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Direct dial 0115 914 8320
Email democraticservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: Wednesday, 14 May 2025

To all Members of the Council

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday, 22 May 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

Moment of Reflection

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest

[Link to further information in the Council's Constitution](#)

3. Minutes of the Meetings held on 6 March and 20 March 2025 (Pages 1 - 24)

To receive as a correct record the minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on Thursday, 6 March and 20 March 2025.

4. Address of the retiring Mayor
5. Vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor

Email:
customerservices
@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Telephone:
0115 981 9911

www.rushcliffe.gov.uk

Postal address
Rushcliffe Borough
Council
Rushcliffe Arena
Rugby Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7YG

6. Election of Mayor 2025/26

To consider nominations for the appointment of Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the 2025/26 Civic Year.

After the vote on the election of Mayor has been carried, the new Mayor, upon making the declaration of acceptance of office, will take the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

7. Election of Deputy Mayor 2025/26

To consider nominations for the appointment of Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the 2025/26 Civic Year.

8. Leader's Announcements

9. Chief Executive's Announcements

10. Appointments of Committees and Member Groups 2025/26 (Pages 25 - 42)

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

11. Approval of Timetable of Meetings 2025/26 (Pages 43 - 46)

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

12. Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies 2025/26 (Pages 47 - 52)

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

Membership

Chair: Councillor A Brown

Vice-Chair: Councillor J Cottee

Councillors: M Barney, J Billin, T Birch, R Bird, A Brennan, R Butler, S Calvert, J Chaplain, K Chewings, N Clarke, T Combellack, S Dellar, A Edyvean, S Ellis, G Fletcher, M Gaunt, E Georgiou, P Gowland, C Grocock, R Inglis, R Mallender, S Mallender, D Mason, P Matthews, H Om, H Parekh, A Phillips, L Plant, D Polenta, N Regan, D Simms, D Soloman, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, J Walker, R Walker, L Way, T Wells, G Wheeler, J Wheeler and G Williams

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

National legislation permits 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 COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 6 MARCH 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 A Brown (Chair), M Barney, J Billin, T Birch, R Bird, A Brennan, R Butler, S Calvert, J Chaplain, K Chewings, N Clarke, T Combellack, S Dellar, A Edyvean, S Ellis, G Fletcher, M Gaunt, E Georgiou, C Grocock, R Inglis, R Mallender, S Mallender, D Mason, H Om, H Parekh, A Phillips, L Plant, D Polenta, N Regan, D Soloman, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, J Walker, R Walker, L Way, T Wells, G Wheeler, J Wheeler and G Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
D Banks	Director of Neighbourhoods
A Hill	Chief Executive
P Linfield	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
S Pregon	Monitoring Officer
E Richardson	Democratic Services Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager
S Whittaker	Head of Finance

APOLOGIES:

Councillors J Cottee, P Gowland, P Matthews and D Simms

48 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

49 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 December 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 5 December 2024 were approved as a true record and signed by the Mayor.

50 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor welcomed Adam Hill as the new Chief Executive and informed Council that he had attended 20 events since the last meeting, including many Christmas events, and he thanked Councillors for attending his Carol Service. He had enjoyed visiting staff and helping to serve Christmas dinner at the Friary on Christmas Day. The Mayor referred to his visit to Rainbows Hospice with Councillor Brennan, where they presented a cheque for £11,600, which had been collected by Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium, with the kind permission

of relatives from the proceeds of recycling metal. He concluded by thanking Kerie Mooney for her successful skydive in aid of his charity last weekend.

51 Leader's Announcements

The Leader also welcomed Adam Hill and confirmed that discussions on Local Government Reorganisation continued, with an Extraordinary Council meeting scheduled for 20 March 2025 to consider an interim list of proposals, with work then continuing to produce the main submission by the end of November 2025.

52 Chief Executive's Announcements

The Chief Executive thanked everyone for the warm welcome he had received and stated that he was looking forward to working with Councillors going forward.

53 Citizens' Questions

The Mayor invited Mr Bear to read his question as submitted:

“Please will the Council review their decision to reduce the period from two years to one year before empty properties become assessable to double Council Tax from 1 April 2024, and exclude properties which have been or are genuinely being marketed for sale or are being repaired following, for example fire or flood?”

Councillor Virdi thanked Mr Bear for his question and advised that in November 2024 a new statutory instrument was approved, which would be active from 1 April 2025, updating previous legislation and the policy approved by Full Council last year. The updated legislation related to exceptions when the premium should only be applied after 12 months, which included actively marketing a property for sale or let, following probate, or if a property was deemed uninhabitable. In the case of a property being uninhabitable, it was feasible a property that had a severe fire or flood could have the exception applied. Furthermore, if properties were severely damaged, an individual could ask the Valuation Office to remove the property from Council Tax, and Councillor Virdi advised that this avenue had been available before 1 April 2024. Regarding properties for sale, the Government had introduced the exception for 12 months, which was considered reasonable to sell properties, and the premium applied thereafter. This was effectively the same policy the Council had in place from 1 April 2024, was consistent with current Government legislation and perfectly reasonable. The legislation was one of the ways that the Council could encourage properties to be occupied rather than empty, and this was endorsed by the Communities Scrutiny Group on 20 July 2023. Councillor Virdi confirmed that for the reasons stated, the Council would not be increasing the period to apply the empty homes premium from one year to two years from 1 April 2024.

54 Petitions

No petitions were presented at this meeting.

55 Business form last Council meeting

Question from Councillor Gaunt to Councillor Combellack.

“Please can I find out the total number of scrutiny matrices that were submitted by Councillors in the past 12 months for the consideration of the scrutiny panel, versus the number of scrutiny matrices that actually made it to the Corporate Overview Group meetings for consideration?”

Councillor Combellack advised that a full breakdown of requests was provided to the Corporate Overview Group last week and this question could have been avoided being asked. Councillor Combellack confirmed that 17 requests were made, of which six were taken forward, seven rejected by the Group and four responded to separately, having either been considered previously, or not requiring full scrutiny, by being addressed by another forum. She stated that one of her requests had not been accepted, if any proof was needed regarding the objectivity of the process.

Councillor Gaunt asked a supplementary question to Councillor Combellack.

“Could training be provided on how to fill in the paperwork correctly to ensure that the criteria is met?”....

Councillor Combellack stated that the breakdown of requests and actions was a matter of record and she and officers would be happy to discuss the matter further, and Councillors could request to attend Corporate Overview Group.

56 2025/26 Budget and Financial Strategy

The Mayor advised that it was proposed that the speaking times be extended to permit the mover of the report 15 minutes to speak on the matter, and to allow 7 ½ minutes for the seconder and other Group Leaders and this was agreed by Council.

The Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Clarke MBE presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Council’s Budget and Financial Strategy for 2025/26.

The Leader stated that all councils continued to face financial pressures; however, Rushcliffe continued improving its services, with a virtually balanced budget over five years, including up to date, signed off Financial Statements, with excellent governance, which was the backbone of any well run local authority. The Leader referred to the hard work undertaken to produce the budget, ensuring that the Council had a commercial culture, generated financial efficiencies and was forward looking. Council noted that Government funding this year was much lower, with Core Spending Power only increasing by 0.9% compared to 6.8% nationally, and with inflation running at 2%, this was a cut in overall funding, resulting in the Council having to raise revenue to fund services. The Leader expressed pride that Rushcliffe continued to have the lowest Council Tax in Nottinghamshire and remained amongst the lowest 25% in the country and felt that the Special Expenses precept for West

Bridgford, compared to other areas remained excellent value.

The Leader referred to the Council's Transformation and Efficiency Plan, which would deliver £1.7m over five years and whilst acknowledging some charges were increasing, he felt that they remained competitive. The Capital Programme remained substantial with £27.1m budgeted over five years, including a continued range of investments across the Borough as detailed in Section 9.2 of the Capital Programme, and he confirmed that reserves remained sound.

The Leader referred to the Commentary of the S151 Officer, which confirmed that the Council was not at risk of requiring exceptional financial support. The Leader advised that going forward significant challenges lay ahead, including Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), together with the impending comprehensive review on local government finances, and uncertainty regarding various Government grants. The Leader confirmed that Rushcliffe was in a relatively healthy financial position compared to many other councils and continued to provide excellent value for money to its residents. The Leader concluded by thanking Councillors, in particular Councillor Viridi and the Director – Finance and Corporate Services and the Finance Team for their continued hard work during such challenging times.

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

Councillor J Walker thanked officers for their continued support and stated that being a successful council was more than just having a balanced budget, it was an opportunity to act with confidence to future proof the organisation. As demands for funding increased, she was concerned that with the Council now looking to identify major assets for disposal, they could be lost to future generations. Councillor Walker stated that the Council needed to re-engage with the principles behind the budget, allowing residents to understand the necessity of taxation, whilst focusing on those dependant on the Council's intervention. She referred to the importance of thinking strategically and questioned if making saving on the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs) now was prudent. Councillor Walker referred to the importance of maintaining trust with residents, which could only be achieved with transparency and honesty.

She referred to the proposed amendment to increase the DFG budget, and reiterated concerns made last year regarding Rushcliffe's unwillingness to consider having Council owned social housing. Councillor Walker referred to the LGR and stated that if district councils disappeared, West Bridgford would be left without any representation and the second proposed amendment to have a Community Governance Review (CGR) would bring the issue into the public forum and offer a solution.

Councillor Gaunt seconded the amended recommendation and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Thomas thanked officers, stated that the Group fully supported the first proposed amendment and felt that despite the lack of Government funding, Rushcliffe was affluent enough to afford this, and she also agreed that it was time for West Bridgford to have its own Town Council. Councillor Thomas

referred to the allocation of £70k for 'Welcome to Rushcliffe' signs and whilst she supported promoting the Borough, she questioned if this was good value for money and suggested that the money be reallocated.

Councillor R Mallender also supported the proposed amendments and agreed that whilst West Bridgford had a Local Area Forum, it was not a Town Council, and given the uncertainties surrounding LGR it was important to consult local residents through a CGR.

Councillor Birch thanked officers and stated that he could see no coherent ideology underpinning this budget, as it was raising taxes, draining reserves, increasing garden waste collection fees, and car parking, which would impact businesses, and he noted that there was no money budgeted for a new car park in Bingham. Councillor Birch referred to Council Tax and clarified that Rushcliffe's element amounted to 6%, and if the rest of the Council Tax was factored in, Rushcliffe was in the top 5% in the UK and the highest in Nottinghamshire. Councillor Birch stated that Rushcliffe was an affluent Borough, which brought great advantages, including a large tax base with lower overheads. Councillor Birch stated that he supported the amendment and agreed that it was important for West Bridgford to have its own Town Council.

In supporting the proposed budget, Councillor J Wheeler reiterated that Rushcliffe's Council Tax was the lowest in the county, despite reductions in Government funding and Rushcliffe was still investing over £27m in services, whilst remaining debt free. Councillor Wheeler confirmed that businesses continued to be supported, with car parking prices balanced to encourage turnover, and he also welcomed the investment in leisure. He felt that having a CGR would not be cost effective for local residents and that the current arrangement should remain, especially whilst LGR was being considered.

Councillor Upton referred to DFG and confirmed that the Council had a good track record of providing grants, although demand was currently outstripping the grant, with Rushcliffe receiving less money than any other district. Councillor Upton referred to the response to his letter from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirming that the Government was keeping DFG funding under review. It was noted that Rushcliffe had allocated an additional £700k over the last three years; however, a change to the Government grant formula was required. Councillor Upton confirmed that more Government funding had recently been allocated, and that districts would 'pool' and redistribute uncommitted DFG funds. He stated that rather than supporting the proposed amendment, the Council's focus should be on getting more Government funding and he also felt that it was too risky for the Council to rebuild its own housing stock.

Councillor Polenta stated that the budget should reflect community values and was a moral statement, with the proposed amendment fulfilling the principle that public services must meet public needs, with accessibility as a right. Many disabled residents struggled to stay in their own homes, being unable to pay for adaptations and she felt that all new developments should be made accessible from the outset. Councillor Polenta supported a CGR as West Bridgford's residents deserved a direct say, and a Town Council would strengthen local

democracy and she felt that overall, Council's should engage more when setting budgets.

Councillor Grocock reminded Council that accessible housing had been discussed by a joint meeting of the Communities and Growth and Development Scrutiny Groups last October, when it had been agreed to ask other councils to redistribute any unspent funds. Councillor Grocock felt that the Council needed to be more ambitious, including making savings from elsewhere, and not doing so was a political choice, which disproportionately impacted the most vulnerable. Councillor Grocock felt that it would be better for the Council to build its own housing stock and that a Feasibility Study should be undertaken to look at the information considered by the two scrutiny groups.

Councillor Calvert supported a CGR as it was appropriate for residents to have a say in local issues, through a decision making body. He felt that current Borough Council consultation was sporadic, there was limited local consultation on the Special Expenses precept and given LGR, this issue needed to be looked at urgently.

Councillor Chaplain also questioned the effectiveness of the Council's consultation process, specifically regarding the pedestrianisation of Central Avenue and that it would be appropriate to consult residents now, to explain what LGR would involve. Councillor Chaplain referred to the benefits gained by the Council in holding large amounts of S106 and CIL monies, questioned why funds available for affordable housing and in the Climate Change Reserve had not been used, and that by holding onto developer contributions, the Council was remaining debt free by failing to provide vital infrastructure.

Councillor S Mallender thanked officers and stated that it was better to raise Council Tax, to produce strong social benefits and help the most deserving. She agreed that it would be better for the Council to have its own housing stock and that West Bridgford should also have its own Town Council.

Councillor Brennan stated that the Council was doing a tremendous amount to support businesses through its first Economic Growth Strategy, which focused on attracting and supporting businesses, by encouraging investment and skills. The Strategy focused on tourism, and Councillor Brennan felt that more could be done to promote the Borough, as it was important to let people know where that they were, and to encourage them to support local businesses. She confirmed that considerable consultation had already taken place regarding pedestrianisation in West Bridgford, and any plans needed to be feasible before consulting with the public. Councillor Brennan stated that she was unaware of any of the Council's assets being disposed of, as investment continued and she was proud of this prudent budget, which continued to attract businesses.

Councillor R Walker advised that a CGR would be automatically triggered if a petition had sufficient signatures and suggested that this would be the best approach.

In supporting the budget, Councillor Parekh referred to the excellent facilities enjoyed by residents in West Bridgford and felt that a Town Council was

unnecessary as the current system worked well.

Councillor Way stated that people were currently suffering because their homes were not adapted and action was needed and she agreed that West Bridgford should have a Town Council, especially given the uncertainty surrounding LGR.

Councillor Chewings stated that the budget would burden residents without delivering real value by increasing taxes and raiding reserves. He stated that the financial outlook was grim, and rather than securing stability, this budget relied on uncertainty, with missed placed spending priorities and he questioned increasing car parking charges. He supported the proposed amendment to increase DFGs, hoped that Government funding would increase, but felt that vulnerable residents were trapped by the Council's decision not to restore discretionary DFG. Councillor Chewings also supported bringing local authority housing back under the Council's control but could not support spending money on a CGR and encouraged residents to push for a Town Council.

Councillor G Wheeler thanked officers, expressed concern that the two proposed amendments, if agreed would add to officers' workloads, reiterated that the Council was investing in its assets and that increasing West Bridgford's Special Expenses made no sense.

Councillor Om referred to the significant investment being undertaken throughout the Borough, whilst remaining debt free and supported the budget.

Councillor Plant thanked officers, expressed concern regarding proposed cuts, together with increased car parking fees in West Bridgford, which she felt would impact the majority of users and that increased charges for green waste bins would impact on collection rates. Councillor Plant felt that the three yearly Residents Survey was not an accurate indicator of satisfaction rates and believed that many residents would be willing to pay more Council Tax for better services, which would improve those rates.

Councillor Regan confirmed that the Conservative Group supported the rights of residents to live comfortably in their homes; however, he felt that there were better ways to address the DFG issue.

Councillor Ellis referred to the challenging economic times and stated that he would be supporting this sensible budget, which secured the Council's finances.

Councillor Gaunt thanked everyone involved, confirming that the two proposed amendments had been costed by the Finance Team. He acknowledged comments about setting up a petition but felt that given the urgency, a CGR was the best approach to address the democratic deficit in West Bridgford and that the first amendment would help those most in need.

Councillor J Walker stated that there was a common thread in the two amendments to help the most vulnerable and residents in West Bridgford and she felt that the CGR would cost very little in real terms, and if residents were told, she thought that they would find it acceptable. In respect of potentially

selling assets, she confirmed that this was referred to in the report.

Councillor Virdi agreed that this Council was future proofing itself and continued to effectively manage its finances, with a small increase in Council Tax, which recognised the cost of living for residents, and he felt that aspects of the alternative budget were too risky. Councillor Virdi stated that the Council did not rely on the New Homes Bonus (NHB), rather it made prudent, commercial decisions, and had an effective Transformation and Efficiency Plan. Reference had been made to raising taxes and reducing reserves, which was necessary to produce a balanced budget. Councillor Virdi agreed that the Borough had many high value properties; however, residents expected high quality services and the rural nature of the Borough resulted in additional costs and less Business Rates income, with Rushcliffe seventh in the county for overall funding. In respect of reserves, the majority was S106 monies, with the rest carefully earmarked, and the budget was a result of diligent decision making, with the Council investing in its assets rather than selling them. Councillor Virdi reiterated that Rushcliffe did have the lowest Council Tax in the county, was debt free, investing in services and prudently using reserves to provide stability.

The Leader thanked the Labour Group for bringing the amendment and confirmed that no major assets had been identified for disposal. He reiterated that Rushcliffe continued to have the lowest Council Tax in the county, and decisions made by the County Council were not relevant to this Council's decision. The Leader questioned the timing for a CGR, given that consultation on LGR would be taking place this summer. The Leader concluded by reiterating that as the Council was financially well managed, it missed out on funding, and he was proud that the Council remained debt free, with a virtually balanced budget over five years, whilst identifying money from reserves for relevant projects and he reiterated his thanks to officers.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken for this item as follows:

FOR: Councillors M Barney, A Brennan, A Brown, R Butler, N Clarke, T Combellack, A Edyvean, S Ellis, E Georgiou, R Inglis, D Mason, H Om, H Parekh, A Phillips, N Regan, D Solomon, R Upton, D Virdi, R Walker, T Wells, D Wheeler, J Wheeler and G Williams

AGAINST: Councillors J Billin, T Birch, R Bird, S Calvert, J Chaplain, K Chewings, S Dellar, G Fletcher, M Gaunt, C Grocock, R Mallender, S Mallender, L Plant, D Polenta, C Thomas, J Walker and L Way

It was RESOLVED that Council:

- a) accepts the report of the Council's Responsible Financial Officer on the robustness of the Council's budget and the adequacy of reserves (as detailed at attached Annex A);
- b) adopts the budget setting report and associated financial strategies 2025/26 to 2029/30 (attached Annex B) including changes to fees and

- charges regarding garden waste and car parking (Annex B, Appendix 5);
- c) adopts the Transformation and Efficiency Plan (at Annex B, Appendix 7);
- d) adopts the Capital Programme (as set out in Annex B, Appendix 3);
- e) adopts the Capital and Investment Strategy (at Annex B, Appendix 8);
- f) 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%);
- g) 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 £64.84 (£59.44 in 2024/25)
 - ii) Keyworth £3.21 (£4.69 in 2024/25)
 - iii) Ruddington £3.14 (£3.29 in 2024/25);
- h) with regards to recommendations f) and g), sets the associated Bands in accordance with the formula in section 36(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992; and
- i) adopts the Pay Policy Statement (at Annex B, Appendix 6).

Councillor Barney left the meeting at 9.27pm.

57 **Council Tax Resolution 2025/26**

The Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Clarke presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Council's position on Council Tax for the year 2025/26.

The Leader advised that this was a technical process to set the Council Tax and moved the recommendation as detailed in the report.

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

Councillor Polenta reiterated that the Labour Group's priority was to provide public services to meet social needs, rather than balancing the books, and she felt that Council Tax was outdated, punishing those on the lowest income, as it failed to reflect the housing market and needed reform. The system punished areas with low property values, forcing Councils to set higher rates to fund basic services, and she believed that a fairer model of local taxation was required, and at the very least Council Tax bands should be revalued to challenge this injustice.

Councillor Birch was concerned about tax communication to residents and felt that Rushcliffe should be communicating more clearly what each council was responsible for and requested that his vote against this be recorded.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Viridi confirmed that he was in favour of positive communications and that officers would continue to consider communications.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council Tax Resolution for 2025/26 as detailed in [Appendix A](#) to the report be approved.

Councillor Birch voted against the recommendation.

58 **Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan**

The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Housing, Councillor Roger Upton, presented the report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth regarding Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan.

Councillor Upton stated that since the Council meeting in September 2024, some important issues had required changes to be made, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the deadline for publishing the revised draft Plan with the updated housing targets, and the removal of all reference to Gedling Borough Council, following its decision to withdraw from the Partnership.

Councillor Upton explained that transitional arrangements were published on 12 December, which meant that the Plan could not be taken forward without making revisions to its proposed housing targets. The Council would now need to meet 80% of the Government's annual housing target, resulting in an increase of 600 homes over the time period, as set out in Table 1 of the report, with Table 2 confirming that the new target would not exceed the Council's existing housing supply, which Councillor Upton believed still provided sufficient protection to maintain a five year land supply. Council noted that if the 12 March deadline for publication was not met then a substantially revised or a new local Plan would need to be prepared. Councillor Upton referred to the revised Plan, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, confirming that it had been prepared following significant public consultation, and considered by the cross party Local Development Forum (LDF) Group, which had recently unanimously supported it. Councillor Upton reiterated that if the Plan was not supported, it would be unable to proceed in its current form, and the Council would be without a Plan and at risk of speculative, unplanned housing development. If approved, the Plan would be subject to a further six week public consultation, followed by a public examination, with potential adoption in the autumn of 2026.

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

In supporting the recommendation, Councillor Calvert reminded Council that the Labour Group had previously voted in favour of the publication of the draft Plan, and not its wholesale approval, and as part of the consultation, whilst it supported the partnership approach, it was disappointed that some areas had not participated. The Group also supported having closer coordination to pool expertise and having the design and layout of the site for the Gamston and North of Tollerton allocation determined by a Master Plan and Design Code.

There was support for the Policy regarding housing mix, together with a suggestion for a new policy to increase the percentage of affordable homes in the Borough and the Group recommended some transport infrastructure schemes.

Councillor Way thanked officers, stating that the Plan needed to be adopted, to avoid having to start again, and that it was incumbent on the Council to do as much as it could to ensure that the Borough remained a good place to live.

Councillor Chewings thanked officers and clarified that the LDF Group had endorsed the Plan to come to Full Council and not its content and felt that this presented an opportunity to reconsider allocated housing sites. He reiterated his disappointment about the removal of Tollerton Airfield due its vital role in the community and questioned if the impact on the Air Ambulance had been assessed. Councillor Chewings objected to housing numbers dictating the Borough's planning future and advised that he could not support this flawed Plan, and he requested that a recorded vote be taken.

It was proposed by Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Brennan and **RESOLVED** by Councillors that the meeting be extended and would finish no later than 10.30pm.

Councillor R Mallender referred to possible contamination on the airfield site, which developers would need to investigate. He noted the considerable time spent to reach this point and felt that the Plan should go out to consultation, where suggestions to remove proposed sites could be made.

The Leader advised that it would not be possible to remove specific areas from the Plan, as it would then fail and the time to raise those issues would be at the Inquiry. The Leader confirmed that the Council was in discussions with the Air Ambulance regarding future arrangements, and in the meantime the developers had granted an extension of time.

Councillor Thomas suggested that the issue of potential contamination on the airfield site be looked at as part of the process in recommendation d) of the report.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Butler reiterated thanks to officers and the LDF Group, referred to the many years it had taken to reach this point, confirming that the Council must have a Plan and expressing his disappointment that Gedling Borough Council had withdrawn. He welcomed the consultation, and hoped everyone would respond, and stated that the Plan related to provision of essential infrastructure and services, as well as housing, and without a Plan, speculative development could take place.

Councillor Upton reiterated that this was a long process and to the necessity of approving the Plan tonight, and he confirmed that the time to raise issues about specific sites would be at the Inquiry.

In accordance with Standing Order Paragraph 4.23, a recorded vote was taken for this item as follows:

FOR: Councillors, J Billin, R Bird, A Brennan, A Brown, R Butler, S Calvert, J Chaplain, N Clarke, T Combellack, S Dellar, A Edyvean, S Ellis, G Fletcher, M Gaunt, E Georgiou, C Grocock, R Inglis, R Mallender, S Mallender, D Mason, H Om, H Parekh, A Phillips, L Plant, D Polenta, N Regan, D Soloman, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, J Walker, R Walker, L Way, T Wells, G Wheeler, J Wheeler, and G Williams

AGAINST: Councillors T Birch and K Chewings

It was **RESOLVED** that Council:

- a) approved the withdrawal of the previous Regulation 19 Publication Draft of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, which was published on 4 November 2024;
- b) approved the revised Regulation 19 Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and revised Policies Map Changes document, in so far as they relate to Rushcliffe Borough, and agrees to their publication for a six week public representation period;
- c) agreed that, following the representation period, the revised Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, revised Policies Map Changes document, all supporting documents and all representations received be submitted for public examination; and
- d) delegated authority to the Director – Development and Economic Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to make any minor editing changes to the revised Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan prior to its publication.

59 **Amendments to the Constitution**

The Portfolio Holder for Business & Growth, Councillor Abby Brennan, presented the report of the Monitoring Officer regarding Amendments to the Constitution.

Councillor Brennan, advised that it was a statutory duty to keep the Constitution up to date and review it annually, with the recommendations considered by the Governance Scrutiny Group and relevant officers, with the proposed amendments set out in red in the Appendix, together with changes from the Governance Scrutiny Group in blue. The amendments were designed to support the efficient running of Full Council meetings and the conduct of business and it was for each council to determine its own constitution to meet its own business needs.

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

Councillor Polenta felt that the Constitution should provide a framework through which Councillors could challenge policy, rigorously scrutinise decisions and ensure that all voices were heard. Councillor Polenta stated that any Councillor should have the right to call for a recorded vote without needing

other Councillors support, that questions should be heard in public, rather than receiving a written response and that the scope of motions should not be restricted, as they should be used to send messages on broader economic and political matters that impacted residents.

Councillor Thomas felt there was a role for debate about important issues outside the direct responsibility of the Council, to allow Councillors to come to a joint view and agree to put pressure on other agencies regarding issues that concerned residents. She felt that more work was required on the proposed amendments and that it should be considered again by the Governance Scrutiny Group.

Councillor Birch expressed concern about limiting the scope of motions as he felt that this helped Councillors represent their constituents better, was educational and allowed democratic debate. He thought that the number of supporters for a recorded vote should be equivalent to membership of the smallest political party, as recorded votes played an important role in holding power to account and was a tool for opposition Councillors to use.

Councillor R Mallender echoed comments regarding the scope of motions and felt that discussing matters beyond the remit of the Council helped with sound decisions making.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Edyvean confirmed that the Governance Scrutiny Group had considered each amendment, and whilst not everyone agreed with them, the recommendations had been agreed and he felt that the Council was here to serve and deliver for residents, rather than discussing matters outside the Council's remit.

Councillor Brennan felt that questions to Council were often timely, with a written reply providing a prompter response. She referred to the wording of the amendment regarding the scope of motions and did not agree that it was restrictive, as it still allowed the Council to discuss and focus on matters that impacted or affected residents. Councillor Brennan also referred to comments that had previously been made by Councillors and members of the public asking why the Council was debating matters that it could do nothing about.

It was **RESOLVED** that Council adopt the proposed revisions to the Constitution.

Councillor Birch voted against the recommendation.

60 **Appointment of Independent Member to Governance Scrutiny Group**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Transformation and Governance, Councillor Virdi presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services regarding Appointment of Independent Person to Governance Scrutiny Group.

Councillor Virdi stated that the report highlighted factors of good practice and governance as set out in the Redmond Review and advised that Government was looking at making this mandatory. The Governance Scrutiny Group supported having an independent member and Councillor Virdi clarified that it

would be a non-voting role. He referred to the job description and person specification as set out in Appendix A to the report, with remuneration for the role set against comparable benchmarks.

Councillor J Wheeler seconded the recommendation.

It was **RESOLVED** that Council:

- a) approved the appointment of an Independent Person to Governance Scrutiny Group;
- b) approved the role description, skills and competencies and person specification at Appendix A;
- c) authorised the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Governance Scrutiny Group, to undertake the recruitment process and appoint to the position of Independent Person on the basis of a two-year appointment;
- d) approved an allowance of £800 per annum for this appointment; and
- e) delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to amend the Terms of Reference of the Governance Scrutiny Group and the Councillor's Allowance Scheme accordingly.

61 **Notices of Motion**

No motions had been submitted.

62 **Questions from Councillors**

The questions from Councillors were not considered. A written response would be provided after the meeting.

The meeting closed at 10.25 pm.

CHAIR

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL**

THURSDAY, 20 MARCH 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 A Brown (Chair), J Cottey (Vice-Chair), M Barney, J Billin, T Birch, R Bird, A Brennan, R Butler, S Calvert, J Chaplain, K Chewings, N Clarke, T Combellack, S Dellar, A Edyvean, S Ellis, G Fletcher, M Gaunt, E Georgiou, P Gowland, C Grocock, R Inglis, R Mallender, S Mallender, D Mason, P Matthews, H Om, H Parekh, A Phillips, L Plant, D Polenta, N Regan, D Simms, D Soloman, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, J Walker, R Walker, L Way, T Wells, G Wheeler, J Wheeler and G Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
D Banks	Director of Neighbourhoods
A Hill	Chief Executive
S Pregon	Monitoring Officer
E Richardson	Democratic Services Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager

63 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

64 Local Government Reorganisation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

The Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Clarke MBE presented the report of the Chief Executive, which provided an overview of the Government's requirement for plans for Local Government Reorganisation to be developed in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

In formally moving the recommendations detailed in the report, the Leader referred to this significant issue, stressed that the recommendations did not constitute any final decision, and confirmed that the nine councils would produce a final submission by 28 November 2025. The Leader stated that maintaining the highest quality services for residents and businesses was his priority, whilst remaining debt free and having the lowest Council Tax in the County, and he questioned if a new unitary authority would be able to maintain that. The Leader felt that proper public consultation was required and that the Government's guidance on population size referred to in the Schedule in the report was flawed, as the figures were out of date. The Leader stated that the Borough maintained more accurate house building and occupation figures, which would bring populations proposed by Rushcliffe for a three unitary model

close to the guidance figures. As this model had gained little support, an additional recommendation had been added, showing that the Council was open to investigating various options, without diminishing Rushcliffe's high quality services. The Leader stated that public engagement was required. Any expansion would cost over £8m, and lead to Rushcliffe's residents receiving inadequate services, with the potential loss of facilities and increased charges. The Leader concluded by reiterating that residents came first, with the need to maintain high quality services and that a final decision was not being made tonight.

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

Councillor J Walker advised that the Labour Group could not support the additional recommendation, questioned the accuracy of the £8m figure and that this would not address the issues that had led to the need for reform. She referred to the advantages of being close to the City, with its world class infrastructure and facilities, and that no tax from Rushcliffe was paid towards them. She questioned how front line services would be managed and that the recommendation was playing politics with issues which required proper debate. Councillor Walker felt that there were four key issues; impact on services, what would happen if nothing was done, impact of the Spending Review, and sense of fairness. She asked for better leadership and representation for all and stated that whilst the Group supported some elements of the recommendation, the party political elements, which would completely tie the Council's hands could not be ignored.

Councillor Thomas proposed the following amendment, which was seconded by Councillor Way, who reserved the right to speak.

It is RECOMMENDED that Council:

- a) endorses the submission of a Local Government Reorganisation Interim Plan to Government by 21 March 2025 (Appendix B);
- b) endorses continuing to work with the other local authorities across Nottinghamshire and Nottingham with a view to developing a final unitary proposal to be considered by Full Council prior to submission to Government by 28 November 2025;
- c) acknowledges that there is significant opposition to any of the Borough of Rushcliffe joining a new Council which encompasses the current Nottingham City boundary and therefore requests that the Government considers an alternative proposal for an option comprising three unitary authorities (Appendix C);
- d) requests Government to also consider an alternative proposal for an option of creating a single unitary authority covering both Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire (Appendix D);
- e) requests Government to further consider an alternative proposals for two unitary councils:

- i) South Nottinghamshire comprising Nottingham City, Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe;
 - ii) North Nottinghamshire comprising Bassetlaw, Ashfield, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood (Appendix E);
- f) writes to the Government to express concern that it is undertaking the cost and disruption of abolishing district councils at this time and to request a public consultation exercise or referendum for the people of Nottinghamshire to have their say on any final proposal.

Councillor Thomas stated that Option 2 in the Interim Plan failed to meet the Government's criteria regarding minimum population size, and the additional option to create a three unitary model would also not be accepted, leaving just two options, one of which involved Rushcliffe joining the City. Councillor Thomas referred to possible boundary changes; however, she felt that this could lead to more areas being drawn into the City and the amendment provided better options for residents, whilst providing more support for the City. The Government model was that more affluent areas would support the City and she felt that going forward it would be better for it to be part of a larger area. Councillor Thomas referred to recommendation d) which would prevent fragmentation of the provision of upper tier services, whilst providing the most support to the City. It had the potential to deliver the greatest economies of scales; however, its size would create challenges and require careful management. She felt that recommendation e) made geographical sense, and having three districts joining the City would provide more support than two.

The Leader stated that he did not accept the amendment.

In supporting the amendment, Councillor Billin acknowledged that the Council's positive financial position made it an attractive proposition for merger and if Rushcliffe had to join the City, it would be better to include more authorities to share the load. Councillor Billin felt that all residents in Nottinghamshire should be helped, questioned the fairness of Rushcliffe not doing so and stated that Rushcliffe's excellent officers should be involved in shaping any new authority. He stressed the importance of being involved in discussions and whilst noting the significant opposition to the Borough joining a new council encompassing current City boundaries, the two extra options would only be submitted for consideration.

In acknowledging the amendment, Councillor Gaunt stated that he could not support it or the original motion, as they were both too rigid, leaving the Council weak and unable to fully negotiate going forward. Councillor Gaunt also felt that it was wrong to say that in the future there would be no possibility of offering support to residents in the City.

On acknowledging the amendment, Councillor Edyvean advised that he could not support joining the City as that would not help rural areas with no connection to it.

Councillor Gowland clarified that the vast majority of services were provided by the County Council, with the majority of funds currently supporting services in

the north of the County, which was necessary. She supported recommendation d) in the amendment and questioned why it had been excluded, as it was one of the original options put forward by Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC).

Councillor Chewings advised that he could not support the amendment in its entirety, noted the significant opposition to Rushcliffe joining the City and agreed with the amended wording in recommendation c). Councillor Chewings could not support recommendation e)(i) referred to the funding challenges the City faced due to the archaic funding system and years of Government austerity and that LGR was driven by cuts rather than making efficiencies.

Councillor J Wheeler agreed that whilst it was important to debate all options a strong message had to be sent that Rushcliffe did not want to join the City and the amendment did not make this clear.

Councillor Polenta reiterated thanks to the Leake Independent Group but advised that she could not support the amendment. She agreed with the removal of the word 'referendum' as she felt that there were better ways to engage with residents through meaningful debate. She stated that it was particularly important to engage with the young to provide fresh ideas and to ensure that their needs were met going forward. Councillor Polenta stated that the motion assumed without substantial evidence that residents were against joining the City, especially when many were unaware of what LGR would mean, and it was important to challenge social division and not reinforce it.

Councillor R Mallender stated that the Government should not go ahead with LGR and agreed that the City was under bounded and had been poorly governed. He referred to the Conservative Group petition, and expressed concern that many residents thought it was from the Council. LGR would result in the loss of a layer of local democracy; however, with the introduction of Mayoral Combined Authorities there would still be two tiers, just more remote from residents, and he felt that the current system should be retained and improved.

Councillor Simms agreed with Councillor Mallender and stated that he had been elected to represent his residents in Rushcliffe and reiterated that this was a well-managed Council.

In seconding the amendment Councillor Way reiterated that it was providing alternatives for the Government to provide feedback on and believed that it would not agree to leaving the City on its own. She referred to the County Council's proposal to retain both the County and City as they were, which could lead to areas close to the City being forced to join it. Councillor Way believed that the amendment in d) would be a reasonable alternative, allowing residents in the City to benefit from better quality services and officers' expertise.

Councillor Thomas thanked everyone for the constructive debate, emphasised that d) and e) would not tie Rushcliffe into the City and felt that it was important to have more options to improve the debate, with e) providing a bigger base to become an entity of its own, as of the two options left for the Government to consider, one would involve joining the City. Councillor Thomas agreed with Councillor Mallender and was concerned that the recommendation had no

push back against LGR, and she felt that the Government had made it clear that Councils should be more than 500,000 people.

The Leader thanked Councillor Thomas and agreed with Councillor Mallender. He disagreed that the Government had made it clear regarding numbers, there was a guidance of 500,000 or more; however, if evidence could be provided for having less, it would be considered. The Leader referred to d) and e) in the amendment and confirmed that they had been in the original PWC report; however, they had not been supported and he concluded by agreeing that negotiations would continue over the summer.

On being put to the vote the amendment was defeated.

The debate continued on the substantive motion.

In acknowledging that all Councillors had residents best interest at heart, Councillor Grocock felt that recommendation b) was both premature and unnecessary and was concerned about the constant unfavourable comparisons made between the City and Rushcliffe. He stated that under LGR, current councils would be abolished, new ones formed, and therefore Rushcliffe would not be joined to the current City Council and felt that in effect b) derided Nottingham itself. Councillor Grocock referred to the importance of Rushcliffe's role in promoting the Greater Nottingham and East Midlands economy and to coordinated development planning and was concerned that the Council had ruled out any potential integration with this area, which would benefit many residents in Rushcliffe. Councillor Grocock stated that the LGR proposals required more careful consideration and that political opportunism was not limited to any one party. He could not support recommendation b), as it would be in direct contradiction to preferences expressed by other councils, and a better option would be to redraw the political boundaries to create an area based on the functional economic geography of the Nottingham Urban Area.

Councillor Calvert agreed that the City boundaries were too tightly bounded to be a financially stable new unitary authority, and referred to concerns raised back in 1998, that it would be unable to maintain effective services, due to high levels of need and low income, which had proved the case, since 2010, due to successive funding cuts. Councillor Calvert acknowledged that coming up with options had been challenging, trying to put aside local and personal ambitions to propose the best options for the County. He felt that the Conservative Group's petition was very insulting to residents in the City, with residents in Rushcliffe signing it in good faith, having been persuaded by threats of potential closures and increased Council Tax. He stated that recommendation b) replicated the negativity contained in the petition and that it was inappropriate to propose an alternative option in isolation, as councils should be working collaboratively.

Councillor R Walker felt conflicted in having a moral obligation to try and find a solution, coupled with futility, given the difficulty the nine councils would have in trying to reach an agreement. He felt that the strength of feelings raised was not about comparing Rushcliffe with the City, it was because of the poor performance of the City Council compared to other core cities in the country,

coupled with the continuing disastrous financial and political leadership, and he could not support any option to join the City.

Councillor Polenta felt that this process should be focusing on how best to deliver sustainable services through constructive dialogue rather using political spin to mislead residents about the City Council. She referred to the successive years of funding cuts and reminded Council that 80% of homes in the City were in Council Tax Bands A and B, and despite this, the City provided cultural and economic benefits across the region. Councillor Polenta stated that many councils had declared bankruptcy, which was not just due to local mismanagement, but because of national priorities and policies. She stated that the system should work for everyone by reducing inequality and increasing democracy, with LGR not just being about managerial efficiencies. She hoped going forward that Local Government could become a transformative force for everyone.

Councillor Gowland stated that LGR should improve services, as current arrangements were not working, were inefficient and confusing for residents. She agreed that the City Council had made mistakes, which had been exacerbated by lack of resources and high service demands. Councillor Gowland stated that this issue mattered as many residents in Rushcliffe felt part of the City and wanted to improve it and use it.

Councillor Edyvean clarified that according to the Government, all proposals must be within pre-existing boundaries and the report covered the Government's requirements.

Councillor Matthews also felt conflicted and agreed that it was good to feel, connected to the City; however, he stated that Rushcliffe's residents were helping to support it by paying for services. Councillors were elected to listen to and represent local residents, and Councillor Matthews stated that he had yet to hear any resident support Rushcliffe joining the City. This Interim Plan did not commit the Council to any decision, and it was hoped that more constructive debate would take place.

Councillor Soloman felt sorry for residents in the City who she believed had been consistently failed due to the City Council's incompetence and poor decision making, which contrasted to Rushcliffe's well managed Council, delivering well run services, whilst remaining debt free, with the lowest Council Tax in the County. Councillor Soloman confirmed that she had come to the meeting with an open mind but had failed to be persuaded of any benefit to joining the City and reminded Councillors that they had been elected to serve Rushcliffe's residents and it was their duty to ensure the best outcome for them. The petition had provided a voice to residents, who overwhelmingly did not want to join the City and she supported the recommendations.

Councillor Phillips agreed that Rushcliffe was an excellent authority and that everything must be done to resist any proposal to merge with a consistently failing City Council.

Councillor J Wheeler agreed that residents were concerned about joining the City, referred to the many residents from the City that enjoyed using

Rushcliffe's great facilities and stated that he had heard nothing this evening to change his views. He clarified that any funding given to the north of the County was related to thresholds and was not a direct subsidy. Councillor Wheeler felt that the City's problems were related to poor decision making and leadership rather than problems with boundary size and housing numbers and that Rushcliffe residents would be worse off if the City boundary was increased.

Councillor Gaunt clarified that the Interim Plan did mention that more complex boundary changes would be considered if there was strong justification. He stated that the core cities previously referred to all had bigger boundaries than Nottingham incorporating wealthy suburbs, and yet recommendation b) if agreed would mean that the City would remain the same. In acknowledging mistakes made by the City Council, Councillor Gaunt referred to the £100m funding lost annually for a decade and stated that Nottingham was one of the most deprived cities in the country, and he felt that given the funding already going to the north of the County, it would be appropriate to help the City too. He stated that it was inappropriate to take away any option to join the City going forward.

Councillor J Walker proposed that the motion be put to the vote. The Mayor advised that there were four more speakers and then a vote would be taken.

Councillor R Mallender called for funding changes, to ensure the City could help its deprived areas, just as the County Council did. LGR would result in Rushcliffe disappearing, and becoming part of a larger area, reducing engagement and democracy at lower levels, which he was concerned about. Councillor Mallender stated that some residents in West Bridgford wanted to join the City and their views should be listened to and he hoped that going forward Councillors from Rushcliffe would stand for re-election in any new authority to fight for Rushcliffe's residents.

Councillor S Mallender stated that officers at the City Council worked very hard in extremely difficult circumstances and agreed with Councillor Gaunt's comments that any new authority would be completely different and she was concerned that the recommendations in the report were unlikely to be accepted. Councillor Mallender reminded Councillors that the City Council did win awards and referred to the many young people from West Bridgford who were unable to live there as it was too expensive and felt that Rushcliffe should be helping those who had no choice.

Councillor Birch advised that he was against joining the City as his ward was rural, where residents' needs were different and his main priority was to represent them. He felt that opposition group members had made some very reasonable points, which he hoped would be talked about going forward as LGR would take place. He was concerned about organisational structures changing together with governance issues and noted that Conservative led Councils had gone bankrupt and changes needed to be made. Councillor Birch was concerned that this additional option had gained no support and left the Council in a weak position. He stated that whilst Rushcliffe's element of the Council Tax was low, as a County it was one of the highest in the country, and in effect less affluent areas were being subsidised.

Councillor Chewings stated that whilst he recognised the benefits of moving to a unitary system to eliminate inefficiencies and improve access to services, he could not support the proposed minimum size of 500,000, as they would be too large to manage effectively, and would erode local democracy. He felt that smaller unitary authorities would cut out duplication and keep local decision making, and that the option in Appendix C was still too large. Whilst the process was deeply flawed, Councillor Chewings stated that the Council must engage to demand a system that worked for residents. He agreed with recommendation b) that Rushcliffe should not join the City, as Rushcliffe had a distinct identity, with differing needs and priorities and bringing them together would fail to serve anyone and he supported having a referendum to ensure that local views were heard.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Brennan thanked everyone for the excellent debate, which she hoped would be helpful going forward. She questioned if this proposal represented any form of devolution and noted that with services moving up to the East Midlands Combined Authority, a layer closest to residents was disappearing. Councillor Brennan stated that the County Council's proposal for a single unitary authority would represent nearly one million population, and it was important for Rushcliffe to keep its own voice and she referred to the uncertainty regarding the Local Government Financial Review. Councillor Brennan referred to the importance of democracy, agreed that the Council had to engage in the process and that work would continue once more information was available.

The Leader reiterated the importance of this issue and that residents came first. He clarified that the £8m previously referred to was in the PWC report and that it was not an option to do nothing. He referred to previous comments regarding a boundary review and clarified that the Government's guidance clearly stated that any reviews, if required, would only occur later. He stated that Rushcliffe's population would continue to grow and that the 500,000 was flawed and the situation needed to be resolved. The Leader thanked everyone for the debate and requested that a recorded vote be taken, which was agreed by four Councillors.

In accordance with Standing Order Paragraph 4.80, a recorded vote was taken for this item as follows:

FOR: Councillors M Barney, T Birch, R Bird, A Brennan, A Brown, R Butler, K Chewings, N Clarke, T Combellack, J Cottey, S Dellar, A Edyvean, S Ellis, E Georgiou, R Inglis, D Mason, P Matthews, H Om, H Parekh, A Phillips, N Regan, D Simms, D Solomon, R Upton, D Viridi, R Walker, T Wells, G Wheeler, J Wheeler, and G Williams

AGAINST: Councillors C Thomas

ABSTENSIONS: Councillors J Billin, S Calvert, J Chaplain, G Fletcher, M Gaunt, P Gowland, C Grocock, R Mallender, S Mallender, L Plant, D Polenta, J Walker and L Way

It was RESOLVED that Council:

- a) endorses the submission of a Local Government Reorganisation Interim Plan to Government by 21 March 2025, as detailed in Appendix B to the report;
- b) does not support any of the Borough of Rushcliffe joining a new Council which encompasses the current Nottingham City boundary and therefore requests that the Government considers an alternative proposal for an option comprising three unitary authorities, as detailed in Appendix C to the report;
- c) writes to the Government to request a public consultation exercise or referendum for the people of Nottinghamshire to have their say on any final proposal; and
- d) endorses continuing to work with the other local authorities across Nottinghamshire with a view to developing a final unitary proposal to be considered by Full Council prior to submission to Government by 28 November 2025.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

CHAIR

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Council

Thursday, 22 May 2025

Appointments of Committees and Member Groups 2025/26

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership,
Councillor N Clarke**

1. Purpose of report

The attached Appendix sets out the nominations for appointments to Committees and Member Groups for 2025/26 in accordance with the requests of the Political Groups.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the nominations to Committees and Member Groups, as set out in the Appendix to the report be approved.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The nominations for appointments take into account the legal requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, in particular the principles in relation to political representation and the allocation of seats where necessary.
- 3.2. Members are reminded that these appointments do not include the Leader of the Council, Cabinet, Mayor or Deputy Mayor positions.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. In accordance with the Council Meeting Rules of Procedure, the annual meeting will 'appoint such committees as the Council considers appropriate' in order to effectively carry out its functions for the municipal year. This involves deciding which committees or member groups to establish, their size and terms of reference, the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules, receiving nominations of Councillors to serve on each committee and making appointments to the committees.
- 4.2. Nominations received from each of the Political Groups are included at the Appendix.
- 4.3. Council is also asked to note the appointment of an Independent Person for the Governance Scrutiny Group as approved at Council on 6 March 2025.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure to appoint to the Committee and Member Group positions would restrict the Council's ability to deliver its functions and priorities.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

Expenditure associated with the various Chair and Vice Chair positions is contained within existing budgets.

6.2. Legal Implications

The appointments are in accordance with Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and are based on the principles in relation to political representation.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications.

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

There are no Section 17 implications.

6.5 Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no biodiversity net gain implications from this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	All Corporate Priorities are supported by the proper appointment of Councillors to Committees and Member Groups.
Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

8. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the nominations to Committees and Member Groups, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved.

For more information contact:	Charlotte Caven-Atack Head of Corporate Services 0115 9148278 ccaven-attack@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix – Nominations for appointment to Committees and Member Groups 2025/26

APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES AND GROUPS 2025/26

A SCRUTINY GROUPS

Corporate Overview Group

7 members – Chair from the Lead Group; Other positions to be filled by the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Growth and Development, Governance and Communities scrutiny groups.

	Conservative (4)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr G Williams (C)	Cllr M Gaunt				Cllr L Way		
2.	Cllr T Combella	Cllr L Plant						
3.	Cllr H Parekh							
4.	Cllr D Simms							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Governance Scrutiny Group

10 members – Chair from the Lead Group; Vice Chair position currently from opposition group – 1 Co-optee

	Conservative (5)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (1)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr D Simms (C)	Cllr M Gaunt (VC)				Cllr C Thomas	Cllr K Chewings	
2.	Cllr H Om	Cllr P Gowland						
3.	Cllr N Regan							
4.	Cllr T Wells							
5.	Cllr G Wheeler							

Mr Jonathan Causton – Independent Person

Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

9 members – Chair from the Lead Group; Vice Chair position currently from opposition group.

	Conservative (5)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (1)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr T Combella (C)	Cllr S Calvert			Cllr E Georgiou	Cllr L Way (VC)		
2.	Cllr A Brown	Cllr J Chaplain						
3.	Cllr S Ellis							
4.	Cllr D Mason							
5.	Cllr R Walker							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Communities Scrutiny Group

9 members – Chair from the Lead Group; Vice Chair currently from opposition group.

	Conservative (5)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (1)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr H Parekh (C)	Cllr L Plant (VC)		Cllr R Mallender		Cllr J Billin		
2.	Cllr M Barney	Cllr C Grocock						
3.	Cllr R Butler							
4.	Cllr P Matthews							
5.	Cllr D Soloman							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

B COMMITTEES

Licensing Committee

15 Members – Chair from the Lead Group

	Conservative (8)	Labour (3)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (1)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (1)	Independent (1)
1.	Cllr N Regan (C)	Cllr J Chaplain		Cllr R Mallender		Cllr J Billin	Cllr K Chewings	Cllr A Phillips
2.	Cllr J Cottee	Cllr G Fletcher						
3.	Cllr D Mason	Cllr C Grocock						
4.	Cllr H Om							
5.	Cllr D Simms							
6.	Cllr D Soloman							
7.	Cllr G Wheeler							
8.	Cllr G Williams							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Planning Committee

11 Members – Chair from the Lead Group

	Conservative (6)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (1)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (1)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr R Walker (C)	Cllr S Calvert		Cllr S Mallender		Cllr C Thomas	Cllr T Birch	
2.	Cllr A Edyvean (VC)	Cllr J Chaplain						
3.	Cllr A Brown							
4.	Cllr S Ellis							
5.	Cllr D Mason							
6.	Cllr T Wells							

Employment Appeals Committee

5 Members – Chair from the Lead Group

	Conservative (2)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (1)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (1)	Leake Independents (0)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr N Clarke (C)	Cllr J Walker	Cllr S Dellar		Cllr E Georgiou			
2.	Cllr J Wheeler							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Interviewing Committee

5 Members – Chair - Leader

	Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (1)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (0)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr N Clarke (C)	Cllr J Walker	Cllr S Dellar					
2.	Cllr A Brennan							
3.	Cllr J Wheeler							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Standards Committee

10 seats (6 Elected Members, 4 Co-optees (1 Parish Member and 1 Independent) and 2 Independent Persons) - Chair from the Lead Group

	Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (1)	Leake Independents (0)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (1)
1.	Cllr A Brown (C)	Cllr L Plant			Cllr R Bird			Cllr A Phillips
2.	Cllr P Matthews							
3.	Cllr D Simms							

A Wood - Parish Member

K White - Independent Member

H Richardson - Independent Person

C Richards - Independent Person

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

C MEMBER GROUPS

Local Development Framework Group

15 Members – Chair from the Lead Group

	Conservative (8)	Labour (3)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (1)	Bingham Independents (1)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (1)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr R Upton (C)	Cllr S Calvert		Cllr S Mallender	Cllr R Bird	Cllr C Thomas	Cllr K Chewings	
2.	Cllr R Walker (VC)	Cllr P Gowland						
3.	Cllr A Brown	Cllr L Plant						
4.	Cllr R Butler							
5.	Cllr A Edyvean							
6.	Cllr S Ellis							
7.	Cllr D Mason							
8.	Cllr T Wells							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Member Development Group

9 Members, Chair currently from the Lead Group.

	Conservative (5)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (1)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr P Matthews (C)	Cllr M Gaunt				Cllr L Way	Cllr T Birch	
2.	Cllr R Butler	Cllr L Plant						
3.	Cllr T Combellack							
4.	Cllr J Cottee							
5.	Cllr G Williams							

Rushcliffe Strategic Growth Board

9 Members – Chair Leader

	Conservative (5)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (1)
1.	Cllr N Clarke (C)	Cllr C Grocock				Cllr L Way		Cllr A Phillips
2.	Cllr A Brennan	Cllr J Walker						
3.	Cllr R Upton							
4.	Cllr D Virdi							
5.	Cllr J Wheeler							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Civic Hospitality Panel

6 Members – Chair – Mayor – Consisting of Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Leader, plus 3 others

	Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (1)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr J Cottee (C)	Cllr G Fletcher			Cllr E Georgiou	Cllr J Billin		
2.	Cllr R Butler							
3.	Cllr N Clarke							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

West Bridgford Special Expenses and Community Infrastructure Levy Advisory Group

9 Members – Chair – Portfolio Holder Finance, Transformation and Governance – West Bridgford Councillors only

	Conservative (5)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (1)	Green (1)	Bingham Independents (0)	Leake Independents (0)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr D Viridi (C)	Cllr S Calvert	Cllr S Dellar	Cllr R Mallender				
2.	Cllr P Matthews	Cllr J Chaplain						
3.	Cllr H Om							
4.	Cllr H Parekh							
5.	Cllr J Wheeler							

[Link to Terms of Reference in Constitution](#)

Barton-in-Fabis Community Governance Review Task and Finish Group

9 members – Chair – relevant Cabinet Member

	Conservative (5)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (0)	Green (0)	Bingham Independents (1)	Leake Independents (1)	Rushcliffe Independents (0)	Independent (0)
1.	Cllr A Brennan (C)	Cllr S Calvert			Cllr R Bird	Cllr C Thomas		
2.	Cllr A Brown	Cllr P Gowland						
3.	Cllr A Edyvean							
4.	Cllr D Soloman							
5.	Cllr R Walker							

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Two members of the Task and Finish Group to be nominated from Liberal Democrat, Green, Bingham Independents, Leake Independents, and Rushcliffe Independents

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Council

Thursday, 22 May 2025

Approval of Timetable of Meetings 2025/26

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership,
Councillor N Clarke**

1. Purpose of report

To set the schedule of Council and committee meetings for the municipal year 2025/26.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the schedule of meetings attached at the Appendix be approved.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To set the schedule of Council and Committee meetings for the Municipal year 2025/26 in accordance with the Council Constitution.

4. Supporting Information

None

5. Risks and Uncertainties

None

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications.

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

There are no Section 17 implications.

6.5 **Biodiversity Net Gain Implications**

There are no biodiversity net gain implications from this report.

7. **Link to Corporate Priorities**

The Environment	All Corporate Priorities are supported by the Schedule of Meetings.
Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

8. **Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that the schedule of meetings attached at the Appendix be approved.

For more information contact:	Charlotte Caven-Atack Head of Corporate Services 0115 9148278 ccaven-attack@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix – Schedule of Meetings 2025/26

Calendar of Meetings 2025 – 2026

Committee	Time	2025								2026				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Council	7pm Thurs	*22		17		18		27				5		*21
Cabinet	7pm Tues	13	10	8		9	14	11	9	13	10	10	14	12
Corporate Overview Group	7pm Tues		17			2		18			24			
Growth and Development Scrutiny Group	7pm Wed			16			22			28		25		
Communities Scrutiny Group	7pm Thurs			24			16			22			2	
Governance Scrutiny Group	7pm Thurs		19			25			4		5			
Planning Committee	6pm Thurs	8	12	10	14	11	9	13	11	8	12	12	9	14
Standards Committee											18			

* Annual Council

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Council

Thursday, 22 May 2025

**Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies
2025/26**

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership,
Councillor N Clarke**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The attached Appendix sets out a table of nominations for appointments to Outside Bodies for 2025/26.
- 1.2. There are three contested appointments.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Council:

- a) approves the nominations to Outside Bodies as set out in the Appendix excluding the contested appointments (numbers 5, 12 and 13);
- b) appoints a representative to the Nottingham East Midlands Airport Independent Consultative Committee (number 5 in the Appendix);
- c) appoints a representative to Rural Community Action for Nottinghamshire (number 12 in the Appendix); and
- d) appoints a representative to the Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park (number 13 in the Appendix).

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To give effect to the nominations considered and put forward by the Political Groups.

4. Supporting Information

Nominations to Outside Bodies have been received from all Groups and are represented in the table in the Appendix.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure to appoint to Outside Bodies may restrict the Council's ability to fulfil its role.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications.

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

There are no Section 17 implications.

6.5 Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

There are no biodiversity net gain implications from this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	The appointment of representatives to Outside Bodies supports the Council's efforts to deliver in all four priority areas.
Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

8. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Council:

- a) approves the nominations to Outside Bodies as set out in the Appendix excluding the contested appointments (numbers 5, 12 and 13);
- b) appoints a representative to the Nottingham East Midlands Airport Independent Consultative Committee (number 5 in the Appendix);
- c) appoints a representative to Rural Community Action for Nottinghamshire (number 12 in the Appendix); and
- d) appoints a representative to the Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park (number 13 in the Appendix).

For more information contact:	Charlotte Caven-Atack Head of Corporate Services 0115 9148278 ccaven-attack@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix – Nominations for representatives to Outside Bodies 2025/26

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REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2025/26

	Name of Organisation	Number of Representatives	Councillor
1.	City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee	1	Leader Deputy Leader (Substitute)
2.	East Midlands Councils (including other representative roles within this appointment)	1	Leader Deputy Leader (Substitute)
3.	Greater Nottingham Joint Planning Advisory Board	1	Appropriate Portfolio Holder
4.	Local Government Association - General Assembly (including other representative roles within this appointment)	1	Leader Deputy Leader (Substitute)
5.	Nottingham East Midlands Airport Independent Consultative Committee	1	Cllr A Brown Cllr S Calvert
6.	Health and Well Being Board	1	Appropriate Portfolio Holder
7.	D2N2 Joint Leaders Board	1	Leader Deputy Leader (Substitute)
8.	Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel	1	Appropriate Portfolio Holder
9.	Development Corporation Board	1	Leader Deputy Leader (Substitute)
10.	Nottinghamshire Waste Management Board	1	Appropriate Portfolio Holder

	Name of Organisation	Number of Representatives	Councillor
11.	Freeport Board	1	Leader Deputy Leader (Alternate Board Member)
12.	Rural Community Action for Nottinghamshire	1	Cllr C Grocock Cllr R Inglis
13.	Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park	1	Cllr M Gaunt Cllr T Wells
14.	Local Area Forum - West Bridgford: Abbey Ward Compton Acres Edwalton Gamston Lady Bay Lutterell Musters Trent Bridge	8 (one per ward)	Cllr S Calvert Cllr H Om Cllr H Parekh Cllr J Wheeler Cllr R Mallender Cllr P Matthews Cllr D Polenta Cllr L Plant
15.	Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board	4	Cllr J Billin Cllr T Combellack Cllr G Fletcher Cllr T Wells