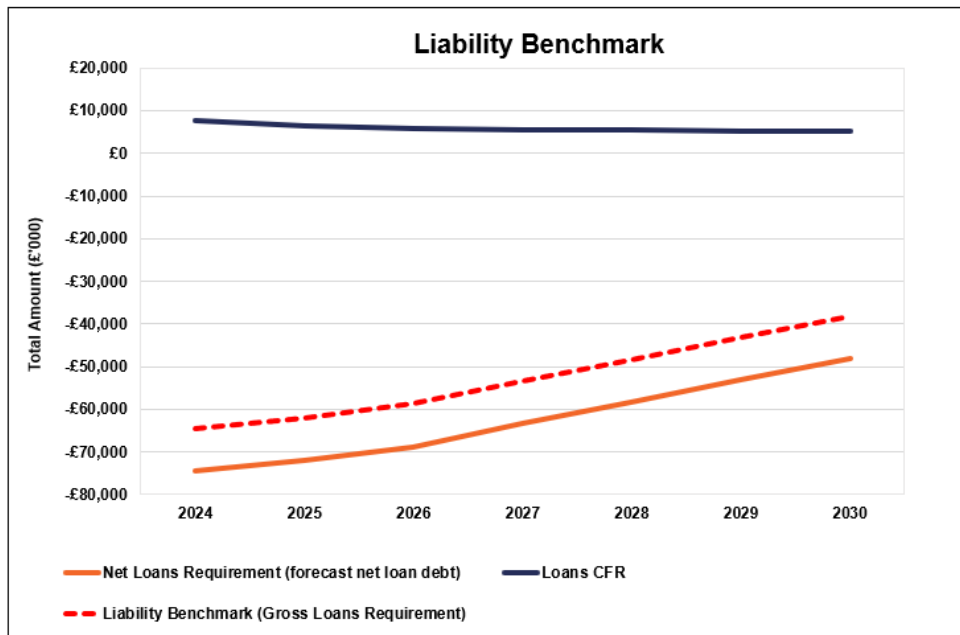
Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months an within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

33. The Liability Benchmark reflects the real need to borrow and can be seen in table 8. In accordance with the Code this must also be shown graphically (Chart 2). The Council's CFR is reducing due to MRP repayments, reserves are being used to fund future capital expenditure and working capital/S106 monies are returning to a normal level. As demonstrated by the credit figures below, the Council expects to be a long-term investor and has no need to borrow over the medium term.

Table 8 Prudential Indicator: Liability Benchmark

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Closing CFR	7,689	6,515	5,776	5,602	5,428	5,254
Less:						
Usable Reserves	(32,267)	(31,516)	(28,730)	(25,197)	(22,058)	(18,524)
Working Capital	(50,020)	(48,020)	(46,020)	(44,020)	(42,020)	(40,020)
Plus minimum investment:	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
LIABILITY BENCHMARK	(64,598)	(63,021)	(58,974)	(53,615)	(48,650)	(43,290)

Chart 2 Prudential Indicator: Liability Benchmark



Prudential Indicators for Affordability

34. Affordability indicators provide details of the impact of capital investment plans on the Council's overall finances.

a) Actual and estimates of the ratio of net financing costs to net revenue stream

35. This indicator identifies the trend in net financing costs which include borrowing costs (MRP only for Rushcliffe) less investment income, against net revenue income. The purpose of the indicator is to show how the proportion of net income used to pay for financing costs is changing over time.
36. A credit indicates interest earned rather than an interest cost. The figures fluctuate over the MTFS period but from 2025/26 all figures are in credit. This is reflective of the reducing MRP payments, as payments in relation to Rushcliffe Arena finish in 2026/27. There are other non-treasury capital commitments in relation to Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium and Bingham Arena and Enterprise Centre which give rise to further MRP, but repayments are lower because they are spread over a longer period.
37. Net revenue streams fluctuate over the period. New Homes Bonus has been extended a further year, but no further income is expected after 2025-26. Later years reflect both the downward trend in interest from lower investment balances whilst net revenue streams increase from Council Tax and Localised Business Rate increases.

Table 9: Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Net Interest Payable/(Receivable)	(261)	(569)	(1,003)	(843)	(748)
Net Revenue Stream	19,392	14,883	14,849	15,446	16,070
Financing costs:Net Revenue Stream	-1.35%	-3.82%	-6.75%	-5.46%	-4.65%

b) Estimates of net income to net revenue stream

38. This indicator that looks at net income from commercial and service investments (for example it includes Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium and Bingham Market) and expresses it as a percentage of net revenue streams. The increase reflects rent increases and full year effect of the crematorium becoming operational.

Table 10: Proportion of Net Income to Net Revenue Stream

	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Net Income from investments	(2,142)	(2,286)	(2,331)	(2,354)	(2,373)
Net Revenue Stream	19,392	14,883	14,849	15,446	16,070
Net Income:Net Revenue Stream	11.0%	15.4%	15.7%	15.2%	14.8%

Investment Strategy 2025/26 to 2029/30

39. Table 11 below shows the Council's investment projections. The downward movement reflects the use of capital receipts to finance capital expenditure. In addition, it reflects the release of S106 monies and the loss of S106 receipts for Education which are no longer paid to the Council.

Table 11: Investment Projections

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Investments at 31 March £'000	74,598	73,021	68,974	63,615	58,650	53,290

40. Both the CIPFA Code requires the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitable low investment income.

Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Council will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, to maintain the spending power of the sum invested. The Council aims to be a responsible investor and will consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues when investing. The Council ensures that robust due diligence procedures cover all external investments.

41. As demonstrated by the liability benchmark above (paragraph 33), the Council expects to be a long-term investor and treasury investments will therefore include both short-term low risk instruments to manage day to day cash flows and longer-term instruments where limited additional risk is accepted in return for higher investment income to support the services the Council provides.
42. Environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations are increasingly a factor in global investors' decision making, but the framework for evaluating investment opportunities is still developing and therefore the Council's ESG policy does not currently include ESG scoring or other real-time ESG criteria at an individual investment level. When investing in banks and funds, the Council will (in accordance with treasury advice) prioritise banks that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking and funds operated by managers that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, the Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance and/or the UK Stewardship Code.
43. The Council will keep under review the sensitivity of its treasury assets and liabilities to inflation and will seek to manage the risk accordingly in the context of the whole of the Council's inflation exposures.
44. The Council will invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in Table 12 below, subject to the limits shown and counterparties included at Appendix i.

Table 12: Counterparty Details

Sector	Time limit	Counterparty limit	Sector limit
The UK Government	50 years	Unlimited	n/a
Local authorities & other government entities	25 years	£10m	Unlimited
Secured investments *	25 years	£10m	Unlimited
Banks (unsecured) *	13 months	£3m	Unlimited
Building societies (unsecured) *	13 months	£3m	£3m
Registered provider *	5 years	£5m	£5m
Money market funds *	n/a	£10m	Unlimited
Strategic pooled funds	n/a	£10m	£30m
Real estate investment trusts	n/a	£5m	£10m
Other investments *	5 years	£5m	£10m

*Please refer to Glossary at Appendix (iv)

Although the above table details the counterparties that the Council could invest funds with, it would not invest funds with counterparties against the advice of Arlingclose (the Council's TM Advisors) even if they met the criteria above.

45. Credit rating information is provided by Arlingclose on all active counterparties that comply with the criteria above. A counterparty list will be maintained from this information and any counterparty not meeting the criteria will be removed from the list.
46. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:
 - no new investments will be made,
 - any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
 - full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.
47. Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "rating watch negative" or "credit watch negative") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn (on the next working day), will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.
48. The Council understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including financial

statements, information on potential government support, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from Arlingclose.

49. The Council is aware that investment with certain counterparties, while considered secure from a purely financial perspective, may leave it open to criticism that may affect its public reputation, and this risk will also be considered when making investment decisions. Many local authorities are not rated by credit rating agencies, although some are. The Council will always take reasonable steps as mentioned in paragraph 48 and carry out due diligence before investing.
50. Although the Council has never made use of financial derivatives and has no current plans to do so, in line with the Cipfa code, the Council would seek external advice before entering into such an agreement to ensure that it fully understands the implications (see paragraphs 65 to 67 for more detail).

Credit Risk

51. The CIPFA Treasury Management Code recommends that organisations should clearly specify the minimum acceptable credit quality of its counterparties; however, they should not rely on credit ratings alone and should recognise their limitations. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations, in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantial doubts about its credit quality, even though it may meet the credit rating criteria.
52. When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the credit worthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Council will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Council's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will cause a reduction in the level of investment income earned but will protect the principal sum invested.

Current investments

53. The Council uses its own processes to monitor cash flow and determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Council being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Council's medium term financial strategy and cash flow forecast.

54. Surplus funds are invested based on the most up to date forecasts of interest rates and in accordance with the Council's cash flow requirements in order to gain the maximum benefit from the Council's cash position throughout the year. Generally speaking, in times of rising interest rates it is prudent to invest short term, whilst also ensuring a diversified portfolio. Funds are separated between service investment and non-specified investments as detailed in paragraphs 58 to 60 below.
55. Historically (prior to 2011) the Council held £2m in pooled/diversified funds. In 2018 it purchased an additional £2m, a further £9m in 2019, followed by £2m in 2021 giving a total of £15m. The fair value of these funds fluctuates, the current value of these investments can be seen in Appendix ii. The downward trend experienced by the political turmoil last year coupled with high levels of inflation and monetary policies surrounding interest rates has impacted on these.
56. The fluctuations in capital value of the pooled funds to date is a loss of £0.978m. This is currently reversed by the statutory override preventing any accounting loss impacting on the revenue accounts. This is due to end 31 March 2025. The risk of this loss crystallising after this period has been largely mitigated by appropriations of £1.173m to the Pooled Funds reserve.
57. It should be noted that whilst the value of this type of investment can fluctuate, the revenue returns make up a significant proportion of the overall returns on investments (the fair value of these investments accounted for 19% of average investment balances in 2023/24 but generated 34% interest) and over the period of investment has returned £3.5m in interest. The Council will continue to monitor the position on these investments and take advice from the treasury advisors.

Service investments

58. The Council invests its money for three broad purposes:
- because it has surplus cash as a result of its day-to-day activities (treasury management),
 - to support local public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (service investments), and
 - to earn investment income (or known as commercial investments where this is the main purpose).
59. The Council can lend money to its suppliers, parish councils, local businesses, local charities, employees, housing associations to support local public services and stimulate local growth. The Council has existing loans to Nottinghamshire Cricket Club which not only stimulates the local economy but provides social outcomes. The Trent Bridge: Community Trust delivers projects that have

positive impacts on local communities such as tackling social exclusion and anti-social behaviour. The main risk when making service loans is that the borrower may be unable to repay the principal lent and/or the interest due. In order to limit this risk and ensure that total exposure to service loans remains proportionate to the size of the Council, the upper limit on any category of borrower will be £5 million.

Non-specified investments

60. Shares are the only investment type that the Council has identified that meets the definition of a non-specified investment in the government guidance. The Council does not intend to make any such investments, that are defined as capital expenditure by legislation.

Investment Limits

61. The Council's revenue reserves available to cover investment losses in a worst-case scenario are forecast to be around £15.8 million on 31st March 2025. The maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £10.0 million. This figure is constantly under review to assess risk in the case of a single default. A group of banks under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes. Limits will also be placed on fund managers, investments in brokers' nominee accounts, foreign countries, and industry sectors as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country since the risk is diversified over many countries.

Table 13: Additional investment limits

	Cash limit
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£10m per manager
Investments held in a broker's nominee account	£10m per broker
Foreign countries	£3m per country

Treasury Management limits on activity

62. The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators:

a) Interest Rate Exposures

63. This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on fixed and variable rate interest rate exposures, expressed as the amount of net interest payable. The Council has set a limit of 50% on fixed interest rate exposure. During a time of falling interest rates as forecast (paragraph 25) this indicator should not be restrictive, preventing the Council from locking into higher interest rates. The definition of fixed rate investments and borrowings are those where the rate of interest is fixed for at least 12

months, measured from the start of the financial year or the transaction date if later. All other instruments are classed as variable rate.

Table 14: Interest Rate Exposure

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Upper Limit on fixed interest rate exposure	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Upper Limit on variable interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Principal Sums Invested over 1 year

64. This limit is intended to contain exposure to the possibility of any loss that may arise as a result of the Council having to seek early repayment of any investments made. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end are set at 50% of the sum available for investment (to the nearest £100k), as follows:

Table 15: Principal Sums Invested over 1 year

	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate	2028/29 Estimate	2029/30 Estimate
Limit on Principal invested over 1 year £'000	37,300	36,500	34,500	31,800	29,300	26,600

Policy on the use of financial derivatives

65. Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g., interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g., LOBO (Lender Option Borrowers Option) loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e., those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).

66. The Council will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures, and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Council is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be considered when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they

present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

67. Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria. The current value of any amount due from a derivative counterparty will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

Treasury Management Advisors

68. Arlingclose will act as the Council's treasury management advisors until 31 October 2026. The company provides a range of services which include:

- Technical support on treasury matters and capital finance issues
- Economic and interest rate analysis
- Generic investment advice on interest rates, timing, and investment instruments; and
- Credit ratings/market information service comprising the three main credit rating agencies.

69. Whilst the treasury management advisors provide support to the internal treasury function, the current market rules and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code confirms that the final decision on treasury management matters rests with the Council. The service provided by the Council's treasury management advisors is subject to regular review.

Other Options Considered

70. The MHCLG Guidance and the CIPFA Code do not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services, having consulted the Cabinet Member for Finance, believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Our policy is to have a feathered approach i.e., a range of counterparties spread over different time periods (short/medium/long term), this mitigates risk of changes in credit ratings and interest rates whether they go up or down.

Commercial Investments

71. The CIPFA definition of investments in treasury management activities above (paragraph 18) covers all financial assets of the organisation as well as other non-financial assets which the organisation holds primarily for financial returns, such as investment property portfolios. This may therefore include investments which are not managed as part of normal treasury management or under treasury management delegations.

72. Under the updated Prudential Code, Local Authorities are no longer allowed to borrow to fund non-financial assets solely to generate a profit.

73. The Council will maintain a summary of current material investments, subsidiaries, joint ventures, and liabilities, including financial guarantees and the organisation's risk exposure. The current summary is included at Appendix iii.

74. The Council will also monitor past commercial property investments against original objectives and consider plans to divest as part of a biennial review. The last report was presented to Governance Scrutiny Group in February 2024 (see paragraph 84).

75. Proportionality is included as an objective in the Prudential Code. Clarification and definitions to define commercial activity and investment are also included, and the purchase of commercial property purely for profit cannot lead to an increased capital financing requirement (CFR).

76. The Council must disclose its dependence on commercial income and the contribution non-core investments make towards core functions. This covers assets previously purchased through the Council's Asset Investment Strategy (AIS), as well as other pre-existing commercial investments.

a. Dependence on commercial income and contribution non-core investments make towards core functions

77. The expected contributions from existing commercial investments are shown in Table 16. To manage the risk to the Council's budget, the contribution from commercial investments should not account for a significant proportion of the Council's total income. Over the medium term the contribution from commercial investments is around 11% each year leaving the Council less exposed to risks surrounding commercial property.

78. This was slightly higher in 2024/25 due to the Council's budgeted total income at the time being lower primarily due to interest receipts forecasts reflecting interest rate cuts which were anticipated at the time of budget setting.

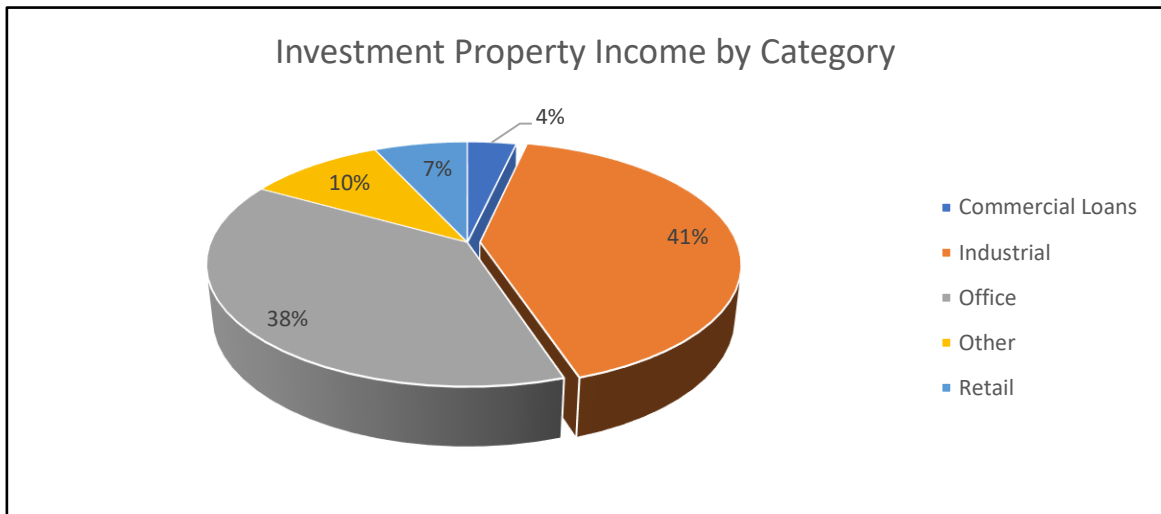
Table 16: Commercial Investment income and costs

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Commercial Property Income	(1,902)	(1,979)	(2,041)	(2,041)	(2,044)	(2,047)
Running Costs	458	465	467	476	486	497
Net Contribution to core functions	<u>(1,444)</u>	<u>(1,514)</u>	<u>(1,574)</u>	<u>(1,565)</u>	<u>(1,558)</u>	<u>(1,550)</u>
Interest from Commercial Loans	(63)	(59)	(59)	(59)	(59)	(59)
Total Contribution	<u>(1,507)</u>	<u>(1,573)</u>	<u>(1,633)</u>	<u>(1,624)</u>	<u>(1,617)</u>	<u>(1,609)</u>
Sensitivity:						
+/- 10% Commercial Property Income	190	198	204	204	204	205
Indicator:						
Total Contribution as a % of total Council Income	13.4%	11.5%	11.7%	11.6%	11.4%	11.1%
Total Income	11,231	13,650	13,949	13,977	14,228	14,436

b) Risk Exposure Indicators

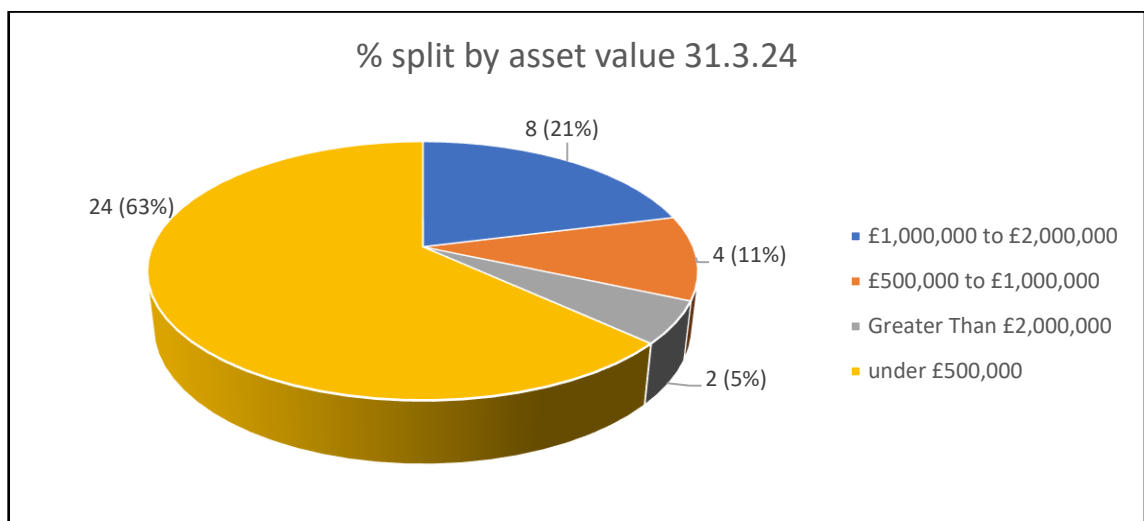
79. The Council can minimise its exposure to risk by spreading investments across sectors and by avoiding single large-scale investments (Chart 3 and 4 below). Generally, there is a spread of investment across sectors in the Council's portfolio. The Council's previous commitment to economic regeneration (not purely financial return) has meant that many of its investments have been in industrial units, which have been very successful. This is closely followed by income from Office accommodation which in some cases is linked to economic regeneration schemes. Bingham Enterprise is the latest investment which is now fully let and generating rental income of £108,000 per annum.

Chart 3 Investment Income by Category



c) Security and Liquidity

Chart 4 Investment by Asset Value



80. Commercial investments are held for longer term asset appreciation as well as yield. Investments or sales decisions will normally be planned as part of the consideration of the 5-year capital strategy to maximise the potential return. Nevertheless, the local and national markets are monitored to ensure any gains are maximised or losses minimised.

81. To help ensure asset values are maintained the assets are given quarterly inspections, together with a condition survey every 3 years. Any works required to maintain the value of the property will then form part of Council's spending plans.

82. The liquidity of the assets is also dependent on the condition of the property, the strength of the tenants and the remaining lease lengths. The Council keeps these items under review with a view to maximising the potential liquidity and value of the property wherever possible.
83. The liquidity considerations for commercial investments are intrinsically linked to the level of cash and short-term investments, which help manage and mitigate the Council's liquidity risk.
84. The investments are subject to ongoing review with regards to their financial viability or indeed whether they are surplus to requirement. At the February 2024 Governance Scrutiny Group Meeting, details on the risks surrounding the Council's commercial properties were reported, as well as providing a pathway to potential commercial asset disposal, if required.

Knowledge and Skills

85. The TM Code requires Local Authorities to document a formal and comprehensive knowledge and skills schedule reflecting the need to ensure that both members and officers responsible for treasury management are suitably trained and kept up to date (TMP 10). There will be specific training for members involved in scrutiny and broader training for members who sit on full Council. Training for Members was last delivered in December 2024. Previously these needs have been reported through the Member Development Group, with the Council specifically addressing this important issue by:
- Periodically facilitating workshops for members on finance issues.
 - Interim reporting and advising members of Treasury issues via Governance Scrutiny Group.

With regards to officers:

- Attendance at training events, seminars, and workshops; and
- Support from the Council's treasury management advisors
- Identifying officer training needs on treasury management related issues through the Performance Development and Review appraisal process

The Governance Scrutiny Group have completed the CIPFA self-assessment tool and the results of this were scrutinised at the 28 November meeting. Actions arising from this self-assessment will be implemented during 2025. Attendance at training is recorded and members are encouraged to attend all Treasury training.

86. The Council will continue to have its Annual Treasury Management training session with Councillors provided by its Treasury advisers.
87. The Treasury Management Policy Statement attached at Appendix B follows the recommendations set out in Section 6 of CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (2021).

Counterparty Registrations under MIFID II

The Council is registered with the following regulated financial services organisations who may arrange investments with other counterparties with whom they have themselves registered:

- BGC Brokers LP
- Royal London Asset Management
- Tradition UK Ltd
- King & Shaxson
- Aberdeen Asset Management
- Aviva
- Institutional Cash Distributors Ltd
- Federated Investors (UK) LLP
- Invesco Asset Management Ltd
- CCLA
- Goldman Sachs Asset Management
- Black Rock
- Aegon Asset Management
- Ninety One
- HSBC Asset Management
- Imperial Treasury Services

Pooled Funds – Changes in Fair Value since Acquisition

Fair Value	31.03.24	Difference		Amount Invested	Difference in valuation from initial investment
		31.12.24	31.03.24		
Aegon-Previously Kames	4,597,766	4,634,285	36,519	5,000,000	(365,715)
Ninety One-Previously Investec	4,535,612	4,511,518	(24,094)	5,000,000	(488,482)
RLAM	1,005,085	1,012,717	7,633	1,000,000	12,717
CCLA Property	1,970,157	1,991,128	20,970	2,000,000	(8,872)
CCLA Divesified	1,929,604	1,872,395	(57,209)	2,000,000	(127,605)
	14,038,224	14,022,043	(16,181)	15,000,000	(977,957)

Current Book Value of Non-Treasury Investments

	Book Value 31.3.24 £000	Book Value 31.3.23 £000
The Point Office Accommodation	3.272	3.429
Hollygate Lane, Cotgrave Industrial Units	2.776	2.918
Unit 3 Edwalton Business Park	2.223	2.432
Bardon Single Industrial Unit	1.929	2.078
Unit 1 Edwalton Business Park	1.787	1.954
Trent Boulevard	1.428	1.559
Colliers Business Park Phase 2	1.386	1.422
Cotgrave Phase 2	1.227	1.266
Bingham Hub Offices	1.112	-
Bridgford Hall Aparthotel and Registry Office	1.061	1.150
Finch Close	0.911	0.978
Boundary Court	0.787	0.838
Colliers Business Park Phase 1	0.775	0.787
Cotgrave Precinct Shops	0.487	0.478
Mobile Home Park	0.477	0.400
New Offices Cotgrave	0.470	0.484
TOTAL INVESTMENT PROPERTY	22.108	22.173
Notts County Cricket Club Loan	1.499	1.611
TOTAL	23.607	23.784

Glossary

Minimum credit rating: Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than [AA-]. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

For entities without published credit ratings, investments may be made either (a) where external advice indicates the entity to be of similar credit quality; or (b) to a maximum of £10 million per counterparty as part of a diversified pool e.g. via a peer-to-peer platform.

UK Government

Sterling-denominated investments with or explicitly guaranteed by the UK Government, including the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility, treasury bills and gilts. These are deemed to be zero credit risk due to the government's ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

Local authorities and other government entities: Loans to, and bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by, other national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk.

Secured investments: Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds, secured deposits and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used. The combined secured and unsecured investments with any one counterparty will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

Banks and building societies (unsecured): Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

Registered providers (unsecured): Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by, registered providers of social housing or registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

Money market funds: Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Council will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.

Strategic pooled funds: Bond, equity and property funds, including exchange traded funds, that offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Council to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, they can be either withdrawn after a notice period or sold on an exchange, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

Real estate investment trusts: Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.

Other investments: This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and unsecured loans to companies and universities. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Council's investment at risk.

Operational bank accounts: The Council may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank. These are not classed as investments but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in and balances will therefore be kept below **£10 million** per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Council maintaining operational continuity.

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA 1 and 1/2011)

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Safety, Councillor R Inglis

1. Purpose of report

To enable Cabinet to consider and approve the revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA 1 and 1/2011).

3. Reasons for Recommendation

Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) is set out in Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, which places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their area to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved. The Council approved the adoption of two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in 2005 and 2011 and has been actively carrying out air quality monitoring at these locations since. The levels have been continuously below the national air quality thresholds for the last five years so it is therefore proposed to revoke both AQMA's.

4. Supporting Information

4.1. Where an exceedance of air quality thresholds is considered likely the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives.

4.2. Rushcliffe Borough Council currently has two active AQMA's declared due to exceedances of the Air Quality Objective for the annual mean concentration of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂):

- AQMA No 1 Trent Bridge; and
- AQMA No 1/2011 Stragglethorpe Road.

The elevated NO₂ levels were associated with road traffic emissions and since declaration of the AQMA's there has been a significant decrease in NO₂ levels

in both areas. This is as a result of the measures implemented to reduce traffic congestion and the associated emissions, changes in vehicle technology and as a result of lifestyle changes in the wider population in more recent years. The Council undertakes continuous air quality monitoring at both locations using specialised equipment. It also undertakes passive air quality monitoring using diffusion tubes, it is proposed to continue using diffusion tube monitoring.

- 4.3. Road traffic is the main source of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) within the AQMA. The concentration of NO₂ is measured as micrograms per cubic metre of air (µg m⁻³) and to protect health the Government has set Air Quality Objectives. The annual objective relates to the concentration of NO₂ in the air averaged over a period of one year and aims to protect over the longer term. The annual mean objective for NO₂ is 40µg m⁻³. Further details are set out in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 Details of AQMA No 1 Trent Bridge

AQMA Name & Date of Declaration	Pollutants and Air Quality Objectives	Description	Pollutant Source	Level of Exceedance: Declaration	Level of Exceedance: Current Year
AQMA No 1 Trent Bridge Declared 01/09/2005	NO ₂ Annual Mean	An area including Lady Bay Bridge/Radcliffe Road/Trent Bridge/Loughborough Road junctions in West Bridgford.	Traffic Emissions	47µg m ⁻³	No exceedance – maximum recorded annual mean concentration 26 µg m ⁻³

Table 2 Details of AQMA No 1/2011 Stragglethorpe Road

AQMA Name & Date of Declaration	Pollutants and Air Quality Objectives	Description	Pollutant Source	Level of Exceedance: Declaration	Level of Exceedance: Current Year
AQMA No1/2011 Stragglethorpe Rd Declared Oct 2011	NO ₂ Annual Mean	Land adjacent to A52 at Stragglethorpe Lane Junction	Traffic Emissions	50.5 µg m ⁻³	No exceedance – maximum recorded annual mean concentration 24 µg m ⁻³

- 4.4. The Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (TG22) (Defra 2022) states:

4.4.1 There should not be any declared AQMAs for which compliance with the relevant objective has been achieved for a consecutive five-year period.

4.4.2 The revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective as evidenced through monitoring.

4.4.3 Where NO₂ monitoring is completed using diffusion tubes, to account for the inherent uncertainty associated with the monitoring method, it is recommended that revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO₂ concentrations being lower than 36µg/m³ (i.e. within 10% of the annual mean NO₂ objective).

TG 22 Requirement	AQMA No 1 Trent Bridge	AQMA No 1/2011 Stragglethorpe Road
Three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective?	Yes	Yes
Diffusion Tube data - three consecutive years of annual mean NO ₂ concentrations being lower than 36µg/m ³ (i.e. within 10% of the annual mean NO ₂ objective)?	Yes	Yes

4.5. As the annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations recorded by the continuous monitors and network of diffusion tubes across both AQMA No 1 Trent Bridge and AQMA No 1/2011 Stragglethorpe Road clearly demonstrate compliance with the Air Quality Objective it is proposed to revoke both the AQMAs.

4.6. In accordance with Statutory guidance we have consulted with Statutory partners on this proposal including the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) who have responded as follows:

“For both AQMA No 1 Trent Bridge and AQMA No 1/2011 Stragglethorpe Road, monitoring results from 2022-2024 are shown to achieve full compliance, 10% below the relevant objective, for three consecutive non-Covid years. Hence, both AQMAs can be revoked based on the monitoring data provided”

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

To not revoke and maintain continuous air quality monitoring at these locations is an option; however, this is not considered necessary, and this view is supported by DEFRA. However, it is proposed to continue using diffusion tube monitoring for the foreseeable future as part of the Council’s wider air quality monitoring obligations.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

No major risks or uncertainties identified.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

The continuous monitoring equipment requires both a maintenance and data management contract with a total annual value of £6k, which will not be required in future should Cabinet agree to revoke the AQMAs.

7.2. Legal Implications

This decision is in full accordance with current legislation and guidance.

7.3. Equalities Implications

Improved air quality will have a positive impact on health particularly for those with lung conditions.

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

None identified.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

None identified.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	This report directly links to demonstrable improvements in air quality
Quality of Life	Improved air quality has clear identified links to public health outcomes
Efficient Services	None
Sustainable Growth	None

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the revocation of the Borough's Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA 1 and 1/2011).

For more information contact:	Geoff Carpenter Head of Public Protection 0115 914 8229 gcarpenter@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Officer report supporting the recommendation January 2025
List of appendices:	None



Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Rushcliffe Play Strategy 2025-2030

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Wellbeing, ICT & Member Development,
Councillor J Wheeler**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The Play Strategy refresh follows the previous strategy “Playing for Life in Rushcliffe” which was adopted in 2007 and provides a review of the previous policy standards in relation to play and proposes an update to these policy standards benchmarked against other local authorities and industry standards.
- 1.2. There are numerous benefits from the act of play highlighted in the substantive Strategy, but we know that play promotes children’s development, learning, creativity, independence, self-esteem, knowledge and understanding. Play also forms a key role in keeping children healthy and active and there is a scientific link between active children and teens becoming active adults, which can contribute to lifelong mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- 1.3. The Strategy refresh incorporates updated guidance such as the Government’s new Disability Action Plan for Play and recent research and guidance on providing sufficient, suitable play space for girls with the aim to provide equity of provision for all when developing new play spaces across the Borough.
- 1.4. It is intended that this analysis will illustrate if there is any additional provision required and which areas may benefit. This gap analysis will link with areas of health inequalities, to strengthen the case for play should any gaps be identified. However, it is noted that this strategy is forward facing and not designed to be retrospective and place an additional burden on play spaces already provided under previous guidance including those owned by third parties.
- 1.5. The full version of the updated Play Strategy 2025-2030 is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet adopts the updated Play Strategy 2025-2030 as a Strategy of the Council and supporting document to the Council’s overall Leisure Strategy 2021 – 2027.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. It is imperative that Rushcliffe Borough Council has an up-to-date Play Strategy to guide future provision for both Council owned and by other parties to ensure that play facilities continue to meet the needs of residents and contribute to community wellbeing.
- 3.2. The Strategy has been developed through a robust process adopting industry recognised methodology. This included a detailed assessment of current play provision mapping to provide an up-to-date picture of current provision across the Borough.
- 3.3. The Strategy was informed by a series of online surveys and in person focus group consultations across the Borough with specific sessions targeting young people with additional needs and disabilities and sessions focussing on teenagers (9 – 12-year-olds) and teenage girls to inform future policy.

4. Supporting Information

Policy Review

- 4.1. The Play Strategy Review follows the previous Strategy adopted in 2007 and aimed to review current policy in relation to play, including guidance such as the Government's new Disability Action Plan for Play, and recent research and guidance on providing sufficient, suitable play spaces for tween and teenage girls. The new Strategy now provides an up-to-date review of relevant national policy including key consideration around equality, inclusion, disability and play as part of the district profile and policy review section.

Play Review

- 4.2. The Strategy aimed to provides an up-to-date list of all play sites within the Borough, broken down into; Local Area for Play (LAP), Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP), and Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP).
- 4.3. The play review section now provides an up-to-date breakdown of play provision in Rushcliffe. The Strategy has identified a total of 69 play sites at the point of review consisting of 14 LAP's, 46 LEAPs, eight NEAP's and one standalone skatepark.

Catchment & Gap Analysis

- 4.4. In line with the Playing Pitch Strategy, the Borough is split into five distinct catchment areas which are Bingham, Cotgrave and Radcliffe on Trent, East Leake, Keyworth and the West Bridgford and Ruddington analysis areas for the purpose of this study. The analysis presents all play sites within the Borough along with the appropriate catchment area applied.

- 4.5. In summary, there is generally a good spread of play provision for younger and older children across all catchment analysis areas of Rushcliffe, especially within the areas with greater population densities.
- 4.6. Most settlements are observed as being served by some form of play and youth provision. However, some gaps in catchment mapping are highlighted in Radcliffe on Trent, Bingham, Keyworth and West Bridgford and Ruddington analysis areas and recommendations have been made to either expand existing provision or provide new facilities to meet this demand.

Consultation

- 4.7. As part of developing the Play Strategy, engagement with stakeholders who use and manage play areas across Rushcliffe has been undertaken. This has been divided into a series of focus group consultation sessions and online surveys.

Online Consultation

- 4.8. The online public consultation survey was made available to enable the Council to understand the perception of play provision in Rushcliffe seeking views from across the Borough. A total of 397 responses were received, with many responding for more than one age group. The majority of responses were from children aged 10 and under (308 respondents), with 91 responses for and from people aged eleven and above.
- 4.9. Across all responses, Rushcliffe Country Park and Bridgford Park were the two most popular sites. Of the top 10 most popular sites, Wharf Lane Recreation Ground was the site most frequently visited, with 30% of people visiting this site at least five times a week.

Focus Groups

- 4.10. In addition to the online surveys three invitation youth focus groups took place in conjunction with Nottinghamshire County Council Youth Service at their youth centres in West Bridgford, Keyworth, Cotgrave and Ruddington to gather general perception of play from the users. The West Bridgford session was a specific “link” session, which serves young people across the entire Borough with additional needs and disabilities as a key line of enquiry. A session specifically targeting tweenage and teenage girls as a key line of enquiry was undertaken but due to a poor attendance a further focus group session was organised with St Giles Guides using the proposed Bridgfield teen area redevelopment as a case study.
- 4.11. The key themes emerging from the focus groups sessions were around making better use of interactive equipment across all sites, a lack of provision for girls, especially tweenagers and teenagers, a call for improvements across all sites and the use of alternative equipment.

Provision Standards and Benchmarking

- 4.12. The Strategy aimed to review and refresh the Council's guidance for new play areas in relation to housing development contributions. This will ensure the correct level of funding is provided to meet future demand. The updated Strategy now provides updated standards in line with local and national standards and updated guidance regarding on and offsite contributions and commuted sums.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

- 5.1. There is no statutory requirement to produce a Play Strategy so a decision could be made not to accept the refreshed Strategy review. However, the review has highlighted the importance of play in delivering the Council's Quality of Life Corporate Priority and its contribution to delivering the overarching Leisure Strategy objectives.
- 5.2. Without up to date play data and guidance it would also be increasingly difficult to secure developer and other external funding contributions towards sustainable fit for purpose play provision.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

- 6.1. The Play Strategy provides an evidence-based approach to play area provision, which supports a balanced option for future development throughout the Borough.
- 6.2. Not adopting the Strategy could result in play provision and associated open space being inadequately considered during new developments.
- 6.3. Without adequate planning and investment in existing and new play infrastructure the cost of repairing existing provision or providing new play site may cause a financial strain on providers to keep facilities safe and operational. To mitigate this uncertainty the Strategy is designed to provide a guide to identify gaps and future demands so all parties can provide the pareto optimum of provision and strike the right balance for the growing population needs but also within financial constraints.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

- 7.1.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council manages play provision in the West Bridgford Special Expenses area and has a rolling programme of capital investment of £75k per annum across its play sites. In the 2025/26 budget it is proposed to increase this to £100k per annum for the next three years to make inclusive improvements to the Council's play provision as part of the rolling Capital Programme.

7.1.2. In addition to the West Bridgford Special Expenses area, the Council provides play provision in Rushcliffe Country Park, which has benefited from a £99k investment in 2024/25 financial year and has a further £25k allocated in 2025/26 to make additional inclusive improvement.

7.1.3. Table 1 below shows Rushcliffe Borough Council's capital investment in play infrastructure from 2020/21 to 2024/25 A total of £817k has been invested in making improvements to play provision over this period:

Table 1: Play Area Capital Investment 2021-2024/25

Play Areas Capital Investment	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	Total £'000
<i>Scheme</i>						
Bridgford Park Trim Trail	9					9
Boundary Road	3	65	4	63		135
Abbey Road		69				69
Alford Road		83	3			86
Rushcliffe Country Park				3	99	102
Rushcliffe Country Park Skate*	74	146				220
Adbolton Play Area				87		87
Greythorn Drive				3	106	109
Total Expenditure	86	363	7	156	205	817
* RCP Skatepark funded 50/50 Capital Receipts and Skatepark Grant						

7.1.4. There are ongoing revenue costs associated with running the Council's play facilities and these are included within existing budgets. There is a risk that further inflationary pressures may increase costs significantly and consequently this may have implications on service provision contracts.

7.1.5. Outside of the play provision directly managed by Rushcliffe Borough Council, play provision is provided by parish councils or developers and subsequently maintained by management companies who make their own budgetary arrangements for the provision and management of play and have no budgetary implications to the Council for the purposes of this report.

7.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3. Equalities Implications

Any capital play redevelopments would be constructed to align with the updated guidance highlighted in the Strategy to be inclusive and ensure people with disabilities have access to play facilities as required by the Equality Act 2010.

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

All design and development of capital play infrastructure will follow the Section 17 basic design principles to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

Play provision and open spaces will be delivered in line with the RBC design Code where opportunities exist to create “wild play” with biodiverse rich planting enhancing connection with nature.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	In creating new play space there are opportunities to create natural play spaces with natural element to create biodiversity rich planting to enhance connection with nature.
Quality of Life	By re-developing and creating new play infrastructure for residents to meet, contribute to development needs, create friendships, reduce loneliness and social isolation, and take part in physical play and wellbeing this will improve the quality of life of users.
Efficient Services	With the current cost pressures on all aspects of local government, the Council need to ensure that it delivers efficient services that meet the needs of our residents. The play strategy is designed to achieve the pareto optimum of play provision across the Borough and to be both economically efficient and meet the need of our growing resident population.
Sustainable Growth	As our resident population grows, our play provision needs to accommodate these new residents by continual improvement and investment to ensure that our provision grows sustainably with our resident population.

9. Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet adopts the updated Play Strategy 2025-2030 as a Strategy of the Council and supporting document to the Council’s overall Leisure Strategy 2021 – 2027.

For more information contact:	David Banks Director – Neighbourhoods 0115 9148 438 dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1- Rushcliffe Play Strategy 2025-2030

Play Strategy



RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAY STRATEGY 2025-2030



January 2025



Funded by
UK Government

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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PART 1: UNDERSTANDING PLAY

There are many definitions of what play is but the general definition within the play industry is that it can be best described as follows:

'Through play, children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relationships with them, elaborating all the while a flexible range of responses to the challenges they encounter. By playing, children learn and develop as individuals and as members of the community'.¹

Who is play for?

Play is not only for the young, play is a natural process that should take place at all ages. Playfulness in adulthood can enable love and affection, it can facilitate creativeness and lateral thinking. Learning to play as a child can engender in adults a work hard and play hard philosophy.

In the context of young people, as opposed to children², the word play has a different meaning. Young people identify this more as positive activities, challenge and/or the enjoyment of recreation provision where this is appropriate.

Types of play

There are many types of play identified, the most common are:

Types of play	Explanation
Exploratory play	Can be handling, throwing, banging or mouthing objects; an example of this can be stacking bricks.
Fantasy play	Play that rearranges the world from the child's perspective in a way that is unlikely to occur; an example of which is to pretend at being an airplane pilot or racing driver.
Imaginative play	Where conventional rules do not apply for example imagining you are an object, a tree or a ship.
Locomotor play	Where movement is applied for example chase, tag, hide and seek etc.
Mastery play	Using the physical ingredients of our natural environment for example digging holes, altering the course of streams and constructing shelters etc..
Object play	Uses an infinite and interesting sequence of hand-eye manipulations and movements which could be examining and use of any object for example a cloth, paintbrush or cup
Role play	Explores ways of being, for example, brushing with a broom, dialling with a telephone or driving a car.

¹ definition adapted from the Hampshire County Council and the early years development and childcare partnership and children's play council (1998) 'new charter for children's play', children's society and the excellence of play edited by Janet r. Moyles, Open University Press, 1995.

² a definition of 'child' is from 0-18 and also includes young people with Special Educational Needs up to 24.

Where does play take place?

Play is not just about ‘swings and roundabouts’ at the Local Park or open space it can and does take place anywhere. An illustration of this can be seen in the research undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation into children’s play (1997) which revealed amongst other things: -

- ◀ Children’s needs are diverse, including places for physically active play and quiet games, places which encourage social contact and places which allow them to be mobile whether on foot or by bicycle.
- ◀ Children stay at each individual attraction for a relatively short time. They enjoy being mobile, travelling from one location to another, their access to as large an outdoor environment as possible was best served by the incorporation of footpath networks and cul-de-sac layouts.
- ◀ Children enjoy socialising and want to play ‘where it’s at’. These are places where there are strong possibilities of interaction with other people, i.e. junctions of paths, by shops and in front gardens.
- ◀ Most children play where they can ‘see and be seen’. This suggests that parks and formal and informal open spaces are best located along the footpath network or adjacent to well used pedestrian routes.

Play also happens when young people “hang out”, even if it is in places where adults do not want them e.g. village greens, shopping precincts, which young people are likely to see as ‘play provision’.

What are the barriers to play?

There are a number of perceived barriers preventing children’s play, some of which are identified as follows:

- ◀ Children are restricted in their freedom to choose how and when they play and especially in their opportunities to play without adult supervision.
- ◀ Children’s play is restricted by a lack of access to good quality play opportunities.
- ◀ Lack of suitable play environments for disabled children.
- ◀ Until now a failure of central and local government to recognise the importance of play and to allocate sufficient financial resources to improve opportunities for play.
- ◀ Restriction on children’s freedom of movement leading to decreased physical fitness, fewer social contacts and increased levels of stress and frustration.
- ◀ Limiting factors of discrimination, poverty, disability and special needs, lack of available space and other environmental factors.
- ◀ A lack of understanding of the issues, needs and aspirations of children’s play.
- ◀ Society’s perceptions of the risks and levels of safety attached to play.

Is play safe, what are the risks?

First and foremost children and young people’s needs for care, nurturing and learning are paramount and can often only be met by indulging in activities which will include some dangers and hazards. As the adage suggests ‘we fall over in life so that we can learn to get up again’.

The following text draws on extracts from the National Play Safety Forum’s position on managing dangers and hazards in play provision.

Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play provision must manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks.

Risk-taking is an essential feature of play provision, and of all environments in which children and young people legitimately spend time at play. Play provision aims to offer children and young people the chance to access stimulating, challenging and controlled learning environments whilst ensuring that the risks associated with those environments are identified, assessed and managed. The Best Play publication³ points out that play provision should aim to manage the balance between the need to offer challenge and the need to keep children and young people safe from harm. Robust risk management principles and strategies therefore need to lie at the heart of any play strategy and the provision delivered under it.

It is acceptable that in play provision children and young people may be exposed to the risk of minor and easily healed injuries such as bruises, grazes or sprains. On the other hand, play provision should not expose children and young people to significant likelihood of permanent disability or life-threatening injuries. However, it may on occasions be unavoidable that play provision exposes children and young people to the risk - the very low risk - of serious injury. But this would only be tolerable in the following conditions:

- ◀ The likelihood was extremely low.
- ◀ The hazards were clear to users.
- ◀ There were obvious benefits.
- ◀ Further reduction of the risk would remove the benefits
- ◀ There were no reasonably practicable ways to manage the risk.

Where does play sit?

- ◀ Community Play - delivers the needs of children and their families in local neighbourhood communities in facilitating and developing play initiatives that build on and supplement existing ones already being undertaken in the home and at school.
- ◀ Environmental play - relates to structured and unstructured play in parks, formal and informal open spaces
- ◀ Formal Play Provision - these can be specific play sites as part of parks and open spaces and school playgrounds.
- ◀ Parenting - need to inform, encourage, and support parents in encouraging and providing play opportunities and activities for their children.

³ <http://www.freeplaynetwork.org.uk/pubs/bestplay.pdf>

Making the Case for Play

What are the benefits and importance of play? There are numerous benefits deriving from the act of play as defined in Best Play and the Charter for Children's Play, these include:

- ◀ Play is enjoyable.
- ◀ Play promotes children's development, learning, creativity, independence, self-esteem, knowledge and understanding.
- ◀ Play keeps children healthy and active and active children and teens become active adults.
- ◀ Play fosters social inclusion and helps children understand the people and places in their lives and also to learn about their environment and develop their sense of community involvement.
- ◀ Play is therapeutic and helps children to deal with difficult and or painful circumstances such as emotional stress or medical treatment.
- ◀ Play gives children the chance to let off steam and have fun.
- ◀ Play provides children with opportunities to enjoy freedom and exercise choice and control over their actions.
- ◀ Play offers children opportunities for testing boundaries and exploring risk.
- ◀ Play also helps reduce the involvement of children and young people in anti-social behaviour and plays a part in social cohesion.
- ◀ Play supports families and communities by providing a focus for informal networks of family support.
- ◀ Play also provides a focus for tackling social exclusion through community development.

Very often we only understand the inherent value of something once it has been taken away. Without the ability and opportunity to play, children's very lives and development are adversely affected in ways that will inevitably have a significant impact on them in their later adult life. For some groups, including children with disabilities and some older children, this lack of provision is the current norm.



PART 2: NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPROACH

2.1 Introduction

This Play Strategy Review for Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) is prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP).

This Play Strategy Review follows the previous Strategy (2007) and aims to:

- ◀ Review current policy in relation to play, including guidance such as the Government's new disability action plan for play and recent research and guidance on providing sufficient, suitable play space for tween and teenage girls.
- ◀ Provide an up-to-date list of all play sites within the Borough, broken down into; Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP), Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) and Local Area for Play (LAP).
- ◀ Present a gap analysis of current play provision. This analysis will illustrate if there is any additional provision required, or if any analysis areas would benefit from additional provision
- ◀ This gap analysis will link with areas of health inequalities, to strengthen the case for play should any gaps be identified.
- ◀ Undertake a series of consultations via online surveys and focus groups. This includes a particular focus on understanding the needs of tweens & teens, girls and disability groups in an effort to improve accessibility and inclusion for all.
- ◀ Engage with key stakeholders who can influence the development of the strategy, including parish and town councils.
- ◀ Review and refresh the borough guidance for new play areas in relation to housing development contributions. This will ensure the correct level of funding is provided.

2.2: The need for this Strategy

This strategy provides an overview in supporting the development of play in the Borough of Rushcliffe. Initially it presents the current supply and identifies if there are any gaps in provision. It also provides perceptions of current provision from a wide range of stakeholders, and what people would like to see, particularly at key sites such as Bridgford Park and Bridge Field, Rushcliffe Country Park, Wharf Lane Radcliffe-on-Trent, Gotham Road East Leake, Cotgrave Precinct, Keyworth Recreation Ground and The Hook in Lady Bay for example.

In addition, the strategy reviews existing provision standards relating to future developments, benchmarked against neighbouring authorities and leading play industry manufacturers. This will inform the approach to calculating the play and youth facility requirements as part of any new housing development.

PART 3: DISTRICT PROFILE AND POLICY REVIEW

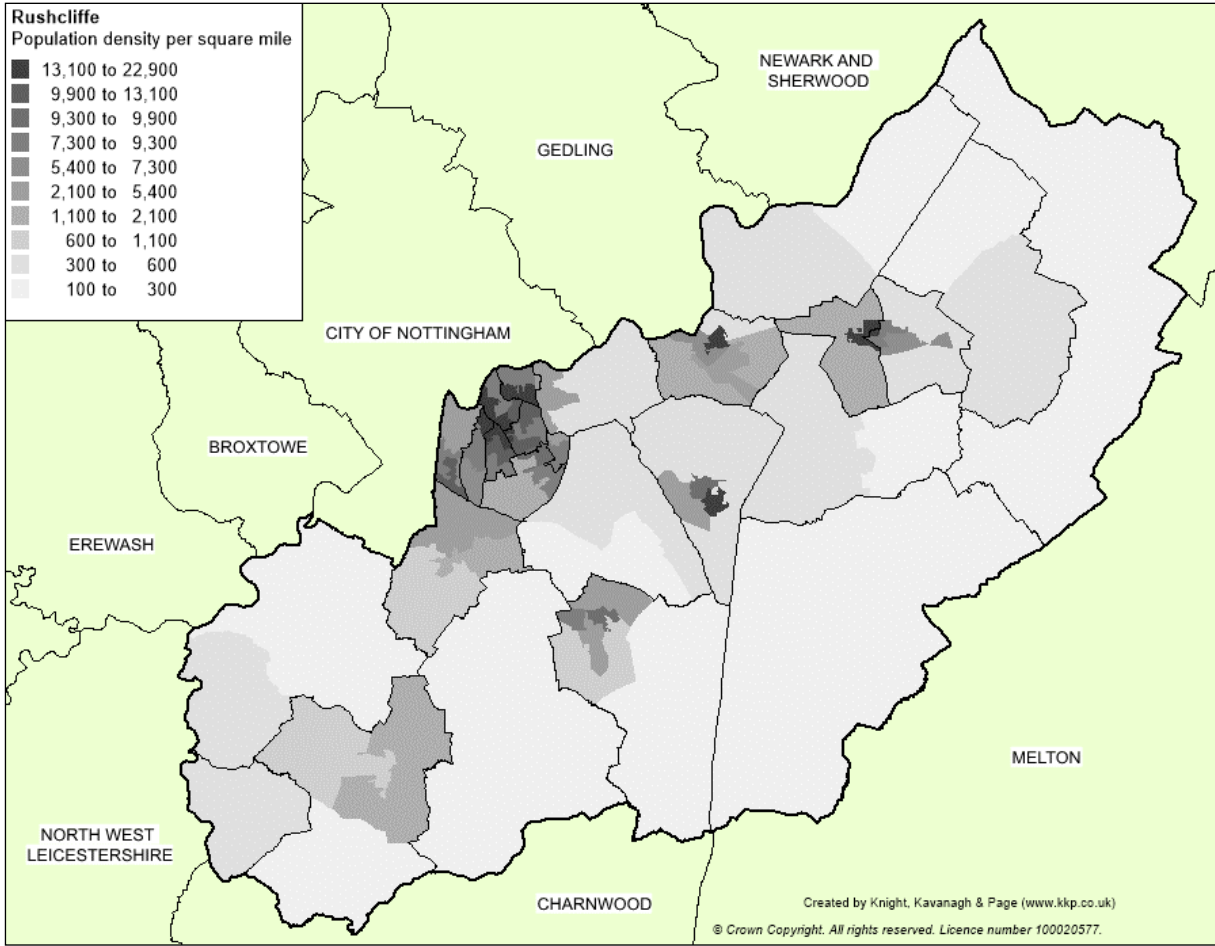
The following is an overview of Rushcliffe Borough based on data taken from nationally recognised sources. It includes the most up to date information presently available although it should be noted that new data is published regularly, often at different intervals.

In addition, a review of national and local policy documents, relevant to play provision, is presented.

Population and distribution (Data source: 2022 Mid-Year Estimate (MYE), ONS)

The total population, from the 2022 MYE, in Rushcliffe was 121,583 (males = 59,659 and females = 61,923). The key concentration of its population is centred on the West Bridgford, Cotgrave, Bingham and Radcliffe on Trent areas.

Figure 3.1: Population density in Rushcliffe Borough



The following chart (Data source: 2022 Mid-Year Estimate, ONS) illustrates the Borough’s population’s age and gender composition.

There are 12,975 people aged between 0 and 9 (6,720 boys and 6,255 girls) making up 10.7% of Rushcliffe’s population and the main age-range using play provision for younger children.

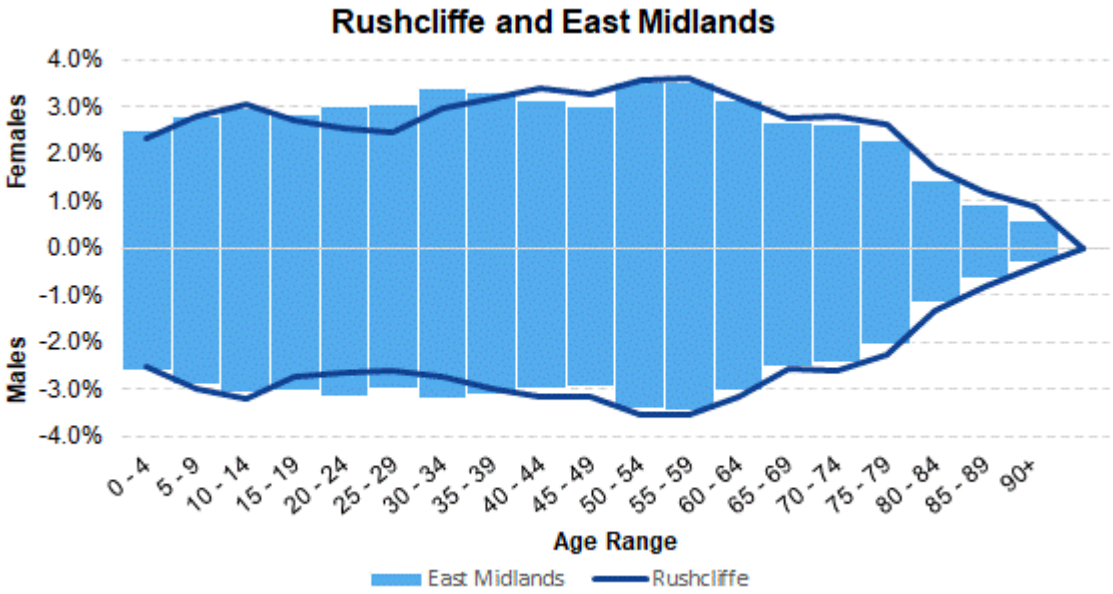
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For those aged between 10-19 years, a key age range for using play provision for older children and teens, there are 14,249 people in Rushcliffe (7,246 male and 7,003 female). This makes up 11.7% of Rushcliffe’s population.

When comparing Rushcliffe’s population against the regional average, there is a lower proportion of 15-34 year olds (Rushcliffe: 21.5%, East Midlands: 24.7%), this may suggest a lower level of demand from what are generally regarded as the main sports participation groups.

There are, however, more in the age groups from 35-64 (Rushcliffe: 40.3%, East Midlands: 38.3%) and more in the age group 65+ (Rushcliffe: 21.8%, East Midlands: 19.7%).

Figure 3.2 Comparative age/sex pyramid for the East Midlands region and Rushcliffe



Weight and obesity (Data sources: NCMP⁴ and NOO⁵)

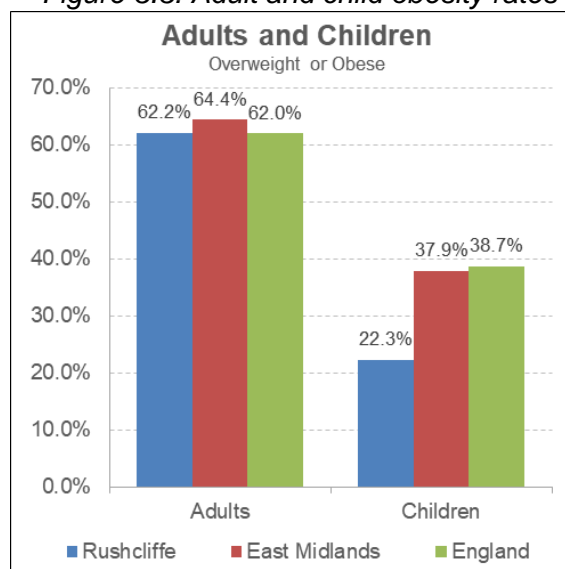
Obesity is widely recognised to be associated with health problems such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

At a national level, the resulting NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity⁶ are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year. These factors combine to make the prevention of obesity a major public health challenge.

Adult obesity rates in Rushcliffe are below the regional average, however, they are similar to the national averages.

Child rates for obesity are significantly below both the regional and national averages, supporting a case for continuing investment in play as a form of physical activity.

Figure 3.3: Adult and child obesity rates



Active Lives Survey (Data Source: Sport England November 2021/22)

This is based on 16+ year olds taking part in walking, cycling, fitness, dance and other sporting activity. As identified in table 3.4 a much lower percentage of the Rushcliffe population is inactive compared to England and the East Midlands and a higher percentage is considered to be active. This is specified by Sport England as follows:

- ◀ Inactive: <30 minutes per week.
- ◀ Fairly Active: 30-149 minutes per week.
- ◀ Active: 150+ minutes per week.

Table 3.4: Active Lives Survey results: November 2021/22.

	Inactive	Inactive %	Fairly active	Fairly active %	Active	Active %
England	11,874,800	25.8%	5,131,700	11.1%	29,062,000	63.1%
East Midlands	1,098,500	27.5%	458,000	11.5%	2,442,600	61.1%
Rushcliffe	16,200	16.6%	9,300	9.4%	72,500	74.0%

⁴ National Child Measurement Program

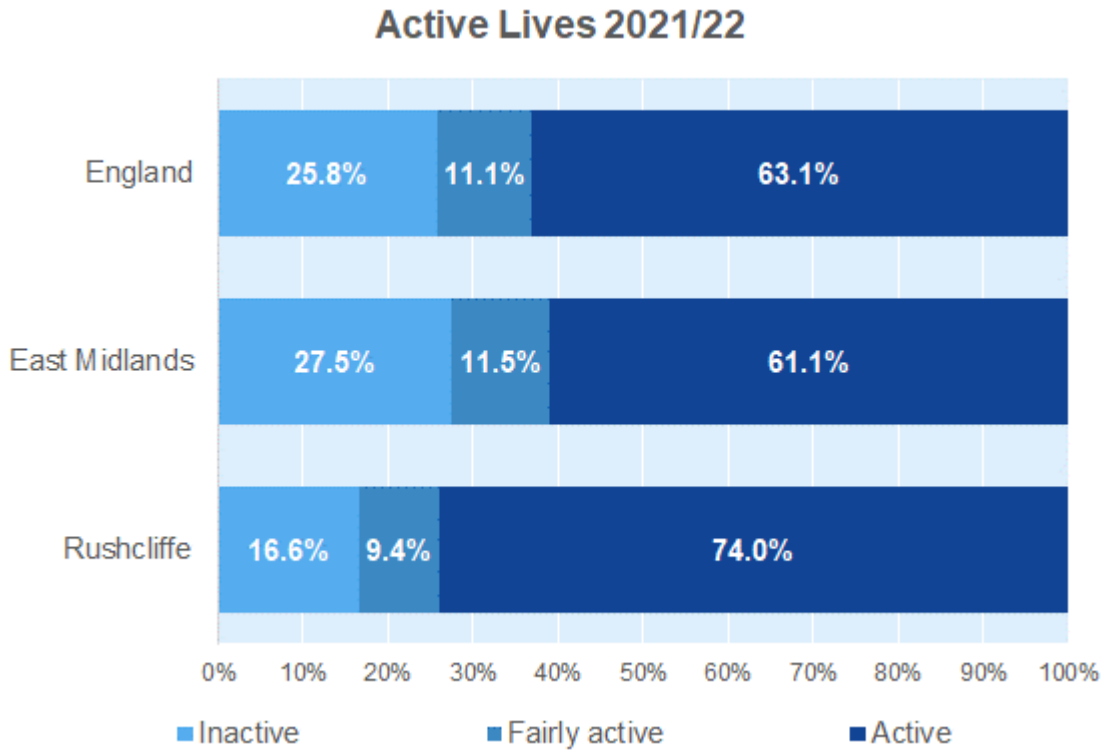
⁵ National Obesity Observatory

⁶ Adult Weight Data is for the period 2016-2017. The child data is for the period 2017-2018

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The rate/population totals for sport and physical activity levels (excluding gardening) of adults (16+) who are active in Rushcliffe (74%) is greater in comparison to East Midlands (61%) and England (63%).

Figure 3.5: Levels of activity.



National Policy & Guidance Review

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework is the key national policy document and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The previous guidance 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play' (PDOSP) predates the NPPF and the Benchmark Guidelines in the revised guidance reflect the relevant requirements of the NPPF, and the revocation of Planning Policy Guidance 17: Sport and Recreation on which the PDOSP was based.

The NPPF advocates a presumption in favour of sustainable development and identifies the three dimensions of sustainable development as economic, social and environmental. Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation are highlighted as an important aspect of healthy communities.

The NPPF seeks to ensure that developments “create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users...”. The NPPF states that “access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision”.

The NPPF also promotes the protection of existing open space (paragraph 104) which is a key aspect of Fields in Trusts' operations as a national charity that safeguards recreational spaces.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. Characteristics protected under the Act include age, sex and disability.

The public sector Equality Duty introduced through this act means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy and delivering services. It also requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity.

Making Space for Girls

A national charity Make Space for Girls (MSfG), founded in 2021, provides wide-ranging guidance to ensure that parks and public spaces are designed for girls and young women, not only boys and young men. This can be found on their website <https://www.makespaceforgirls.co.uk> and includes resources for Councils, Developers and Design Professionals.

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Key factors to consider include; listening to teenage girls to understand their perception and use of local spaces, the barriers they face to enjoyment of those spaces, involving them in the design process and developing new policies to support inclusive spaces.

Principles for Councils:

- ◀ Create parks which are more inclusive for all: *Better spaces can promote healthier lifestyles and add social value. Spaces that work better for teenage girls can work better for many other groups.*
- ◀ Understand what teenage girls want from parks and social spaces: *Skate parks and MUGAs only work for a small proportion of young people – a wider range of facilities is much more inclusive.*
- ◀ Recognise the barriers to change: *Lack of information and policies that don't recognise the issues both embed unequal treatment for teenage girls into practice. Engagement, research and equality law provide tools to overcome this.*
- ◀ Make Sure Teenage Girls are heard: *Reaching girls and minority groups can be difficult but their voices are essential for change.*

Example design features in MSfGs' 'What Does Better Look Like' resource, include:

- ◀ Playful mixed-height spaces that allow people to sit, climb, or lie around.
- ◀ Dividing up MUGAs and other spaces, so no group can dominate the space.
- ◀ Social exercise spaces; arranging equipment so people can exercise and chat.
- ◀ Social seating; allowing people to face each other while they chat.
- ◀ Swings; suited to the age-group, including accessible swings.
- ◀ Lower, mixed-height gym bars; to hang from, swing round, lean against.
- ◀ Stages and seating space; for performances, exercise classes and informal fun.
- ◀ Shelters and shade, for all weathers.

Figure 3.6: Key principles to consider for enabling girls to use outdoor spaces

Eyes on the Park	Awareness	Inclusion
The presence of other people can make the park feel safer; either through activation which brings in other users or making the most of park staff and other officials.	The design of parks can make women and girls feel more secure in a space, helping them to see and be seen, ensuring they don't feel trapped and giving them the ability to navigate their surroundings.	How to create parks where all women and girls feel they belong by identifying and addressing the barriers which exist for different groups.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BUSYNESS • • STAFFING • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VISIBILITY • • ESCAPE • • LIGHTING • • WAYFINDING • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BELONGING • • IMAGE • • ACCESS • • ENGAGEMENT •

Government’s National Disability Strategy (2021)

The National Disability Strategy sets out the long-term vision to transform disabled people’s lives for the better. The Strategy focuses on 14 different areas, of which one is to make playgrounds more accessible for people with disabilities.

Currently, the accessibility of playgrounds differs significantly, meaning that disabled children and children with disabled family members are not always able to use the playgrounds in their local areas. The Strategy sets out that play areas need to focus on:

- ◀ the importance of inclusivity as well as accessibility.
- ◀ the need to ensure playgrounds have equipment that caters to all disabilities.
- ◀ the importance of the wider area being accessible, including pathways, car parks and toilet provision where possible.
- ◀ Encourage authorities to have on-line hubs to ensure parents can search what type of facilities are at playgrounds. This allows parents of children to see if a playground is suitable. City of Westminster Council is a good example of listing play areas which have provision for people with disabilities: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/parks-and-open-spaces/playgrounds-and-green-gyms>

Homes England: Inclusive Spaces and Places for Girls and Young People, An Introduction for Local Government, June 2023

This guidance summarises the issues on inclusive play spaces, legal duties and provides guidance for local government. Key issues include the narrowness of typical play provision for teens, lack of consideration for safety when siting facilities and patterns of use that often exclude girls, including from the surrounding area. Results of recent research, case studies and suggestions for inclusive provision are provided.

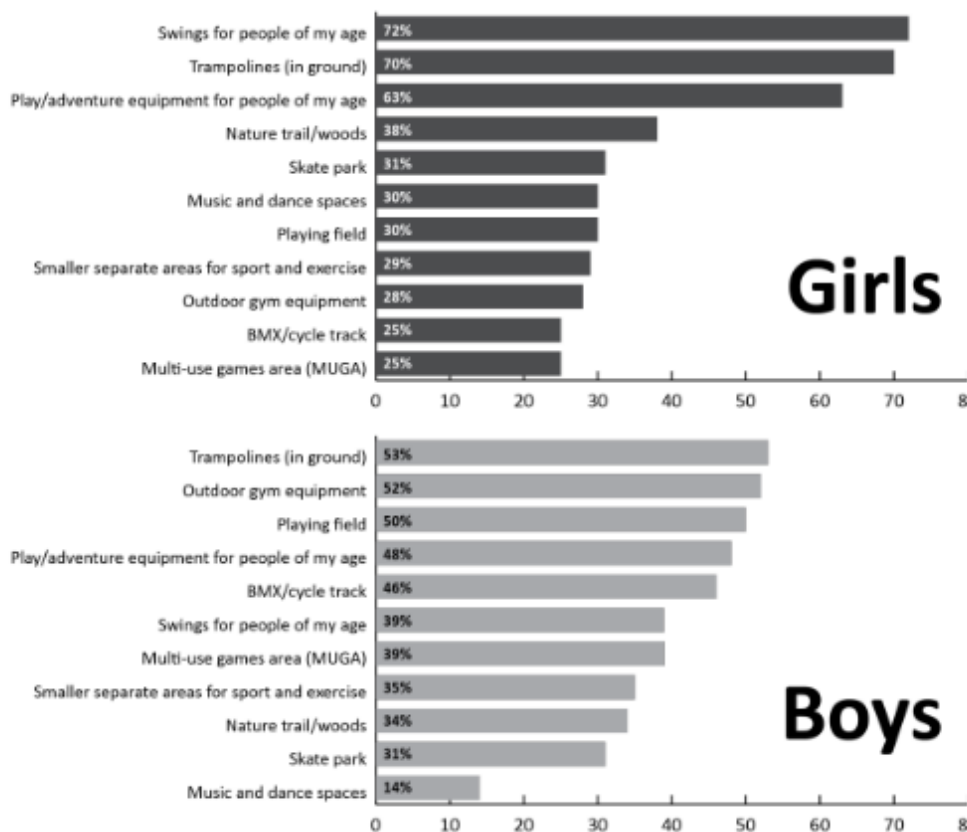
‘This absence of provision has a number of implications: for the rights of girls and for their sense of belonging in the wider community, and for councils’ obligations to consider equality in their decision making. But another really important one is health. Girls are less active than boys at every stage of teenage life, but we rarely connect this with the fact that we don’t give them anything to be active on. Access to nature is also proven to have a big positive effect on mental health in teenagers, and teenage girls are three times more likely to suffer from low moods and anxiety than boys. It’s also true that many boys are also not interested in the facilities which are on offer or don’t feel they can access them. Furthermore, improving parks has the potential to benefit many other groups too, such as older people, adult women... and those with disabilities.’

The research and guidance section incorporates findings from research by **Women in Sport and Yorkshire Sports (2022)**, which surveyed nearly 400 teenagers across three schools in Yorkshire to find out what would help them be more active in parks.

Key findings from this survey are presented below:

Figure 3.6: Women in sport play survey results

What would help you be more active in your local park?



Other facilities and design features which can make parks more inclusive are:

- ◀ walking loops around the perimeter of a park and no dead-end paths.
- ◀ seating which allows users to face each other.
- ◀ breaking down spaces into more smaller areas so that no one group can dominate.
- ◀ outdoor gyms – but with equipment arranged more socially and not weighted for adult men.
- ◀ public toilets where possible.

Scope: 'Let's Play Fair' campaign

Scope, a national disability charity, states that inaccessible playgrounds are stopping too many children with disabilities or special educational needs from having fun and friendship. It highlighted that the benefits for including play are as follows:

- ◀ Every child is equal in inclusive play. This removes stigmas and separation between Disabled and non-Disabled from an early age, helping mindsets change and society progress in a positive way.
- ◀ Children become more independent, confident and develop different ways to communicate. It can help non-Disabled children become more open to new people and different situations too.

- ◀ Outdoor play alleviates stress, improves mood and boosts wellbeing. It helps children be physically active, engage with the natural world and have fun.
- ◀ For sensory impaired children, play can strengthen their other senses and ways to interact with the world. Calming spaces can also help neurodivergent children find comfort, and sensory play helps children develop fine motor skills as they learn how their bodies work.
- ◀ Play helps children learn about risk in a safe supportive environment, as well as adjust to change and build resilience.
- ◀ It helps children develop social and empathy skills, make friends and form connections.

Scope has created, in collaboration with PiPA Play, (PiPA Play is a social enterprise with the sole aim of helping to improve accessible and inclusive play facilities) a guide to make inclusive playgrounds happen in all communities. The guide features the following:

- ◀ Developing a universal design concept of creating environments that are accessible to everyone. The principle is that by eliminating a barrier for one group, more people overall can use it.
- ◀ Ensure all equipment has features which are accessible - this includes that all equipment and features are inclusive. Examples include; providing wheelchair accessible roundabouts/seesaws and features such as shaded areas.
- ◀ Influencing your local councils- the guide presents options on how to encourage individuals to lobby local councils to provide inclusive play- such as contacting local councillors with portfolio responsibilities.

Play England: A new 10-year strategy (2024)

The latest 10-year strategy from Play England outlines its Vision for Play across England. This states that 'England will be a country where everybody can fully enjoy their right to play throughout their childhood and teenage years, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 31 and the Charter for Children's Play'.

To achieve this vision, Play England aims to ensure that:

- ◀ All children and young people have the freedom — time, space, permission and opportunity — to play throughout their childhood and teenage years;
- ◀ All residential neighbourhoods are child-friendly places where children and young people can regularly play outside; and
- ◀ Everyone is aware of the importance of play — outdoors and indoors — as part of children and young people's daily lives.

To support this vision, in addition, Play England will:

- ◀ Work with key partners supporting front line play providers
- ◀ Provide expert play information - by signposting important information
- ◀ Develop strategic partnerships through working with other nations and organisations
- ◀ Raise the profile of play in the media

Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Fields in Trust (2015) and Beyond the Six Acre Standard^[1]

As part of its protection work, Fields in Trust (FiT) offers guidance on open space provision and design. This is to ensure that provision of outdoor sport, play and informal open space is of a sufficient size to enable effective use; is in an accessible location and in close proximity to dwellings; and of a quality to maintain longevity and to encourage its continued use.

Beyond the Six Acre Standard sets out a range of benchmark guidelines on quantity, quality and accessibility for open space and equipped play. It also offers some recommendations to minimum site sizes.

Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA)

PiPA is an organisation that exists to empower the true meaning of inclusion, equality and diversity in play area design. It has provided a guide for local authorities and designers to ensure play areas meet a certain standard. The design guidance covers three key themes:

Accessibility - Need to ensure there is a hard standing path network throughout the play space and the surfacing is suitable for wheelchair users.

Nurturing the Senses - Making sure at least 3 of the senses from the Six Senses Wheel are engaged from both a seated and standing position at a play area.

Figure 3.7: Six senses wheel



Dynamic Play - offer an opportunity for dynamic play. This allows the opportunity to engage in proprioception and promote the development of a healthy vestibular system.

Best Play: What play provision should do for children (National Playing Fields Association, 2000)

'Best Play: What play provision should do for children' has been produced as a result of a partnership between the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA), PLAYLINK and the Children's Play Council (CPC).

The document is about how children benefit from play opportunities. It is also about how play services and spaces can provide these benefits, and how they can show that they are providing them.

^[1] [Fields in Trust PDF](#)

Local Policy

Rushcliffe Borough Council: Corporate Strategy 2024 - 2027

The latest Corporate Strategy sets the Council’s strategic direction until 2027. Below, are the strategic objectives which the Council will prioritise.

Objective	Description
1	Deliver Rushcliffe’s Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030.
2	Implement the Environment Act commitments
3	Deliver Rushcliffe’s Leisure Strategy 2021-2027.
4	Be an active partner in the delivery of the East Midlands Devolution Deal.
5	Support Uniper Technologies in the redevelopment of the Ratcliffe on Soar site
6	Implement Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill commitments.
7	Adopt a Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan.
8	Develop and deliver an Economic Growth Strategy for the Borough.
9	Deliver good value for money in Council operations for residents.
10	Conduct a review of the Council’s asset base

As part of delivering the leisure strategy (Objective 3), the Council is committed to maintaining the existing local standards for provision of open spaces and children’s play areas across all sites, to address inequalities in participation, support the inactive into regular activity and provide more outdoor wellbeing opportunities.

Rushcliffe’s Leisure Strategy 2021-2027 (Mid-Point Review)

In this latest leisure strategy The Council recognises the importance of *‘providing leisure facilities to enable all of our community to lead healthy lives, by participating in a wide range of activities’* and aims to *‘provide high quality, financially sustainable leisure facilities to support Rushcliffe residents to enjoy healthy, active lives’*.

Guiding principles are:

- To protect and enhance facilities where there is evidence of need.
- To invest in major facility enhancements only where a sound business case exists.
- To work in partnership to meet the needs of communities.
- To focus on improving community health and wellbeing.

To achieve this vision, the Council has set out six key objectives:

- To retain five indoor leisure facilities and ensure they are fit for the future;
- Supporting partners/parishes to deliver the priority projects within the playing pitch strategy;
- To address inequalities in participation;
- To work with local health services to support ‘the inactive’ into regular activity;

- To maintain the existing local standards for provision of open space, children’s play and allotments.
- To create more outdoor wellbeing opportunities, including walking and cycling throughout the Borough

To maintain the existing local standards, the following standards are noted:

Type of provision	Standard
Formal and informal amenity open space and formal paths and gardens	0.72 hectares per 1,000 population
Equipped children’s play areas	0.25 hectares per 1,000 population
Unequipped children’s play areas	0.55 hectares per 1,000 population

To address inequalities in participation, which includes a drop-off in physical activity among teenage girls, the Council is committed to understanding girls’ active leisure preferences and how it can support these, especially outside of team sports. This will include developing play spaces to support these.

In addition, the Council is developing more wellbeing opportunities supporting mental health. This can be achieved by developing high quality facilities both indoors and outdoors including parks and open spaces. The Council is committed to working with key partners to deliver programmes and activities in parks and green spaces to support mental wellbeing such as the Green Social Prescribing initiative. This could include working with youth delivery agencies to deliver outdoor sessions.

Rushcliffe Playing Pitch Strategy 2022

A review of the playing pitch strategy in 2022 allowed information on emerging issues and opportunities to be gathered, highlighting changing priorities for the Borough. These included issues also relevant to playgrounds:

- ◀ Due to a significant increase in housing growth applications, the playing pitch strategy and action plan is becoming increasingly important to inform planning policy.
- ◀ Demand-mapping – this is needed for wider parks, green-spaces and outdoor leisure opportunities, as well as for playing pitches and play areas.
- ◀ The importance of creating more opportunities for residents to enjoy the Borough’s outdoor parks and open spaces to improve their mental and physical wellbeing was highlighted by Covid-19 and the current cost of living crisis. Also, that these opportunities are free at the point of entry.

Understanding demand and benefits includes understanding how people are accessing pitches, parks and playgrounds. The health benefit of visiting a park, pitch or playground will depend in part upon whether active travel is part of the experience and upon what else visitors do while there e.g. running around, playing games in surrounding greenspace.

Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy 2021 – 2025

The Nature Conservation Strategy makes a connection between access to wildlife-rich green spaces and human health. Many playgrounds are sited within parks that provide access to green-space, alongside or as part of the experience of visiting the playground.

‘The objective of the strategy is not only to benefit wildlife; visitors and residents will also benefit through the opportunities to observe and enjoy nature. A wildlife-rich environment has been shown to provide health benefits and economic benefits.’

Increasing numbers and accessibility of playgrounds might therefore result in improved access to wildlife-rich greenspace so wider health benefits; while improving the wildlife-richness of greenspace surrounding playgrounds might improve the health benefits of visiting those playgrounds.

The strategy references Natural England’s ‘Access to Natural Greenspace Standards’ (ANGSt) (Natural England, 2003). ANGSt standards recommend that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural greenspace:

- ◀ Of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home;
- ◀ At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home;
- ◀ One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home;
- ◀ One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home, plus
- ◀ A minimum of one hectare of statutory local nature reserve per thousand population.



PART 4: PLAY REVIEW

4.1 Current provision

Play areas can be classified in the following ways to identify their effective target audience, as defined by the Fields in Trust (FIT) (adapted)

- ◀ LAP - Local Areas for Play. aimed at very young children.
- ◀ LEAP - a Local Equipped Area of Play. Designed for unsupervised play generally aimed for younger aged children containing a wider range of equipment types which allows for progression through the age ranges.
- ◀ NEAP - a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play. Catering for all age groups. Often contain an extensive range of play equipment which including teen/casual provision.

The following table details the characteristics and guidelines for each type of play area.

Table 4.1 Definition of the various play types (adapted)

Area	LAP	LEAP	NEAP
Age group	Up to 6 years	4-10 years	Predominantly for older children
Location	Adjacent to a well-used pathway, on a well-used route overlooked by houses and on a flat site that is well drained.	Adjacent to a well-used pathway, on a well-used route overlooked by houses and on a flat site that is well drained. Preferably the play equipment should not overlook nearby gardens.	Adjacent to a well-used pathway, on a well-used route overlooked by houses and on a flat site that is well drained. Preferably the play equipment should not overlook nearby gardens.
Minimum activity zone	Minimum of 100m ² .	Minimum of 400m ² .	Minimum of 1000 m ² that is divided into two parts, one containing a range of playground equipment and the other having a hard surface of at least 465m ² (the minimum area needed to play five-a-side football).
No. and type of play equipment	Contains features that enable children to identify the space as their own domain, e.g. low-key games such as hopscotch, a footprint trail, mushroom style seating, rocks, bunds, tree logs etc.	Contains at least 6 types of play equipment, of which at least 2 are individual pieces, rather than part of a combination multi-play unit. Each type of play equipment should be designed to stimulate balancing, rocking, climbing/Agility, sliding and social play. Additional items may focus upon rotating, swinging, jumping, crawling, viewing, counting or touching.	Contains at least 10 types of play equipment comprising at least 2 items to stimulate rocking, touch, social or developmental play among younger children. At least 2 items to facilitate sliding, swinging or moderate climbing; at least 5 items to encourage either more-adventurous climbing, single point swinging, balancing, rotating or gliding (e.g. cableway). At least 3 of these items should be individual play items rather than part of a combination multi-play unit.

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Area	LAP	LEAP	NEAP
Buffer zone	Has a buffer zone of 5m minimum depth between the activity zone and the nearest dwelling that faces the LAP. This should include planting to enable children to experience natural scent, colour and texture.	Has a buffer zone of not less than 10m in depth between the edge of the activity zone and the boundary of the nearest dwelling and a minimum of 20m between the activity zone and the habitable room facade of the dwelling. This zone should include planting to enable children to experience natural scent, colour and texture where possible.	Has a buffer zone of not less than 30m in depth between the activity zone and the boundary of the nearest dwelling. A greater distance may be needed where purpose-built skateboarding facilities/Teen shelters are provided. This zone should include planting to enable children to experience natural scent, colour and texture.
Fencing	600mm high fencing and barrier to limit speed of child entering or leaving the facility. Self-closing pedestrian gate to prevent access by dogs. In some instances, it may be appropriate for the LAP to not require formal fencing	Has fencing of at least 1m in height around the perimeter of the activity zone, with two outward opening, self-closing gates, on opposite sides of the play area, to deter entry by dogs, restrict opportunities for bullying and to limit speed of child entering/leaving the facility In some instances, it may be appropriate for the LEAP to not require formal fencing particularly in natural environments or linear parks	Has fencing of at least 1m in height around the perimeter of the activity zone, with two outward opening, self-closing gates, on opposite sides of the play area, to deter entry by dogs, restrict opportunities for bullying and to limit speed of child entering/leaving the facility In some instances, it may be appropriate for the NEAP to not require formal fencing particularly in natural environments or linear parks
Features	Contains features that enable children to identify the space as their own domain, e.g. low-key games such as hopscotch, a footprint trail, rocks, bunds, tree logs, styled seating etc.	Has adequate space around the equipment to enable children to express their general exuberance and play games of tag or chase, informal ball games.	Has adequate space around the equipment to enable children to express their general exuberance and play games of tag or chase, informal ball games.
Furniture	Contains seating for parent(s), carer(s) etc.	Contains seating for parent(s), carer(s) and a litter bin.	Contains seating for parent(s) and/or carer(s) in the vicinity of the play equipment and other seating within the hard-surfaced games area. Also appropriate number of litter bins and convenient and secure parking facility for bicycles.
Signs and notices	Has a sign indicating area is solely for use by children. Adults are not allowed unless with children and dogs are to be excluded. What 3 words location	Has a sign indicating area is: Solely for use by children. Adults are not allowed unless with children. Dogs are to be excluded. Name and telephone number of the	Has a sign indicating area is: Solely for use by children. Adults are not allowed unless with children. Dogs are to be excluded. Name and telephone number of the

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Area	LAP	LEAP	NEAP
		operator of the facility to report any incident or damage to the play equipment. What 3 words location	operator of the facility to report any incident or damage to the play equipment. What 3 words location

A total of 69 play sites are identified in Rushcliffe. Table 4.2 below presents a breakdown of the types of provision using the FIT guidance. Most are identified as being a LEAP (66%) classification. It must be noted that there were no quality ratings undertaken as part of the study.

Table 4.2: Breakdown of play provision in Rushcliffe

LAP	LEAP	NEAP	Standalone skateparks	Total
14	46	8	1	69

A full list of sites is located in Appendix A.

Accessibility analysis

To ensure the local population has sufficient access to provision, catchment mapping is utilised. Guidance on appropriate accessibility distances for play provision is published by FIT in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015). These vary depending on play type. The analysis is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Table 4.3: FIT accessibility guidelines

Play type	FIT Walking guideline	Approximate time equivalent
LEAP	400m	5 minutes
NEAP	1,000m	12 ½ minutes
Youth/Casual	700m	9 minutes

Catchment Analysis

The Borough is split into five distinct areas (termed analysis areas) for the purpose of this study. The analysis presents all play sites within the Borough along with the appropriate catchments applied, broken down into the following analysis areas. The analysis areas also list the populations (2022).

Analysis area	Population
Bingham	21,552
Cotgrave & Radcliffe on Trent	14,674
East Leake	12,905
Keyworth	13,642
West Bridgford and Ruddington	51,701

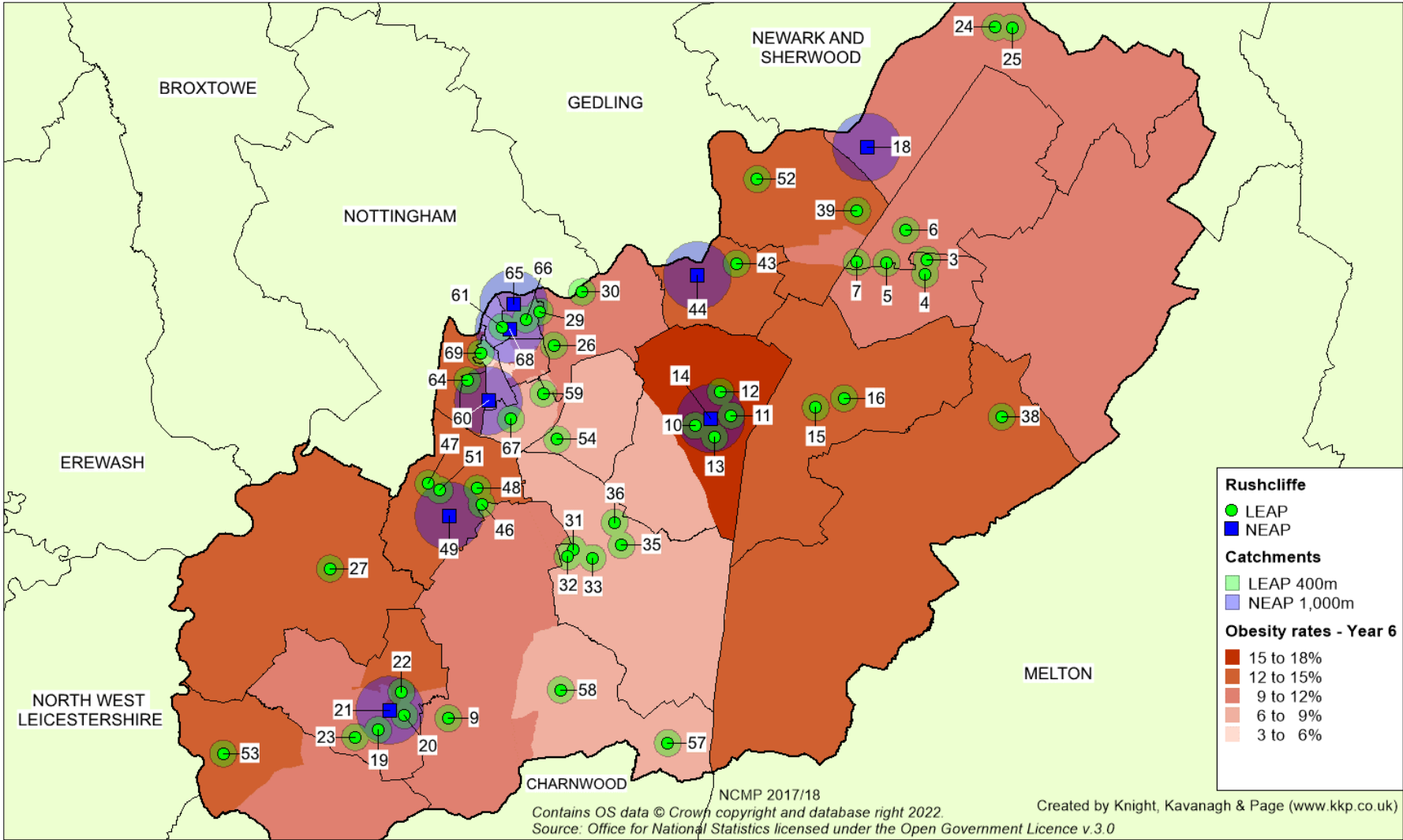
The study also considers play sites in neighbouring authorities, as these could affect residents within Rushcliffe. Sites in neighbouring authorities which could affect residents in Rushcliffe, located in Nottingham City, are illustrated in the mapping. It must be noted quality of play was not assessed, and this analysis only looks at existing provisional gaps. Below each map, a summary box illustrates any gaps in catchments and possible recommendations (if required).

The analysis has used two useful backgrounds. Figure 4.1 shows the overall authority with obesity levels for Year 6 (10-11 yr) children. Unfortunately, data was not available at ward level. However, it does show the highest levels of Year 6 obesity is in the Cotgrave and Radcliffe area (darker shaded area), when compared to the more rural areas of Keyworth. Although this is not reflective of all children, it provides a snapshot of a single school year and highlights the added benefits play and investment in play can help to bring.

The analysis area maps (figures 4.2 to 4.6) use overall health deprivation levels as backgrounds. Commentary in relation to this is provided in the analysis boxes.

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Figure 4.1 All LEAP and NEAP plays areas across Rushcliffe with appropriate catchments against Year 6 obesity levels



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Figure 4.2: LEAP (400m) and NEAP (1000m) sites with catchments (Bingham)

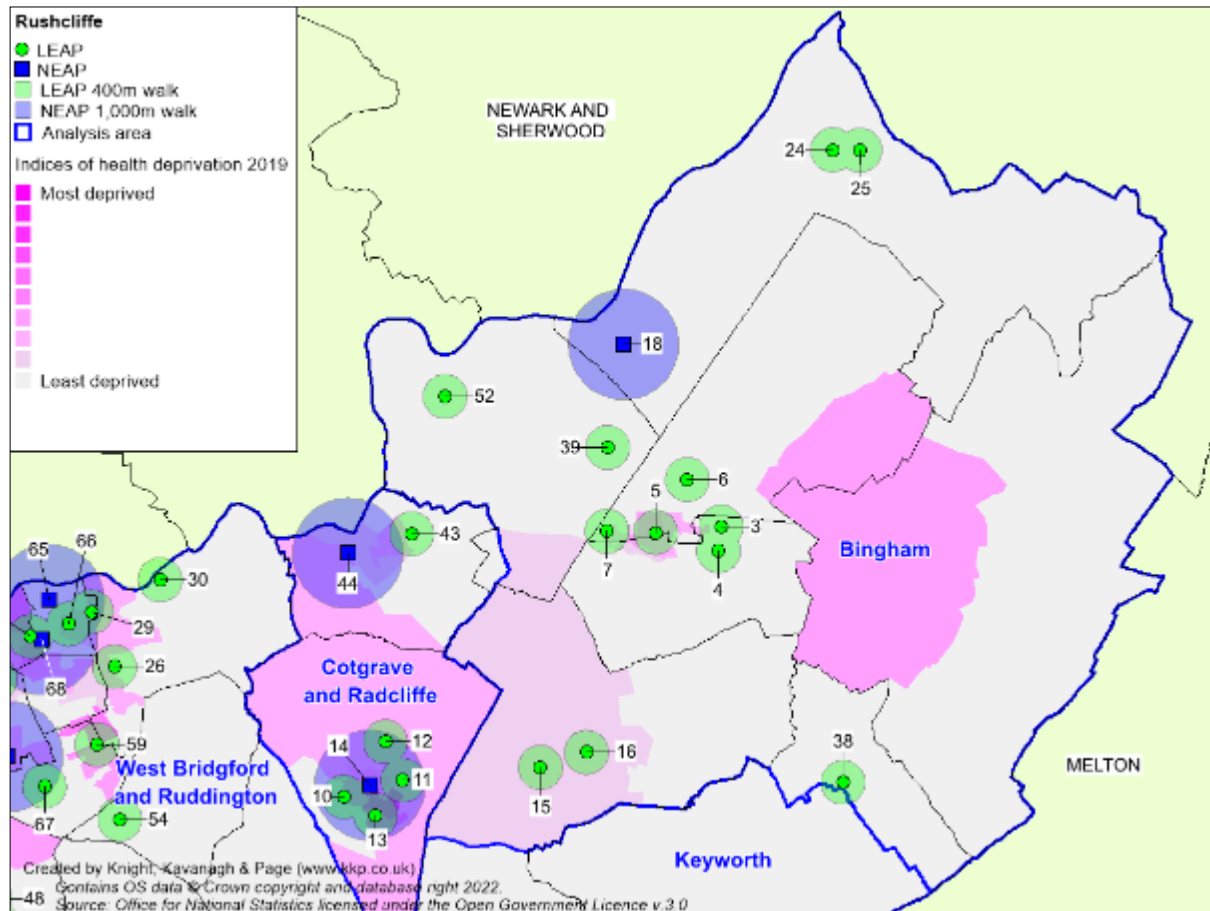


Table 4.4: Catchment gaps for Bingham Analysis Area

Town/Settlement	Identified gap	Potential options
Bingham	Gaps in catchment in areas of dense population	Explore options to upgrade a LEAP site to a NEAP

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Figure 4.3: LEAP (400m) and NEAP (1000m) sites with catchments (Cotgrave and Radcliffe on Trent)

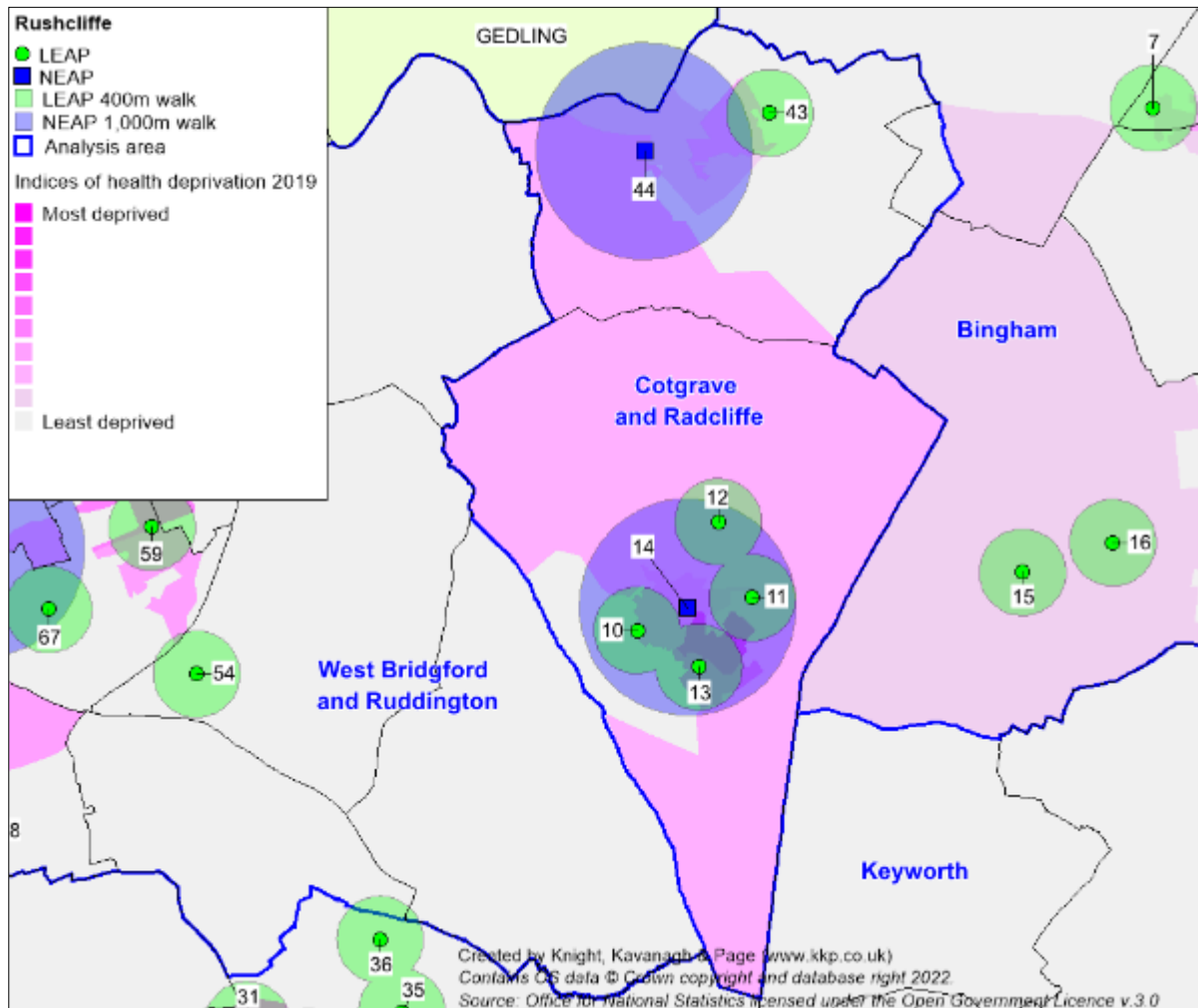


Table 4.5: Catchment gaps for Cotgrave and Radcliffe on Trent Analysis Area

Town/Settlement	Identified gap	Potential options
Radcliffe	Gaps in catchment in areas of dense population. Area also has medium levels of health deprivation.	Explore opportunities to upgrade a LEAP site to a NEAP

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Figure 4.4: LEAP (400m) and NEAP (1000m) sites with catchments (East Leake) and neighbouring local authorities.

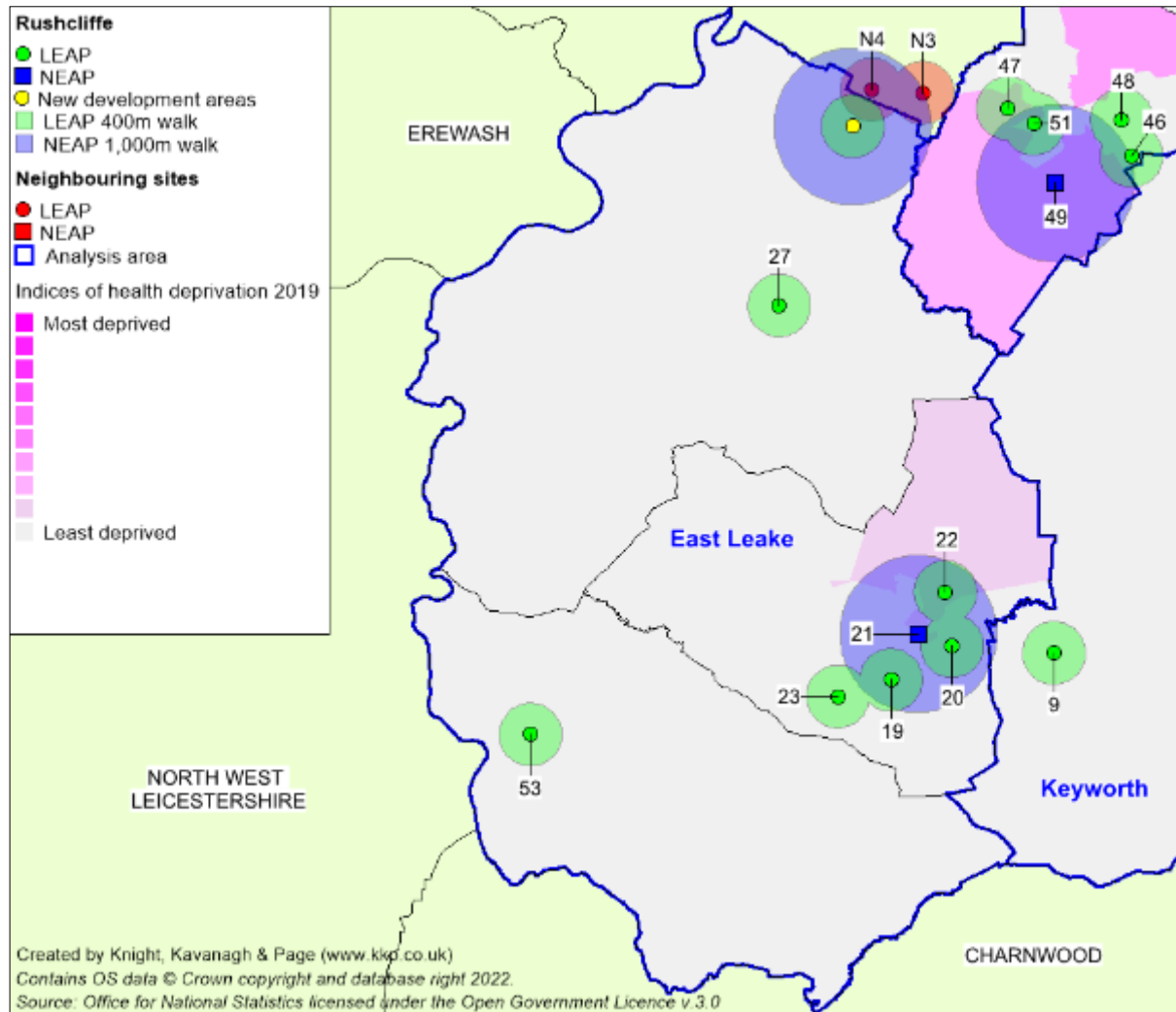


Table 4.6: Catchment gaps for East Leake Trent Analysis Area

Town/Settlement	Identified gap	Potential options
East Leake	No gap identified	n/a

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Figure 4.5: LEAP (400m) and NEAP (1000m) sites with catchments (Keyworth)

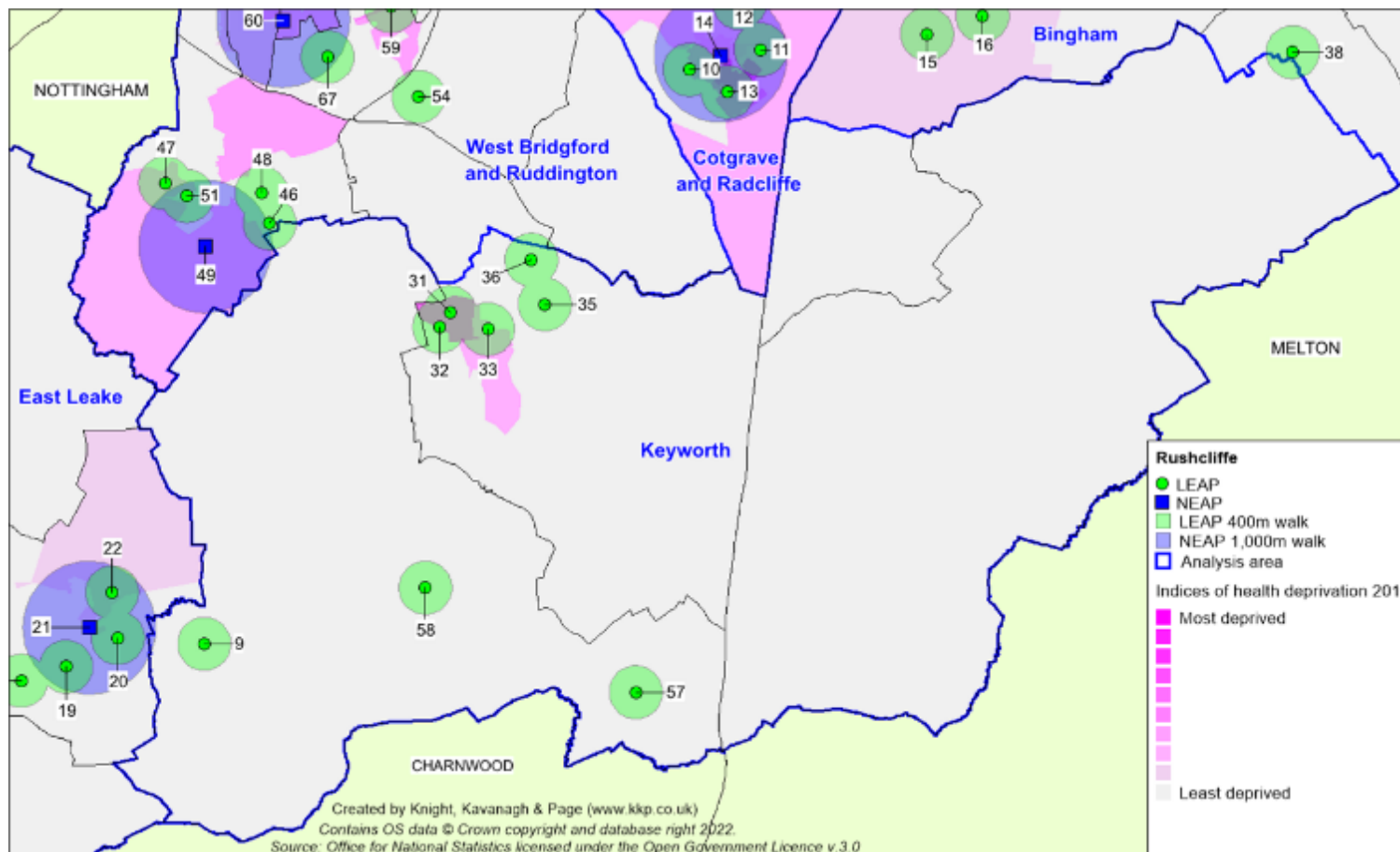


Table 4.7: Catchment gaps for Keyworth Analysis Area

Town/Settlement	Identified gap	Potential options
Keyworth	Lack of provision in areas of high population	Explore options to upgrade one LEAP site to a NEAP

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Figure 4.6: LEAP (400m) and NEAP (1000m) sites with catchments (West Bridgford and Ruddington) and neighbouring local authorities

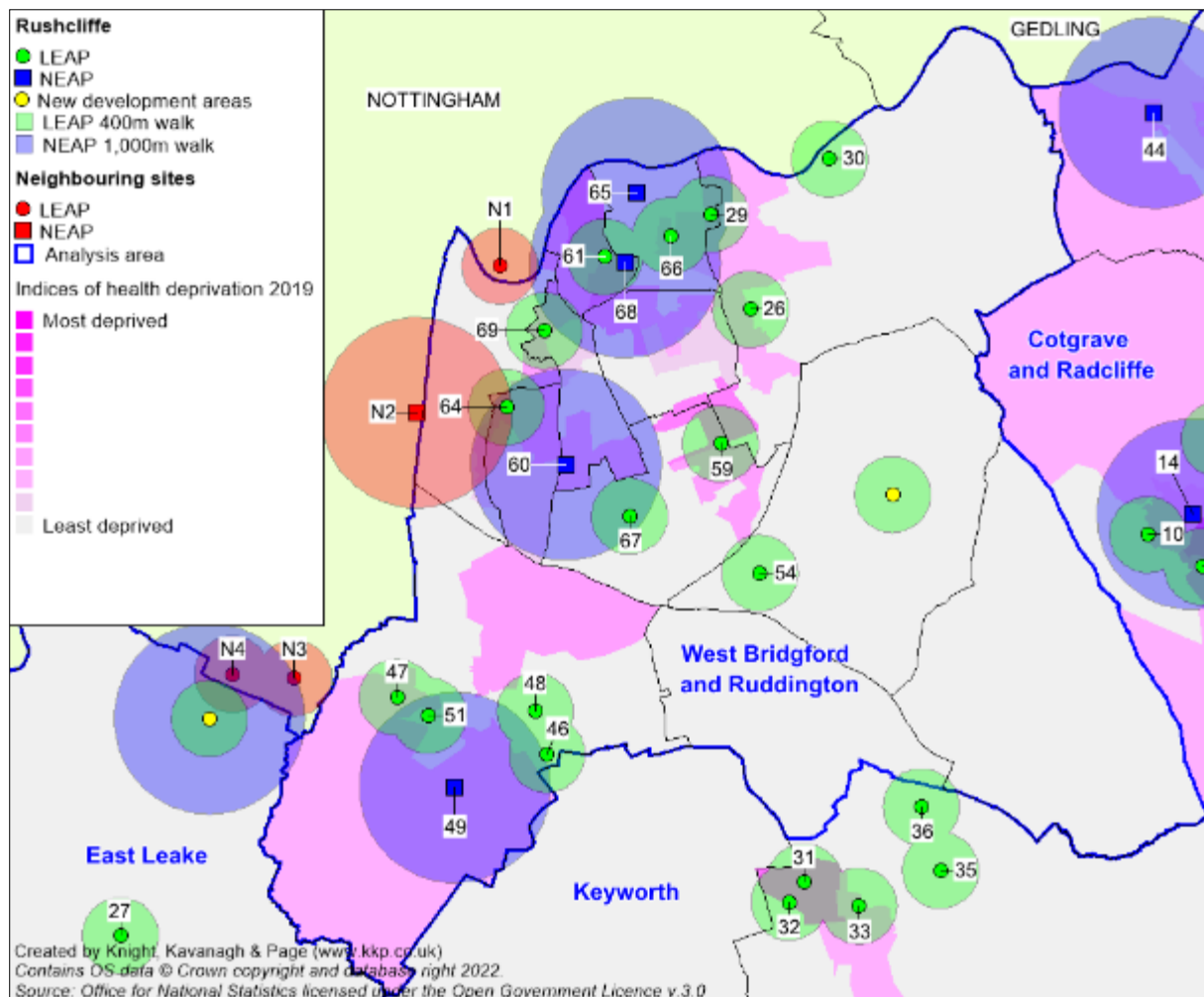


Table 4.8: Catchment gaps for West Bridgford and Ruddington Analysis Area

Town/Settlement	Identified gap	Potential options
West Bridgford and Ruddington	Gaps in catchment in areas of dense population. Area also has medium levels of deprivation.	Explore options to upgrade one LEAP site to a NEAP in West Bridgford and Ruddington analysis area

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In summary, there is generally a good spread of play provision for younger and older children across all areas of Rushcliffe, especially within the areas with greater population densities.

Most settlements are observed as being served by some form of play and youth provision. However, some gaps in catchment mapping are highlighted in Radcliffe on Trent, Bingham, Keyworth and West Bridgford and Ruddington analysis areas and recommendations have been made to either expand existing provision or provide new facilities to meet this demand.

Future developments

In addition to the existing sites, two new housing sites will also feature play. Both are illustrated on the maps above and show the respective catchments. These are:

- ◀ Fairham development - Located on the border of Clifton (Nottingham City Council), the development will consist of 3,000 new homes. No play sites have been built yet; however, it is proposed there will be 1.73 ha of formal play space including a full range of LAP, LEAP and NEAPs.
- ◀ Gamston Development - a significant development consisting of circa 4,000 new homes on the former Nottingham City Airport site. The proposal is to create two key play areas, one part of a recreational facility, the other in the south-west of the development. There will also be some trim trails with fitness provision associated including a full range of LAP, LEAP and NEAPs.

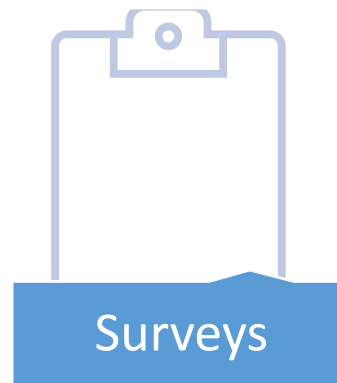


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PART 5: CONSULTATION

As part of developing the Play Strategy, engagement with stakeholders who use and manage play areas across Rushcliffe has been undertaken. This has been divided into a series of consultation sessions and online surveys. Consultation sessions were targeted at users across the Borough. In addition, there have been three surveys; a community, management company and a parish council survey (see Appendix B for a copy of surveys questions).



Focus groups

There were three invitational youth focus groups which aimed to gather the current perception of play across the Borough. Each had a specific focus. These were:

- ◀ West Bridgford Young People's Centre: at the "Link" session which serves young people across the entire borough with additional needs and disabilities.
- ◀ Open session in Keyworth, Cotgrave and Ruddington; to gather general perceptions to on play across the three areas.
- ◀ Rushcliffe Arena: focus on play for tween and teenage girls.

The key themes from the youth sessions were:

Better use of interactive equipment across all sites - it was felt that fusing technology with play across all sites would improve the experience. Equipment which uses technology to improve agility and allow children / young people to express themselves would make visiting play sites more attractive to a younger audience. It would also provide a better sensory experience for those with disabilities. An example of such equipment is the interactive play at Tollerton's as illustrated the right).



Lack of provision for girls, especially tweens & teens - the majority of play sites for older children are geared towards males, with provision (such as MUGAs, basketball courts and skate ramps) encouraging sports such as football, basketball and skateboarding, consequently restricting opportunities for many girls and for those boys less interested in these sports.

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Preferences emerging from our focus groups include more social / informal areas, more dispersed facilities and less focus on sport and formal physical activity, more on informal activity. Ideas included seating, climbing facilities, age-appropriate swings, exercise and gymnastic equipment and covered shelters.

Improvements across all sites - It was felt that certain sites were poorly presented. General improvements are required across all key sites, which include better flooring, lighting, improved landscaping, more benches and better use of the natural environment (use of boulders) would make visiting play sites a better experience.

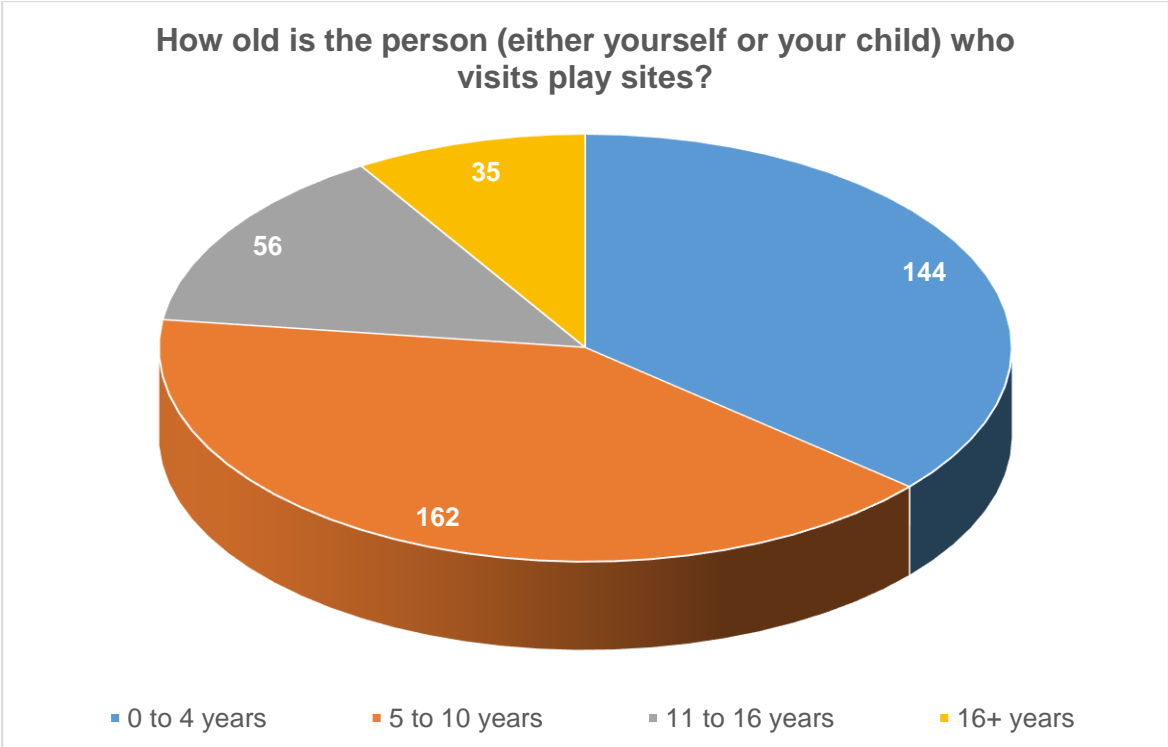
Use of alternative equipment - the Council could consider something different at key sites, including bouldering opportunities and gymnastics equipment.

Online Surveys

There were four online surveys issued, a public, a parish council survey, management company and an online survey undertaken by Skate Nottingham around wheeled sports. The purpose of the public questionnaire was to understand usage and perceptions of each site, in terms of quality, range and quantity of equipment, experience of visiting and suggestions for improvement.

A total of 397 responses were received, with many responding for more than one age group. The majority of responses were for children aged 10 and under (308 respondents), with 91 responses for and from people aged eleven and above. Across all responses, Rushcliffe Country Park and Bridgford Park were the two most popular sites. Of the top 10 most popular sites, Wharf Lane Recreation Ground was the site most frequently visited, with 30% of people visiting this site, doing so at least five times a week.

Figure 5.1: Age of respondent who visited play sites



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Figure 5.2: Most popular play sites visited (top 10)

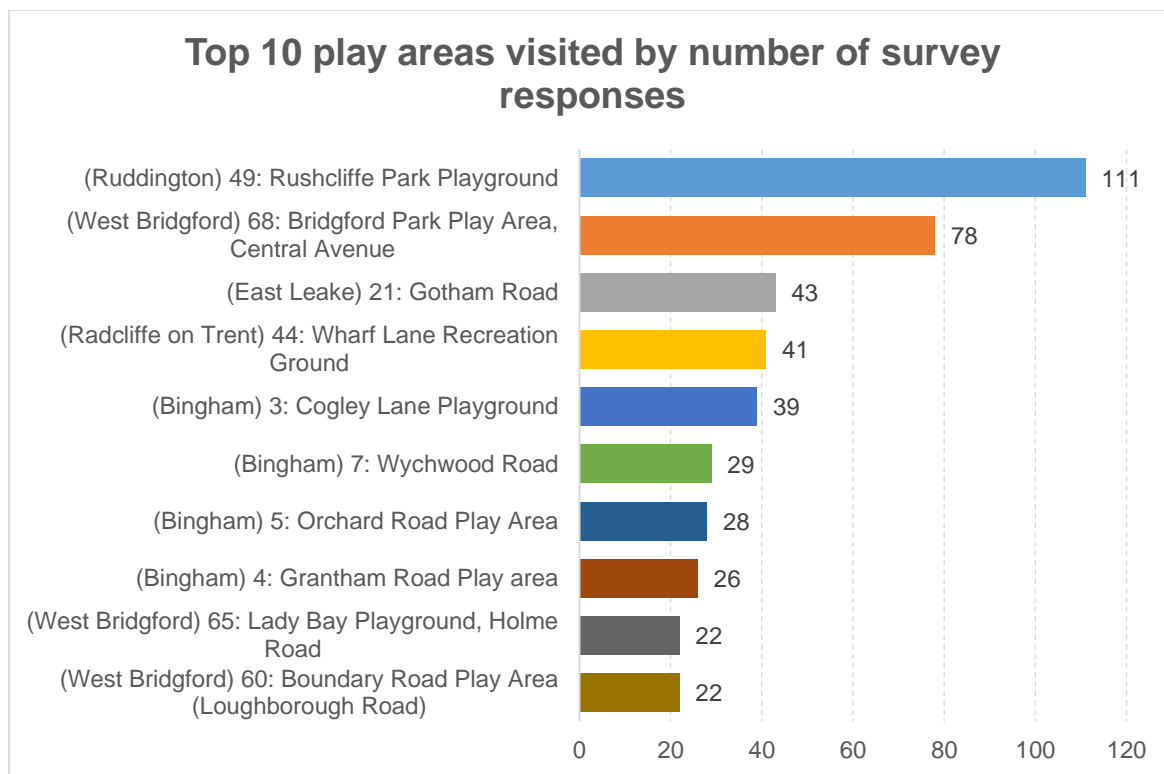
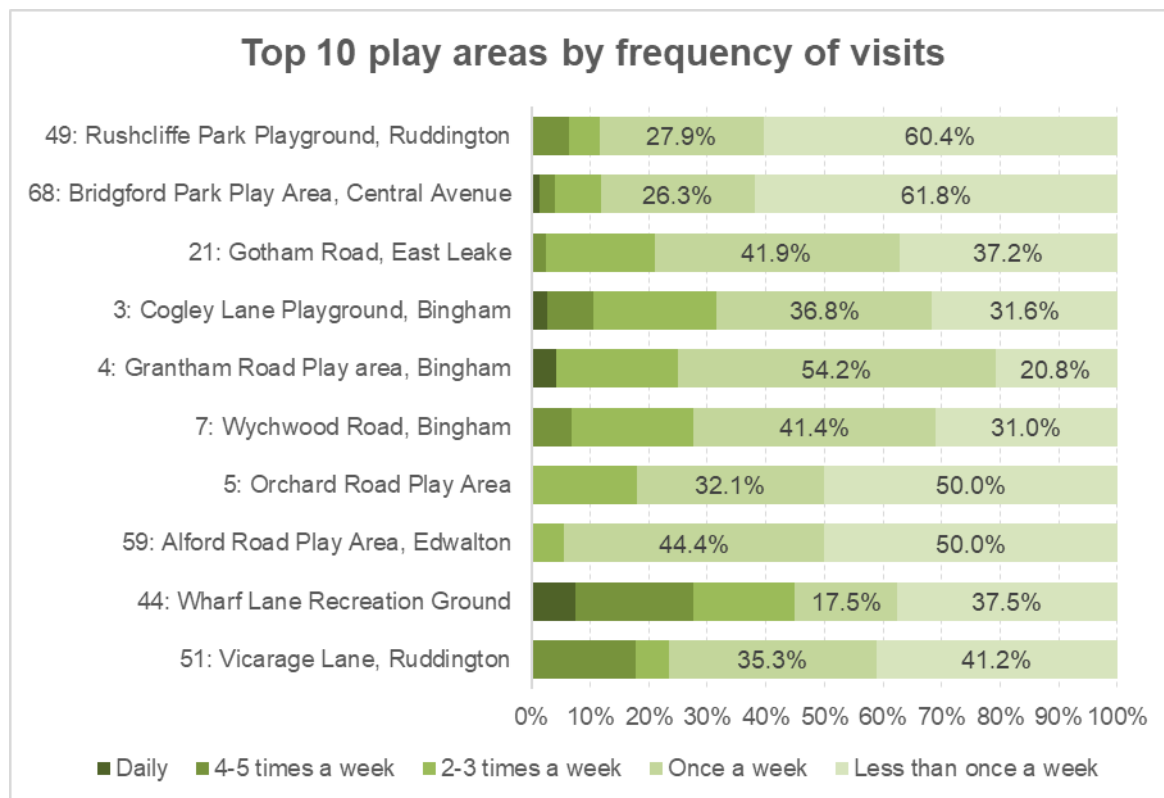
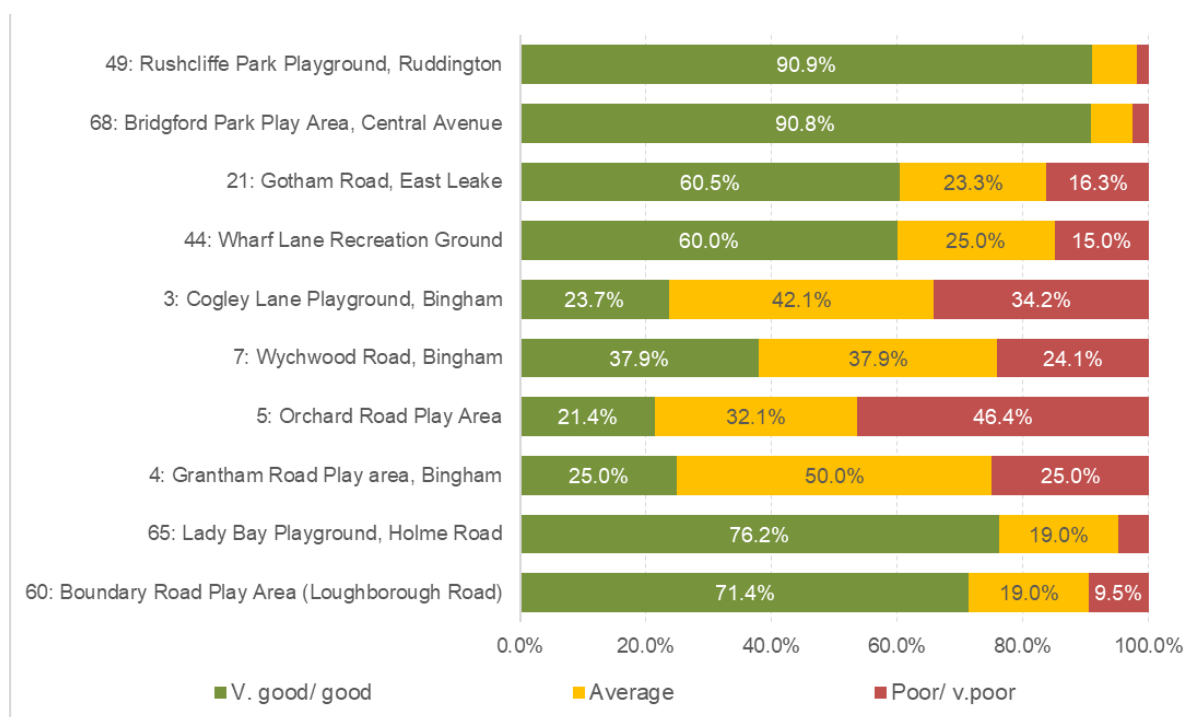


Figure 5.3: How often do you visit these sites (top 10 most popular)



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Figure 5.5: Of the top 10 most visited sites, how do you rate the play area and site it sits within, in terms of ambience, experience and safety.



In terms of overall ambience, safety and experience, the big parks at Rushcliffe Country Park and Bridgford Park both scored very well, with over 90% of respondents reporting these sites were very good.

In terms of overall quality, quantity and range of equipment at the sites, over half of the respondents felt that the quality was either good or very good (52.9%) whereas just under half felt that the range of equipment was either good or very good (47.8%). A slightly higher proportion of respondents rated quantity of equipment as either poor or very poor (28.9%) compared to quality and range. However, 46.8% rated quantity as good/very good.

Table 5.1: Overall quality, quantity and range of equipment across Rushcliffe

	Good/very good	Average	Poor/very poor
Quality of equipment	52.9%	25.4%	21.7%
Range of equipment	47.8%	26.7%	25.5%
Quantity of equipment	46.8%	24.2%	28.9%

Sites which respondents rate as either very good or good, across quality, quantity and range of equipment were:

- ◀ Rushcliffe Country Park
- ◀ Elms Park, Ruddington
- ◀ Lothian Road Play Area, Tollerton
- ◀ Bridgford Park Play Area
- ◀ Greythorn Drive Park, West Bridgford

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Conversely, sites which respondents rate as poor or very poor were:

- ◀ Main Street, Sutton Bonington
- ◀ Sellors Playing Field,
- ◀ Bingham Road, Radcliffe on Trent
- ◀ Memorial Hall Rec. Ground, Gotham
- ◀ Ring Leas (East Moor) Play Area, Cotgrave
- ◀ Broad Meer Play Area, Cotgrave
- ◀ Grantham Road Play area, Bingham
- ◀ Bingham RFU

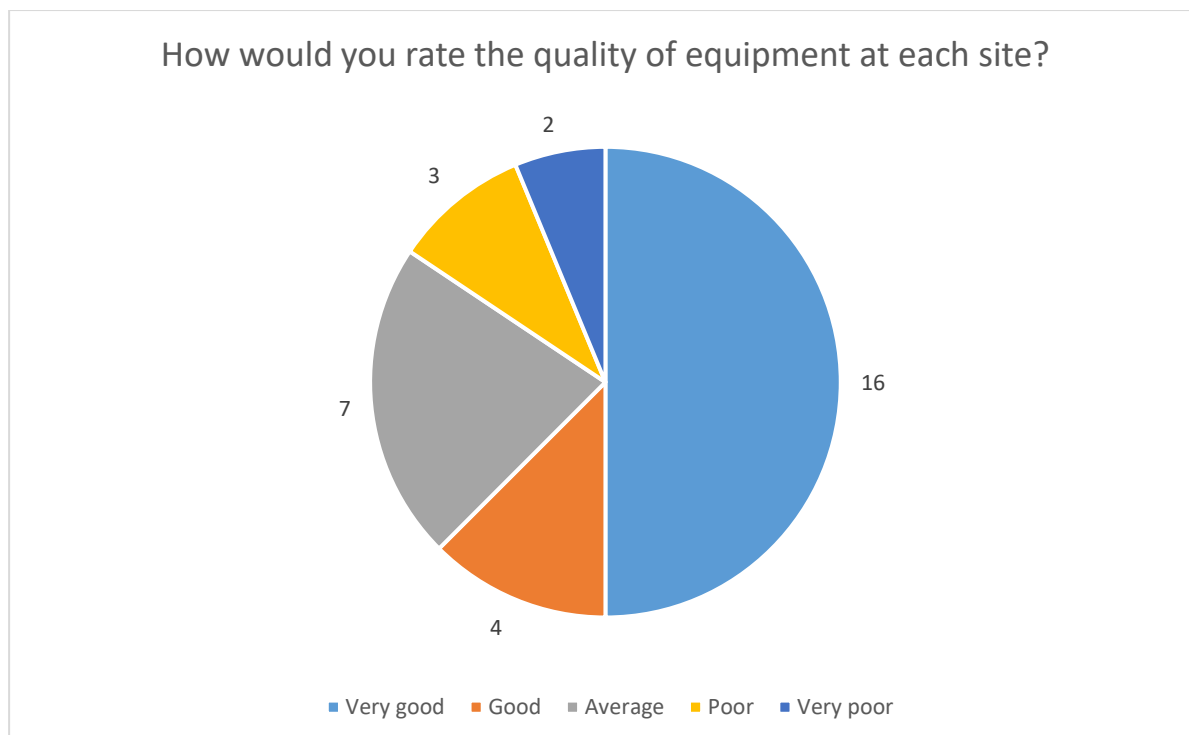
Town and Parish Councils were surveyed because they are responsible for publicly managed playgrounds in parished areas. In West Bridgford, Rushcliffe Borough Council is responsible for playgrounds. Some playgrounds are managed privately and management companies were surveyed separately.

The Parish Council survey received 25 responses across the Borough. Analysis highlights, in general, the quality, quantity and range of equipment is either rated good or very good (as illustrated overleaf). The two sites highlighted as poor across all three elements (quality, quantity and range), also reflected in the public survey, were:

- ◀ Bingham RFU.
- ◀ Butt Field (Bowls Club), East Bridgford.

Fifteen of the twenty-three Town and Parish Councils responding said that they have plans to upgrade playgrounds in their area.

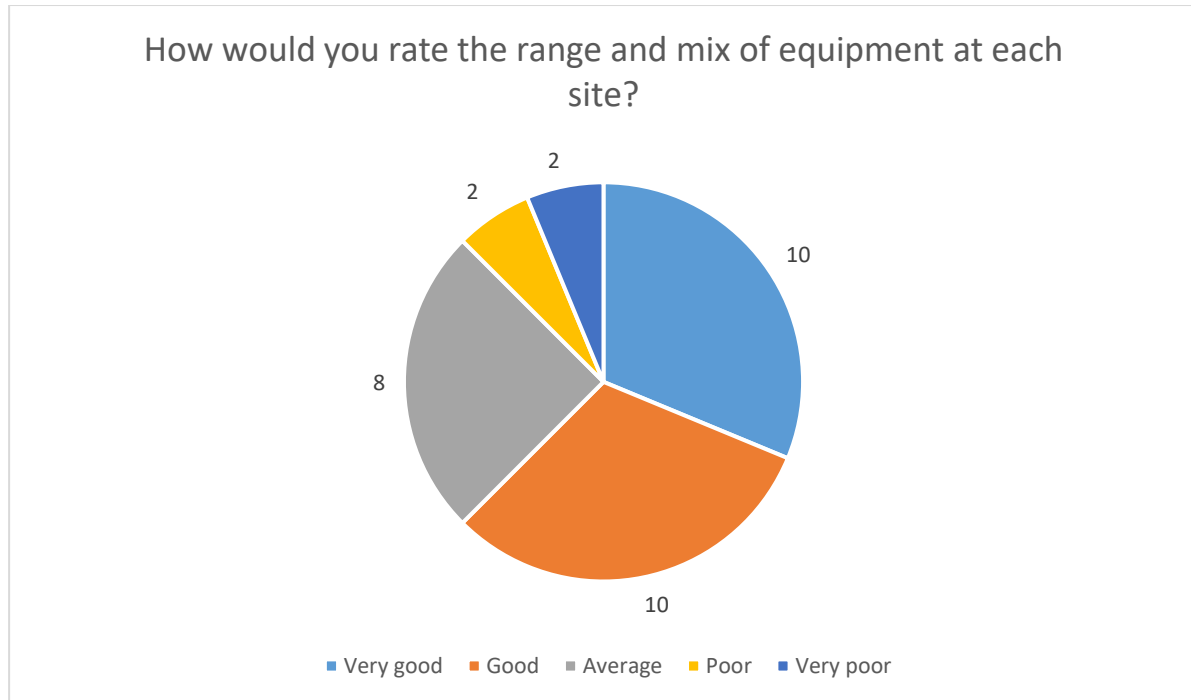
5.4 Quality of equipment



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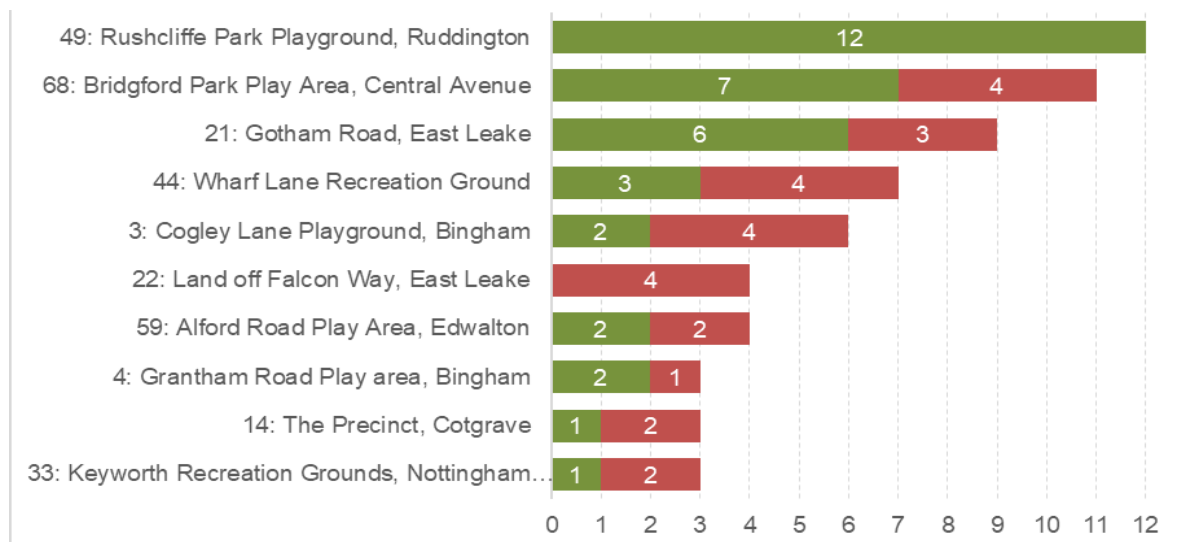
Figure 5.5 Range of equipment



Respondents were asked ‘if you are registered disabled, or care for someone who is registered disabled, is the play equipment at the site inclusive for your needs?’

Rushcliffe Country Park and Bridgford Parks were identified as having the best accessible equipment (fig. 5.7). However, four respondents stated that Bridgford Park did not have suitable equipment. It must be noted, there was a low response to this question.

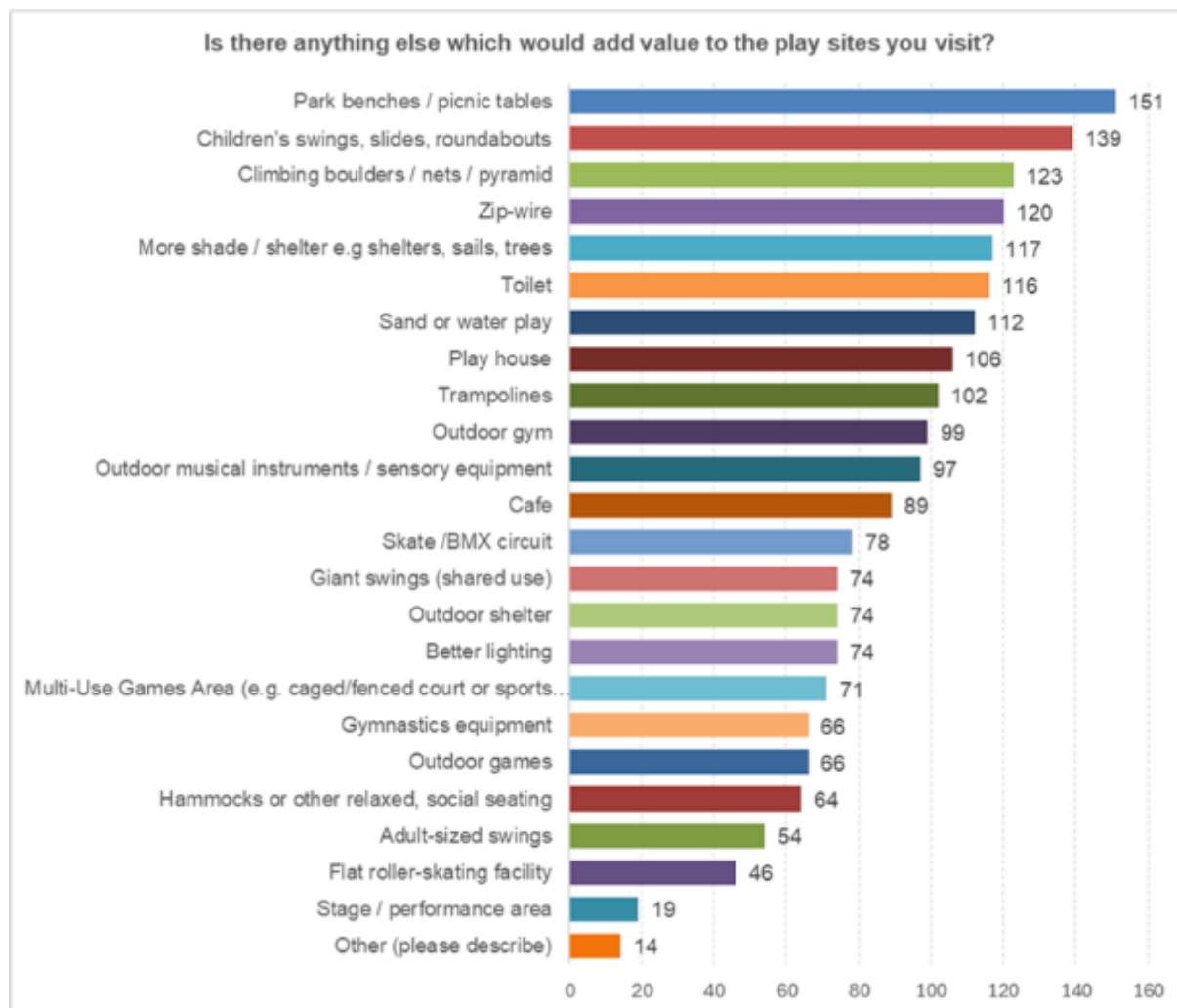
Figure 5.7: Which sites have the best accessible equipment?



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Respondents were asked what else would add value to the playgrounds they visited, with a list of options and opportunity for free-text response. Responses to the listed options are shown in figure 5.9.

Figure 5.9: What could add value to play sites which you visit.



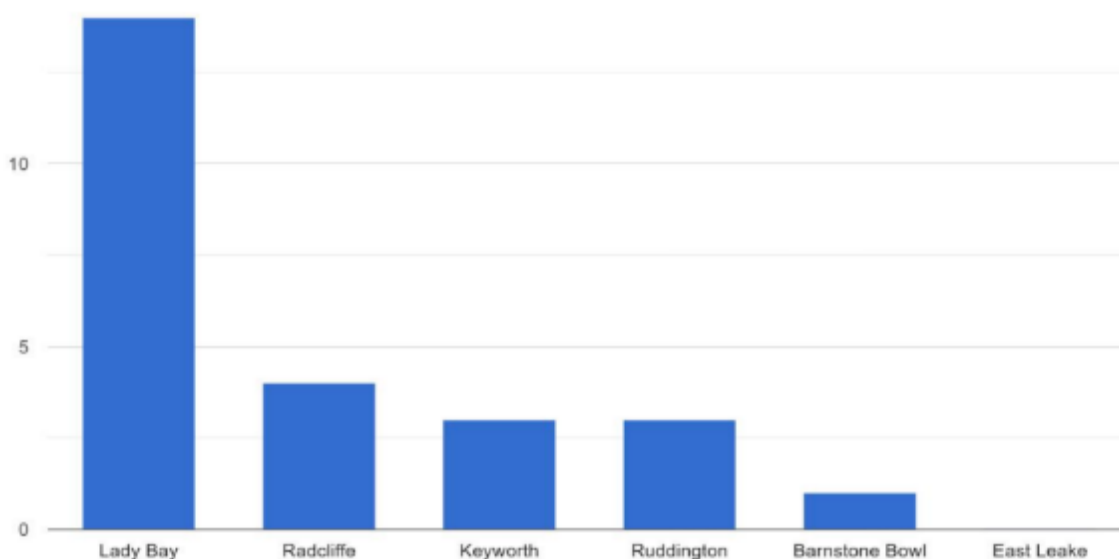
Skate Nottingham survey

Skate Nottingham undertook an online survey with all users of skateparks in Rushcliffe to understand popularity of individual sites along with any challenges faced by users. The survey was promoted through both Instagram and Facebook with 45 responses.

As shown in Figure 5.10, the most popular site for skateboarding in Rushcliffe is Lady Bay skatepark (nicknamed the Hook), followed by Radcliffe-on-Trent, Wharf Lane. Responses indicated that Radcliffe-on-Trent and Keyworth offered the most variety with large expansive areas allowing people to undertake a variety of obstacles/bowls/ramps. The majority of parks had large concrete areas, which provided a modern experience. Keyworth provided opportunities for beginners as well as advance users.

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Figure 5.10: Most visited skateparks in Rushcliffe



To improve users experience, toilets, lighting, bins and additional seating were identified across all main sites. In addition, regular maintenance would benefit sites with graffiti being a key issue at most sites, as this causes slippery surfaces. At some sites the concrete is already cracking, which needs to be addressed with regular maintenance.

Qualitative responses

The public survey also offered respondents the chance to provide comment on play across the Borough. The key themes which came from the qualitative responses were as follows:

- Equipment to be repaired, maintained or improved, across many sites. More equipment and greater variety is considered desirable at a number of sites.
- More accessible play equipment was a common theme, including swings, sensory equipment and quiet space, accompanied by accessible surfaces, seating and toilets.
- Seating, including benches, tables and picnic areas was a high priority for respondents. A lack of seating was reported to make supervision of children difficult and limit the time families could spend at playgrounds. At one site seats were requested because *'people are sitting on play equipment smoking'*.
- Shade over seating and play areas was referenced repeatedly as a necessity for children and adults. *'Visiting with a 4yr old who wants to play but needs supervising, and a breastfed baby who needed shade there are not enough benches or shade, so we didn't visit as often last summer'*. Drinking fountains were also requested, as a way to cool down and extend visit time.
- Toilet provision, including accessible, changing places toilets. Toilet cleaning & maintenance was also noted as essential. *'The need for more changing places facilities for children with special needs and disabilities.'* *'The cleanliness of toilet facilities in the large parks is poor. This prevents women and girls of all ages from staying for longer. We can't just pee in the bushes like the men and boys do.'*

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- Access improvements, benefiting people with prams, in wheelchairs and children on bikes, skates and scooters, in particular. These include making play area surfaces and the surrounding ground more even and less prone to puddles, adding access paths, addressing road-safety issues adjacent to parks and making blue badge parking with dropped kerbs available close to park gates. Responses included: *'Pram access is important', 'gets extremely muddy after just a bit of rain', 'Often equipment is on bark which a wheelchair can't go on. Grass is fine only if it is dry otherwise wheelchairs get stuck. Play equipment often in a raised area with no ramp.'* *'Disabled parents exist! I often can't be near my children and it makes me feel excluded and not able to spend time with my children.'*
- Fencing, particularly around play areas for younger children, to keep children in and dogs out, was cited as desirable and as a reason why some people travel to play areas further from home.
- Separate play areas for different age groups but near each other, with a central vantage point. Many adults made the point that with children of different ages, they need to be able to supervise young children while also keeping an eye on older children; supervise siblings while feeding a baby; sit with the family dog; and with other adults. A seating area outside any individual play area but overlooking more than one of these, as well as seating within play areas, would provide the right range of options.
- More play areas for children aged 8-12 and for teens was a major theme. As above, there was a desire expressed for some of these to be close to play areas for younger children to accommodate family groups. Also in the hope that providing play areas suited to different ages would discourage children from using age-inappropriate play areas, to the exclusion of their intended users. *'Kids above 8 need play equipment too - and if they have younger siblings what are they supposed to do?'*. *'There are usually teenagers sitting on the equipment chatting and not using it, making it more difficult for others to use the equipment.'* *'...sometimes families with younger children 'take over' the teen area, displacing the teens. More scattered islands of equipment would prevent single-group dominance and make [these sites] more useable by more people at once.'*
- Greater variety of equipment for older children and teens. Suggestions included; climbing equipment, zip-lines, trampolines, obstacle courses, adventure play, exercise equipment, large swings, street-skating / roller-skating / scooter paths or rinks and pump tracks: *'More variety. More facilities that support children getting into a variety of sports. More wildlife attraction, bird hides / feeding stations.'* Facilities suitable for both children and adults were suggested; *'A site for performances would be great for community events e.g. yoga in the park, outdoor cinemas or theatre.'*
- Older and teen girls requiring investment in play provision was a repeated theme. Almost all provision for this age-group is in the form of multi-use games areas (MUGAs) and skate ramps. *'More equipment for teenage girls. If you survey who uses the skate parks and BMX tracks, you will find that this investment has benefitted boys. Engage with experts in designing parks for women and girls.'* *'In 14 years of walking past the MUGA many times a week I've only seen a girl in there once, when a family group had taken it over. Looking across the borough I see expensive skatepark after skatepark. Where is the equal investment in facilities for same-age girls?'*

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- Skateparks benefitting from beginner ramps, with lighting for use in winter another suggestion. *'I see that a lot of children that come down to the skatepark are overwhelmed by the ramps. This is because there isn't really a beginner section of the park, I think this skatepark would benefit from having an additional area that could suit a variety of abilities.'*
- Bingham was repeatedly identified as lacking suitable playgrounds, for all ages but especially older children. *'Bingham parks are ok for very young children, but by the age of about 7, they have outgrown the equipment there.'* *'Bingham does not have any big playgrounds like Radcliffe-on-Trent, West Bridgford or Ruddington. It would be great if Bingham would have a nice big playground for all-aged children and parents to enjoy for longer than the odd hour here and there.'*
- Over-all, provision of play areas in Rushcliffe was considered good, with some people travelling from further afield to visit the Borough's larger sites. *'Generally Rushcliffe play areas are good and the Council has invested well in children's play. But one or two play areas seem to have been forgotten. During Covid 2020 we used Rushcliffe (Country) Park for exercise a lot and felt very fortunate to live close to such a wonderful facility. Thank you.'*



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RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PART 6: PROVISION STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKING

Provision standards are used to help inform what future requirements are needed. The following section provides a review to the existing RBC provision standards and approach to calculating play facility requirements as part of new housing developments.

The basic principle is that a development should provide for the recreational needs it generates and deliver the provision on site where the demand is generated. All new developments should therefore contribute. Consequently, the Council expects appropriate provision of play facilities to be provided. RBC also has general design guide principles for play facilities (Appendix C).

Future need should not just centre on quantity requirements of new developments. In some instances, a new development may not warrant on-site provision but instead could contribute towards the enhancement of an existing site within local proximity.

This is intended to mitigate the impact of increases in demand on existing provision. In most cases, an increase in use, arising from a greater resident population, will reduce the lifespan of certain sites and/or features (e.g. play equipment and maintenance regimes etc.). This will lead to an increased requirement to improve, refurbish and/or replace such forms of provision.

Consequently, the recommended approach is to increase the capacity of and/or enhance the existing provision available. There continues therefore to be a requirement on developers to demonstrate that where new provision is to be provided it will be managed and maintained accordingly. Developers are therefore also required to contribute a sum of money to pay for the costs of the site's future maintenance.

Current approach

RBC currently uses a standard of 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population for equipped children's play areas and 0.55 hectares per 1,000 population for unequipped children's play areas. This is based on previous guidance by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA). The NPFA is now Fields In Trust and has slightly updated quantity guidelines.

Table 6.1: RBC standards

Type of provision	Standard
Formal and informal amenity open space and formal paths and gardens	0.72 hectares per 1,000 population
Equipped children's play areas	0.25 hectares per 1,000 population
Unequipped children's play areas	0.55 hectares per 1,000 population

Table 6.2: FIT quantity guidelines

Type of provision	Standard
Equipped/designated play areas	0.25 hectares per 1,000 population
Other outdoor provision (e.g. MUGAs & Skateboard parks)	0.30 hectares per 1,000 population

PLAY STRATEGY REVIEW

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Therefore, the adopted standards for Rushcliffe Borough Council incorporating the above standards are as follows:

Table 6.3: Rushcliffe adopted Play Space Standards

Type of provision	Standard
Equipped children's play areas (LEAP)	0.25 hectares per 1,000 population
Unequipped children's play areas (LAP)	0.55 hectares per 1,000 population
Other outdoor provision (MUGAs & Skateboard parks) (NEAP)	0.30 hectares per 1,000 population
Formal and informal amenity open space and formal paths and gardens	0.72 hectares per 1,000 population

The play standards will therefore include the play type according to the side of the development and in addition the amenity open space to get the overall play and associated open space requirements for a development.

Comparative standards and costs

It is also worthwhile reviewing the standards and costs used by RBC compared to neighbouring local authorities. The following table sets out the existing contributions of neighbouring authorities (where possible).

Table 6.4: Comparative standards and costs

Local Authority	Standard	Offsite contribution
Broxtowe	Not set	-
Charnwood	0.25 ha per 1000 population	-
Gedling	-	-
Mansfield	Open space onsite to be 10% of the developable area proposed	-
Newark	18m ²	£927 per dwelling
Nottingham	2.4 ha per 1000 population ⁷	£1,314 per person
North West Leicestershire	0.25 ha per 1000 population (designated equipped play) 0.55 ha per 1000 population (informal playing space)	-

The existing RBC standard being sought of 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population (2.5 m² per person) for equipped play areas reflects the suggested standard by Fields In Trust (2015) and is also in keeping with the standards sought by most other local authorities.

⁷ For all forms of open space provision, not just play

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Onsite or offsite

Whether provision should be made onsite or via an offsite contribution is dependent on the size and location of the development. RBC utilise the following triggers to inform when onsite provision is to be sought:

Play type	Triggers for onsite provision (based on number of dwellings)
LAP	10 dwellings
LEAP	50 dwellings
NEAP	100 dwellings

In some instances, if new provision cannot be sufficiently delivered onsite it is appropriate to seek to enhance the scale and quality of existing provision and/or improve access and linkages to existing sites in order to meet the additional need generated by the development. For example, a development may be located within proximity of an existing site. In such cases, particularly where the development only generates a small space requirement, it may be more appropriate for an off-site contribution to be made to improve or enhance the existing site.

To assist in this approach the following costs are identified:

Play type	Approximate cost by play type ⁸
LAP	£35,000
LEAP	£90,000
NEAP	£170,000

These are based on the average costings for a typical installation for each play type informed by recent local schemes. On this basis, the following cost per metre squared are calculated:

Play type	Minimum activity zone	Approximate cost per m ² ⁸
LAP	100m ²	£350
LEAP	400m ²	£225
NEAP	1000m ²	£170

These are intended to help inform the process; it is however important for each site to be calculated and designed in its own unique right.

Maintenance

Sums for the maintenance cost of a play site are intended to cover a period of **15** years. Based on existing practices it is estimated to be £1000 per annum for inspections and maintenance.

Timeframe	Approximate maintenance cost ⁸
Inspection and Maintenance Per annum	£1000
15-year period	£15,000

⁸ Subject to change based on changes in design, cost for materials, installation, annual inflation etc.

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APPENDIX A: FULL LIST OF SITES (LEAPS AND NEAPS)

ID	Site	Type	Analysis area
3	Cogley Lane Playground, Bingham	LEAP	Bingham
4	Grantham Road Play area, Bingham	LEAP	Bingham
5	Orchard Road Play Area	LEAP	Bingham
6	Play area North of Archers Lake, Bingham	LEAP	Bingham
7	Wychwood Road, Bingham	LEAP	Bingham
9	Rear of Costock Primary School	LEAP	Keyworth
10	Broad Meer Play Area, Cotgrave	LEAP	Cotgrave and Radcliffe
11	Grassmere Play Area, Cotgrave	LEAP	Cotgrave and Radcliffe
12	Hollygate Park, Harvest Drive, Cotgrave	LEAP	Cotgrave and Radcliffe
13	Ring Leas (East Moor) Play Area, Cotgrave	LEAP	Cotgrave and Radcliffe
14	The Precinct, Cotgrave	NEAP	Cotgrave and Radcliffe
15	Memorial Hall, Cropwell Bishop	LEAP	Bingham
16	Play Area off Hopewell St, Cropwell Bishop	LEAP	Bingham
18	Adj. Butt Field (Bowls Club), East Bridgford	NEAP	Bingham
19	Admiral Close, East Leake	LEAP	East Leake
20	Aldershot Trust play area, Costock Road, East Leake	LEAP	East Leake
21	Gotham Road, East Leake	NEAP	East Leake
22	Land off Falcon Way, East Leake	LEAP	East Leake
23	Woodgate Road, East Leake	LEAP	East Leake
24	Coney Grey Spinney, Flintham	LEAP	Bingham
25	Flintham Pavillion, Inholms Road	LEAP	Bingham
26	Ambleside Play Park, Gamston	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
27	Memorial Hall Rec. Ground, Gotham	LEAP	East Leake
29	Adbolton Lane Play Area, West Bridgford	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
30	Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
31	Bunny Rise - Play area off Lambert gardens	LEAP	Keyworth
32	Bunny Rise, land off Tyler Drive	LEAP	Keyworth
33	Keyworth Recreation Grounds, Nottingham Road	LEAP	Keyworth
34	Keyworth Skatepark, Platt Lane	Skatepark	Keyworth
35	Nickerhill Play area, Keyworth	LEAP	Keyworth
36	Spinners Croft Playpark, Keyworth	LEAP	Keyworth
38	Main Street/Rear Works Lane, Barnstone	LEAP	Bingham
39	RAF Newton Play area	LEAP	Bingham
43	Play area off Halam Drive, Radcliffe On Trent	LEAP	Cotgrave and Radcliffe
44	Wharf Lane Recreation Ground	NEAP	Cotgrave and Radcliffe

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RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ID	Site	Type	Analysis area
46	Land East of Loughborough Road, Ruddington	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
47	Land North of Marshall Drive, Ruddington	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
48	Play area south of Flawforth Lane, Ruddington	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
49	Rushcliffe Park Playground, Ruddington	NEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
51	Vicarage Lane, Ruddington	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
52	West Street, Shelford & Newton	LEAP	Bingham
53	Main Street, Sutton Bonington	LEAP	East Leake
54	Lothian Road Play Area, Tollerton	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
57	Community Park, Widmerpool Lane	LEAP	Keyworth
58	Wysall Village Hall, Main Street	LEAP	Keyworth
59	Alford Road Play Area, Edwalton	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
60	Boundary Road Play Area (Loughborough Road)	NEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
61	Bridge Field, Trent Bridge	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
64	Greythorn Drive Park, West Bridgford	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
65	Lady Bay Playground, Holme Road	NEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
66	Oak Tree Close, West Bridgford	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
67	Shalimar playground, Rose Way	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
68	West Bridgford Park Play Area, Central Avenue	NEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington
69	West Park, West Bridgford	LEAP	West Bridgford and Ruddington

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RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY AND PARISH SURVEYS QUESTIONS

Community Questionnaire

Which of the following play areas do you regularly visit?

Which of the following play areas do you regularly visit?

How often do you visit the site?

Is the site you regularly use the nearest play site to where you live?

How would you rate the site in terms of quality of equipment?

How would you rate the site in terms of range of equipment?

How would you rate the site in terms of quantity of equipment?

How would you rate the play areas surrounds, including fencing, paving, and access?

Is there anything else which would add value to the play sites you visit?

If you are registered disabled, or care for someone who is registered disabled, is the play equipment at the site inclusive for your needs?

If you have answered no, how can the equipment be improved?

Are there any barriers to access or enjoyment that have not been highlighted, if you used to visit a park but don't visit anymore?

In general, is there anything else you would like to add regarding play sites in Rushcliffe?

Parish Questionnaire

What Parish do you represent?

Which play areas fall within your Parish which the parish manages? (list more than one if applicable) (Drop down list of all sites)

How would you rate this site in terms of quality/quantity and range of equipment?

How would you rate the play areas surrounds, including fencing, paving, and access?

Is there anything else which would add value to the site?

Are there play areas within your parish/Town Council Area which are not managed or maintained by the Parish Council that are publicly accessible (i.e.) within management company ownership and management as part of a new housing development which have not been previously listed.

How would you rate these sites in terms of **quality/quantity/range** of equipment?

If you have highlighted any issues with the equipment at this site, how would you improve it?

PLAY STRATEGY REVIEW

RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPENDIX C: GENERAL DESIGN GUIDE PRINCIPLES FOR PLAY

The following are our principles to the design of play. These are based on the Fields in Trust National Playing Fields Association General Design Principles Guidance (6.1.9).

Play areas should be:

- Appropriate to the needs of the local community
- Accessible for every child within the appropriate walking time for LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs
- Accessible without having to cross main roads, railways or waterways
- Sited in open, welcoming locations with appropriate lighting (where applicable)
- Separated from areas of major vehicle movements and accessible directly from pedestrian routes and visible from nearby dwelling or well used pedestrian routes
- Sited on land of natural topography or on land capable of being landscaped for the type of play experience intended
- Designed in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 and Equalities Act 2010
- Designed so that any high climbing structures are as far as possible from nearby dwellings and any potential visual intrusion is minimised
- Integrated, as far as possible, with other open spaces and areas of amenity planting to provide separation from nearby dwellings
- Visible from nearby dwellings or well used pedestrian routes
- Accessible for footpath with surface
- Surfaced in manner fitting to the intensity of use
- Provided with seating accompanying adults, carers and siblings which promotes a variety of adaptable spaces for scaling, performing and fun.
- Ensure spaces are not dominated by one activity and provide several opportunities for play and physical activity. e. g. providing swings which allow for multiple users or installing interactive equipment.
- Designed to provide a sociable, stimulating and challenging play experience that may include equipment and other features providing opportunities for meeting friends, undertaking physical activity, imaginative play and expressing yourself or other activities.

Further guidance is also offered in the RBC Design Code Landscape (Section 4.5 focuses specifically on play).



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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Asset Investment Group Terms of Reference

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance,
Councillor D Viridi**

1. Purpose of report

To provide an update on governance regarding the Asset Investment Group (AIG) and that the AIG Terms of Reference (ToR) are refreshed along with the rationale for both the AIG and the associated ToR.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the Terms of Reference for the Asset Investment Group at paragraph 4.5.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure good governance is maintained in the acquisition of assets on behalf of the Council.

4. Supporting Information

4.1. The purpose of the Asset Investment Group (AIG) originally was to ensure 'fleet-of-foot' property decisions could be made, linked primarily to commercial decisions. This was linked to driving financial return to support the Council's budget. Subsequently CIPFA introduced rules to prohibit such investments, primarily stating Councils cannot borrow from the Public Works Loans Board if its Capital Programme includes asset acquisition where the prime intention is commercial return. Consequently, the Council has refrained from such asset investments and no longer has an Asset Investment Strategy, which was predicated on asset acquisition for commercial return.

4.2. The Council has always been mindful that there needs to be strict governance regarding both making and reporting on such decisions ie asset acquisition or disposal (and this is subject to the Council's Asset Acquisition and Disposal Policy). The Governance process surrounding asset acquisitions is summarised at Appendix A. The processes in place strike a balance so that 'fleet of foot' decisions can be taken with regards to asset acquisition, or disposal (via a business appraisal process); and that there is necessary accountability and transparency through either individual Cabinet reports on the

acquisition or retrospective Cabinet endorsement via the normal budget monitoring process. The Council's standard governance processes prevail. The reporting to Cabinet, Corporate Overview Group, Governance Scrutiny Group; and ultimately changes to the Capital Programme to Full Council, ensures there are checks and balances in the decision-making process.

- 4.3. Whilst the Council does no longer acquire assets for pure commercial reasons it may need to acquire assets for other reasons. A recent example is the potential acquisition of land for carbon offsetting and allocating funds for potential asset acquisition. Given £1.5m has been made available, the relatively small size of the fund means the requirement for such decisions will be infrequent. Furthermore the relatively high cost of land in Rushcliffe and availability of suitable land means opportunities are limited.
- 4.4. A key part of the process is the role of the AIG. The nature of asset availability is ad hoc, and opportunities can arise at any moment in time. Considering asset acquisition involves many factors, whether property focused, finance issues, and broader social, environmental and governance factors. Pertinently these involve confidential decisions due to both the commercial nature of making an 'offer' for the acquisition as well as the often-short time frame to make such offers. This requires both members of the Council's executive and necessary professional decision making by relevant officers, thus ensuring confidentiality, proper due diligence and expedient decision making.
- 4.5. To take account of the move away from acquisition for purely investment purposes, it is proposed that the broad Terms of Reference for the AIG are revised as follows:
 - Frequency of meetings are ad hoc, dependent on when opportunities for asset acquisition or disposal avail.
 - Membership of the Group is linked to executive and professional disciplines required. The core Group consists of the Leader, Chief Executive Officer, Portfolio Holders for both Finance and Property and also the Directors responsible for both Finance and Property.
 - A quorate of a minimum of four individuals (Two Councillors and two officers) is required for such decision making.
 - Asset appraisal reports are completed and input is likely from other professional disciplines in particular the Director for Neighbourhoods and the Council's Monitoring Officer (e.g. environmental and legal implications).
 - Any decisions taken will be reported to Cabinet and subject to any necessary scrutiny and the Council's finance and contract standing orders.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

The Council could decide not to have an Asset Investment Group but this would compromise its ability to effectively acquire future assets.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

- 6.1 Any asset investment requires proper asset appraisal to ensure property, environmental, finance and legal risks in particular are addressed. The AIG should ensure business cases are properly appraised and reported to Cabinet with any other necessary scrutiny. This should ensure proper transparency and accountability and that the investment meets the Council's corporate objectives.
- 6.2 A poor investment decision could lead to an increase in financial costs or not achieve its desired social and/or environmental value and a potential adverse impact on the Council's reputation.
- 6.3 Broader property and financial risks are balanced by portfolio diversification.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications. Any potential asset acquisition will have financial implications assessed.

7.2. Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications. Any potential asset acquisition will have its legal implications assessed.

7.3. Equalities Implications

There are no direct equalities implications.

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

There are no direct implications.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

Any BNG implications will be considered with any individual asset acquisition.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

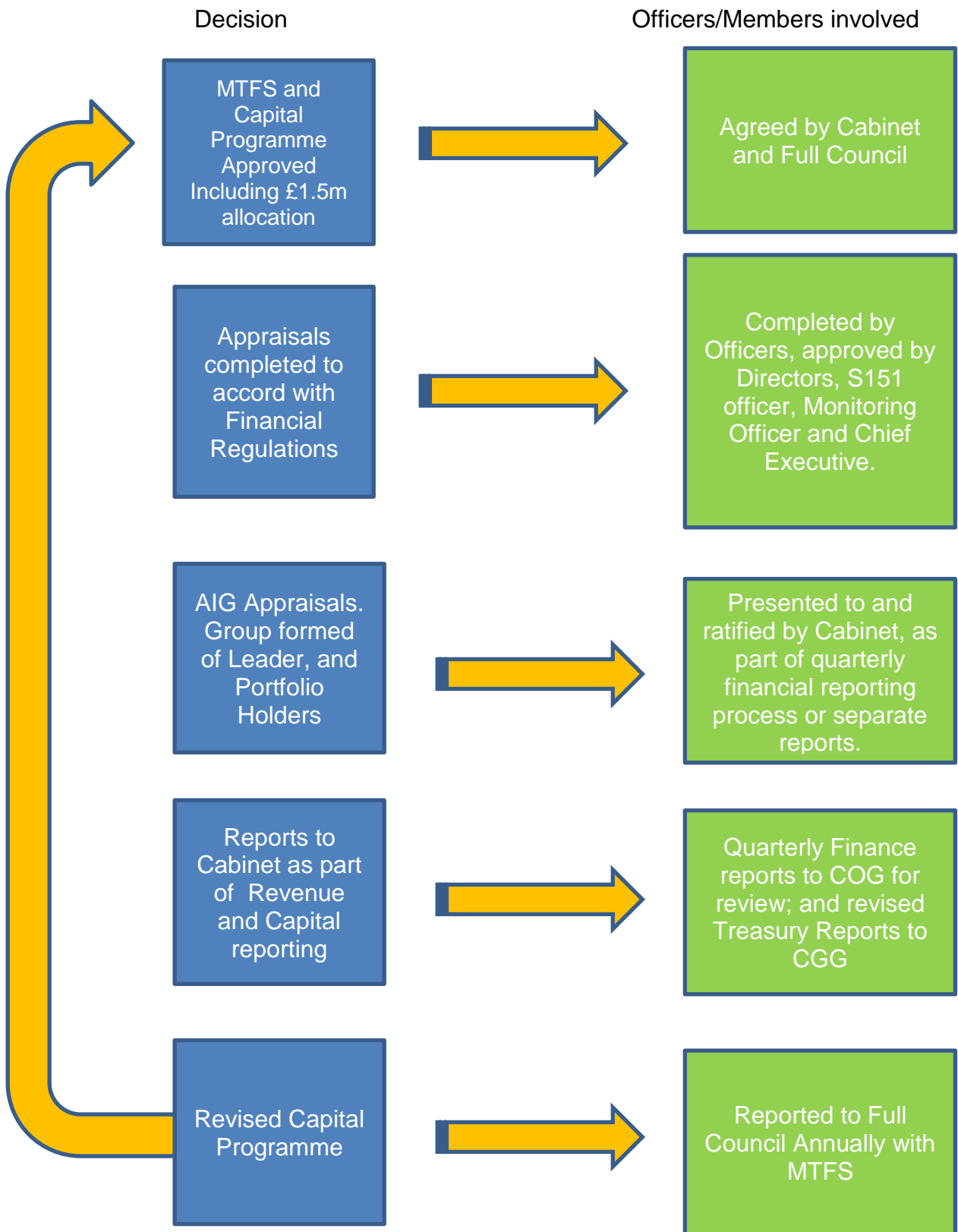
The Environment	Land acquired for carbon offsetting should improve the environment.
Quality of Life	There are no quality of life implications.
Efficient Services	Any acquisition has to be within the confines of the council's overall budget envelope.
Sustainable Growth	There are no sustainable growth implications.

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the Terms of Reference for the Asset Investment Group at paragraph 4.5.

For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Director – Finance and Corporate Services 0115 914 8439 plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Cabinet Report, 21 July 2015 Asset Investment Strategy 2015 – 2020
List of appendices:	Appendix A – Governance Arrangements for Asset Acquisition or Disposal

Governance Arrangements for Asset Acquisition or Disposal



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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 February 2025

Officer and Member Indemnity

Report of the Monitoring Officer and Head of Chief Executive's Department

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance – Councillor D Viridi

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report sets out arrangements for granting of indemnities to officers and Members to cover the risks of claims which may be made against them personally or other losses or liabilities they might incur when representing the Council on outside bodies or when carrying out special roles on behalf of the Council.
- 1.2. The aim for providing the indemnity is that officers and Members should not be deterred from seeking public office or participating in outside bodies or carrying out special roles by the personal liability they might incur while acting on behalf of the Council.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the grant of an indemnity for officers and Members at Appendix 1 of this report.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure Members and officers have appropriate protection from personal liability in relation to Council's appointments and positions. Failure to indemnify Members and officers may result in individuals being reluctant to work for or with or be appointed to outside bodies or other external organisations if there is a potential associated personal liability

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. The Council regularly nominates elected Members and officers to a number of outside bodies, which can include private companies and charitable organisations or trusts. Council Members and officers act as directors, trustees, members of the management committees of outside bodies and/or otherwise play an active role in the affairs of the body in question, often because such bodies' constitutions require the Council to nominate officers or Members to act in such capacities or to ensure there is Council representation on outside bodies.

- 4.2. Those who act as directors, trustees or members of management committee may owe various statutory duties and/or fiduciary responsibilities to the outside body(ies) in question. For example, a company's director owes a duty to the company which he/she is a director, and a trustee has the fiduciary responsibility and liability to use the trust assets according to the provisions of the trust instrument. In certain, very limited circumstances, they may be personally liable for the debts of the bodies on which they serve, or in relation to third party claims brought against those bodies. In the case of a limited company, they may be personally liable for the company's business liabilities and be fined, prosecuted or disqualified as a company director if they do not discharge their directors' responsibilities.
- 4.3. Company directors, trustees or members of the management committee can generally avoid personal liability by being careful to take appropriate professional advice before making decisions and/or by hiring other people to manage some of their responsibilities on a day-to-day basis for example, an accountant may file a company tax return. However, officers and Members acting as such remain legally responsible for the discharge of their duties
- 4.4. The risk of personal liability may deter potentially suitable candidates from seeking election to the Council or seeking appointment to responsible posts supported by the Council because of concerns over possible personal liabilities. This report therefore recommends that the Council gives an indemnity in respect of such risks as it lawfully may to both officers and Members. This is common practice by many local authorities.
- 4.5. It is proposed that the Cabinet approves the indemnity at Appendix 1 to this report to ensure the Council has a formal written indemnity adopted for clarity for both Members and officers. The proposed wording makes clear that the indemnity would not apply to deliberate or reckless breaches of trust, nor any deliberate wrongdoing or recklessness. For the avoidance of doubt, the indemnity would not apply in respect of Members or officers serving on outside bodies in their private capacities. Examples of recent officer and councillor involvement with outside bodies includes the Development Corporation and the East Midlands Freeport.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

Not to provide the indemnity. Failure to do so may result in individual officers and members not being covered for personal liabilities arising from their conduct or decisions when acting on behalf of or pursuant to any appointment agreed by the Council in circumstances where they would otherwise be covered by the indemnity, as set out in the report. Failure to indemnify officers and Members may result in individuals being reluctant to work for or with or be appointed to outside bodies or other external organisations if there is a potential associated personal liability.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

Providing the indemnity proposed will allow the Members and officers to undertake their roles and responsibilities fully, and in the knowledge that they will not incur personal, civil and criminal liability whilst acting on behalf of the Council. This will provide comfort to both Members and officers when undertaking their roles and responsibilities.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

Reliance on the indemnity is likely to be rare but could have significant consequences if a claim were made. The Council has Officials Indemnity insurance which covers legal liability for negligent acts, accidental errors or omissions committed in good faith by Council Members, officials or employees in relation to Council business. This has a maximum limit of £5m. In the remote scenario that an issue arose and exceeded this limit or there was a breach in policy conditions that invalidated the policy then Council Reserves would be called upon.

7.2. Legal Implications

7.2.1 Where Members and officers act within their own local authority, within their powers and acting in good faith, they have statutory immunity against personal liability under Section 265 of the Public Health Act 1875 (as amended by Section 39 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976). This covers any civil liabilities and costs associated with such liabilities that may be incurred but does not afford protection where other than Council business is being conducted and therefore does not apply where they act on outside bodies and in the circumstances set out in this report.

7.2.2 Local authorities in England can provide an indemnity to its Members and officers under the Section 111(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004. The Order permits local authorities to provide an indemnity for personal liabilities incurred by Members and officers when acting on behalf of their authority.

7.2.3 The Order restricts the provision of indemnities so that they cannot enjoy cover for any finding of criminal liability or liability arising from fraud, deliberate wrongdoing, recklessness, or the cost of pursuing a defamation claim.

7.2.4 This statutory power and the proposed indemnity at Appendix 1 seek to remedy the injustice that would otherwise occur if a Member or officer engaged in Council business incurred personal liability for legal costs.

7.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications as a result of this report as the indemnity will apply equally to all elected Members and officers. The protection afforded by the indemnity may encourage individuals to stand for office who would be deterred by the risk of personal liability.

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

None identified.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

None identified.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	The recommendations in this report support the functions and administration of the Council which in turn contributes towards the Council's Corporate Priorities.
Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the grant of an indemnity for officers and Members at Appendix 1 of this report.

For more information contact:	Sara Pregon Monitoring Officer and Head of Chief Executive's Department 0115 914 8480 spregon@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Indemnity

INDEMNITY FOR OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF
RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. Rushcliffe Borough Council (“the Council”) confirms it indemnifies its employees (“Officers”) and elected members, co-opted members, independent members and independent persons (“Members”), against any costs, claims or expenses (“Costs”), subject to the conditions set out below, where such Costs arise from activities carried out on behalf of the Council where the Member or Officer was acting in good faith and honestly believed that the act or omission complained of was within their power and that their duty as a Member or Officer or (in the case of functions exercised otherwise than in the capacity of Member or Council employee) performer of the function in question with the approval or at the request or for the purposes of the Council, required or entitled them to do or omit to do it. Such Indemnity shall apply to any liability of any Member or Officer acting as the Council’s representative or nominee on an outside body and to any Officer who in connection with their employment with the Council provides an administrative, technical, professional or other service to any person or body outside the Council on behalf of or on instruction of the Council.
2. The indemnity is effective to the extent that the Officer or Member in question:
 - a) having not received advice from an officer to the contrary, believed that the action, or failure to act, was within the powers of the Council; or
 - b) where the action or failure comprises the issuing or authorisation of any document containing any statement as to the powers of the Council, or any statement that certain steps have been taken or requirements fulfilled, believed that the contents of that statement were true

PROVIDED ALWAYS THAT it was reasonable for that Officer or Member to hold that belief at the time when he or she acted or failed to act.

3. The Costs are those which arise from, or in connection with, any action of, or failure to act by, the Officer or Member in question, which:
 - a) is or has been authorised by the Council; or
 - b) forms part of, or arises from, any powers conferred, or duties placed, upon that Officer or Member, as a consequence of any function being exercised by that Officer or Member (whether or not when exercising that function he or she does so in his or her capacity as an Officer or Member of the Council) at the request of, or with the approval of, the Council.

4. The Council will not provide an indemnity in the following circumstances:
 - a) Where any action or failure to act on the part of any Officer or Member:

- (i) constitutes a criminal offence (except where the criminal offence is an offence under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974 or relevant statutory provisions within the meaning of that Act in which case the indemnity will continue to apply); or
 - (ii) is the result of fraud, or other deliberate wrongdoing or recklessness on the part of that Officer or Member; or
 - (iii) is a failure by the Member to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members or a failure by the Officer to comply with the Code of Conduct for Officers.
- b) This indemnity will not extend to any advice or representation in respect of any claim or threatened claim in defamation to be brought by a Member or an Officer.
- c) The indemnity will not cover any loss or expense for which the Member or Officer can obtain re-imbusement from any other source, including insurance, whether taken out by the Council, Member or Officer, or by any other person.

5. Decisions on the granting of all indemnities:

- a) The Director for Finance and Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer) has delegated authority to make decisions on the granting of indemnities and in the case of a requirement of an indemnity for the Director for Finance and Corporate Services, this will be granted by the Monitoring Officer.
- b) The indemnity is subject to the Officer or Member notifying the Council's Director for Finance and Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer) and Monitoring Officer immediately of any claim being made or intimated against him or her, and of any circumstances arising which may give rise to a claim.
- c) The indemnity will only extend to cover actual loss and expense incurred and evidenced by the Officer or Member to the satisfaction of the Director for Finance and Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer) and Monitoring Officer.
- d) The indemnity will not automatically apply if the Officer or Member without the written authority of the Director for Finance and Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer) or Monitoring Officer and the Council's insurers, as appropriate, admits liability or negotiates or attempts to negotiate a settlement of any claim falling within the scope of this indemnity.
- e) The indemnity shall not extend to any loss or damage directly or indirectly arising from any motor vehicle claims in which an Officer or Member using his or her own private vehicle on the Council's business has been involved in an accident.

- f) The Council or its insurers will be entitled to take over and conduct in the name of the Officer or Member the defence of any proceedings brought against the Officer or Member.
- 6. This indemnity is without prejudice to the rights of the Council to take disciplinary action against an officer in respect of any act or failure to act.
- 7. This indemnity applies retrospectively to any act or failure to act which may have occurred before this date and shall continue to apply after the Member or Officer has ceased to be a Member or Officer of the Council for any acts or omissions which took place at a time when they were a Member or Officer of the Council.

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