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Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: Tuesday, 21 January 2025

To all Members of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group will be held on Wednesday, 29 January 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>
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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 17 July 2024 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2024 (Pages 9 - 16)
5. The Health of our Town and Village Centres (Pages 17 - 28)
Report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth
6. Work Programme (Pages 29 - 30)
Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services



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Membership

Chair: Councillor P Matthews

Vice-Chair: Councillor L Way

Councillors: K Chewings, S Dellar, C Grocock, D Mason, H Parekh, D Soloman and R Walker

Meeting Room Guidance

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**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY GROUP
WEDNESDAY, 17 JULY 2024**

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 P Matthews (Chair), K Chewings, C Grocock, D Mason, H Parekh,
D Soloman and R Walker

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| C Evans | Service Manager Economic Growth and Property |
| R Churchill | Rushcliffe Oaks Manager |
| James Bate | Team Manager Planning |
| E Richardson | Democratic Services Officer |

APOLOGIES:

Councillors L Way and S Dellar

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.

Councillor Grocock referred to an Environment Agency report ranking environmental equality within Nottinghamshire boroughs, which included some lower rankings for Rushcliffe, and the Chair confirmed that there was an outstanding invitation for the Environment Agency to attend a future meeting of this Group.

3 Review of Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium

The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager delivered a presentation which provided the Group with an update about Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium.

The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager explained that the Crematorium had held 506 cremations in its first year, of which 32 were direct cremations without a service. She presented the Group with financial information which set out the monthly income generated compared to target income, by month, and noted that income had increased over the year and demonstrated business growth. She explained that the initial business case projections for income had been overly optimistic for a newly opened business and as such had subsequently

been reviewed.

The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that total income for the year amounted to £485k which meant that a £61k surplus had been achieved. In comparing the number of services held over the year, she noted that 22 had taken place in April 2023 and 52 in April 2024, with projected income for 2024 being £710k, or £683k without memorialisation income which was projected to be £27k.

In relation to memorialisation, the Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that sales had initially been slow but were increasing and it was hoped that opening up the bottom third of the site which would include a wildflower meadow would also increase sales. She noted that circa 4% of the population chose to have a memorialisation at the crematorium where a service took place.

The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager explained that the Team had sought feedback from local funeral directors which had been extremely positive, saying that the service provided was professional and welcoming. She said that the Team aimed to accommodate all types of service requests, whilst being mindful of safety concerns, and welcomed all faiths and all types of funerals and had generous service times which meant that services did not impact on each other. She added that they also had a comfort dog, possibly being the only crematorium which had one, which had proved popular, particularly in providing a distraction for children. She said that the Crematorium was also operationally carbon neutral.

In relation to competition and communications and marketing, the Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that the Team had visited funeral directors in the area to better understand the market and where people were coming from and had looked at how best to share news. She said that the Team were including adverts in hospital bereavement brochures and sent quarterly newsletters to funeral directors. The Team had held two Open Days which had been very well attended and posted sensitive updates on social media. The Crematorium had also received exposure from having a comfort dog which had generated news and radio press items and who was a finalist in the BBC Make a Difference Awards.

Referring to future focus for the Crematorium, the Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that the Team had needed to build resilience to allow for annual leave and unforeseen circumstances and had trained additional Council staff so that they could step in to provide support when needed. She said that the Team hoped to attend appropriate events in villages and look at different ways of marketing, perhaps through charities, and use the success of having a comfort dog. She added that it was hoped to install a beehive on the site to enhance biodiversity and that they were offering the site to host partner and national events and wanted to expand their knowledge about all faiths to be better able to meet needs.

The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that they had recently received a visit from 34 delegates from South Korea to learn about their technology and grounds and their biodiversity and carbon neutral features.

The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that the Team were looking at other

memorialisation options and would be benchmarking fees ahead of the review in 2025/2026.

The Chair referred to the financial information and asked for clarification in relation to the £200k projected growth in income and how much of that would be profit. The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property said that it would be necessary to review costs to ascertain the profit margin, the figures provided were total projected income rather than profit. The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that the facility was projected to pay back the capital investment within 15 years.

Councillor Chewings referred to the Cabinet report in October 2018 which had projected the need for 1000 cremations in the area and also referred to the number of deaths in the Borough and said that there was an existing crematorium at Wilford Hill. He said that the business case had been for the facility to generate a revenue return and asked for greater financial detail, including costs, to allow for more analysis and understanding of the financial situation.

The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property confirmed that the Council did track expenditure to monitor progress against target and to inform future projections. She highlighted that as a new facility there was much work taking place to grow the business, part of which included competition and changing people's habits and noted that the facility was used by residents outside of the Borough and she said that there was confidence that the business would continue to grow.

Councillor Mason said that whilst one factor of the business case had been income generation, another driving force had been to provide a valued service to the community, particularly as Wilford Hill was coming to the end of its life and had to close annually for lengths of time for maintenance. She asked about whether Rushcliffe Oaks had to close for maintenance and the Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that it did and had closed for a week this year but this also included time for completing the ground work to the bottom third of the site.

Councillor Mason asked about the Crematorium's green roof and the Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that it was self-maintaining, only needing to be watered if it was very hot and dry.

Councillor Mason asked about the solar panels on the site and the Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that they had provided sufficient energy to meet the baseload requirements for the building as had been planned, this did not include the cremator.

Councillor Parekh asked about how the facility was catering to the diverse and different faith needs of the community. The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that the Team had engaged with members of the Sikh and Hindu community before it had opened and whilst it was a secular facility they had many different signs required for many different services and families were welcome to bring their own additional items. She said that they were flexible to meet differing needs and accommodate different elements as much as possible. She said that the Team were looking to learn more.

Councillor R Walker referred to the 4% of families choosing memorialisation and the benefit of focussing resource on that provision. The Rushcliffe Oaks Manager said that whilst the Crematorium did not spend too much time on them it did want to respond to feedback from clients who had asked for things, such as tree memoria.

Members of the Group congratulated Rushcliffe Oaks Manager and the Council for providing such a superb, welcoming and well run facility for the community and for its successful first year since opening.

The Chair agreed an Action for further financial information, including costs, to be circulated to the Group.

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

- a) Reviewed the actions taken in response to the Group's suggestions in July 2023
- b) Identified new opportunities to further promote and develop the offer at Rushcliffe Oaks.

4 **Infrastructure Delivery**

The Team Manager Planning delivered a presentation to the Group about Infrastructure Delivery and provided answers to the five questions that had been asked.

The Team Manager Planning provided the Group with some background information, being that infrastructure providers often gathered money from multiple development pots which while this may delay work until all of those had been collected, could also enable more to be delivered and with greater efficiency than if funded piecemeal. He explained that it was not possible to cross fund between s106 pots of money and clarified that the role of the Council was to work with relevant partners to identify infrastructure needs arising from a development, secure funding to meet those needs, and to collect the money secured through the legal agreements and make it available to the infrastructure provider/s.

In relation to infrastructure triggers and their monitoring, the Team Manager Planning explained that triggers for s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) were different, with CIL triggers all being pre-defined in the instalments policy. He informed the Group of the various levels of CIL contributions required for small, medium and large developments and confirmed that as all payment due dates were time based, it was easy to monitor whether payment had been made on time. He added that development completion was monitored through regular updates from Council Tax.

In relation to s106 payments, the Team Manager Planning explained that triggers were bespoke negotiated for each development and were rarely time based, more often linked to events such as commencement of development or percentage occupation. He said that payments could be linked to the developer

realising a return on their investment for larger developments, were often paid in instalments and depending on what was to be funded, related to when would be best to deliver that provision, for example it could be beneficial for a school to be built early. He added that s106 could also secure works rather than financial payments and that works could be to directly facilitate the development or to offset its impacts on services and infrastructure.

The Team Manager Planning informed the Group that s106 triggers were monitored through Council Tax information, annual monitoring undertaken by the Planning Policy Team and from estimates provided by developers at previous trigger stages. He explained that on and off site physical delivery had to be monitored directly, but that functionality of infrastructure could not be monitored by the Council and as such was not signed off.

The Team Manager Planning explained that enforcement of s106 was conducted through legal action for breach of contract and that CIL had inbuilt penalties and functions with the Council being able to apply stops functions, late payments and surcharges. He added that in relation to CIL, a developer needed to inform the Council of commencement onsite and forfeited the facility to make staggered payments if they did not do so.

Councillor Thomas referred to the visibility of s106 to town and parish councils and the level of understanding and input that they had into what was asked for. She said that the things asked for were often not things that the community would want or prioritise. She asked how the process could be improved to include consultation with them and their input.

The Team Manager Planning said that s106 agreements were initially drawn up through negotiation and were informed by a variety of factors, including cashflow and local priorities as to what was seen as being vital to secure. He said signatories were usually the developer, the Council and sometimes the County Council and that parties who were not signatories could not have such input. He said part of the consultation asked for information about aspects that would be affected by a development and that this was when town and parish councils could submit their requests.

The Chair asked about s106 notifications and the Team Manager Planning said that infrastructure providers were informed when the funding for their contribution had been collected, such as notifying the County Council when education money was available.

Councillor Thomas said that she did not think that most town and parish councils understood that they needed to set out their requests at the consultation stage of a development and said that they also did not have chance to comment on other requests put forward.

Councillor Chewings suggested that this s106 be included as an agenda item at the next Town and Parish Conference.

The Team Manager Planning said s106 requests could only be for infrastructure necessary to make the development acceptable and to meet the needs of the development, rather than for facilities elsewhere in a community.

In relation to play areas, he said that the Council's Communities Manager usually advised on what would be acceptable for the given scale of a development. The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property added that the Communities Team were currently consulting on a refresh of the Council's Play Strategy, which was used to inform s106 requests, and that this would shortly go out to all Members and town and parish councils for their input.

In relation to delays to delivery programmes, the Team Manager Planning said that s106 agreements set out the way in which funding for delivery was collected but that there were no timescales for when the works needed to be delivered by. He said that there was often a repayment clause which was often set at ten years after payment of the last instalment, and as such the Council had systems in place to communicate with infrastructure providers to ensure that they claimed the money before repayment was due. He said that the Council had never had to return any money.

In relation to enforcement, the Team Manager Planning said that for s106 this was through legal action for breach of contract and that if a developer could demonstrate that the delay was despite them having actively tried and made 'best endeavours' to deliver something, then this could be used as a legal defence.

The Team Manager Planning informed the Group that if there were delays to major infrastructure works the Council aimed to keep Ward Councillors involved.

In relation to CIL money, the Team Manager Planning explained that this did not directly secure works and was spent by the Council according to its Priority Funding List which was reviewed every three years and which was published on its website.

The Team Manager Planning presented an Infrastructure Projects list and their progress towards completion to the Group.

In relation to how, when and why changes were made to s106 agreements, the Team Manager Planning said that changes could be made at any point and were done through Deeds of Variation. He said that any changes needed to be agreed by all signatories and that parties should not unreasonably refuse to consider amendments. He said that changes could be for any manner of reasons, including those driven by changing economic circumstances, legislative or policy changes, where clarification was required or where infrastructure needs had changed.

In relation to engagement with stakeholders, the Team Manager Planning explained that the Council held regular meetings with NHS and partners and consulted with stakeholders. He explained that the Council notified stakeholders when it had received contributions that they were likely to deliver and notified them when the repayment dates was looming but confirmed that the Council could not enforce delivery of a facility.

In relation to lessons learned from past infrastructure delivery, the Team Manager Planning said that it was difficult to learn from matters where

amendment had been purely as a result of time elapsed as the Council and partners could not predict the future but only make best estimates at the current time. He noted that there was learning in relation to offsite infrastructure which had been secured by either s106 or planning conditions, both of which had different enforcement mechanisms and as such reflection on what had worked best in different circumstances could be done.

Councillor Thomas asked for a recommendation to be added for the Infrastructure Monitoring report to be brought to Scrutiny on an annual basis to give opportunity for review of progress of projects. This was seconded by Councillor R Walker and Agreed by the Group.

The Service Manager Economic Growth and Property explained that much of the work was outside of the Council's control and represented collection of money over a long period of time and this would be an information item only.

The Chair highlighted that bringing the report to the Group annually would enable Members of the Group to have oversight and feedback information to the town and parish councils on their respective infrastructure projects.

Councillor Soloman referred to Deeds of Variation and how it could be confusing to know where and when something was due to be delivered and asked whether it would be possible for summaries to be provided to town and parish councils after a series of variations had occurred.

Councillor Thomas noted that Deeds of Variation did not go out to consultation and asked whether they could go out to town and parish councils for comment.

Councillor Thomas asked whether when consultations on large developments were issued whether a briefing note could be sent to town and parish councils to advise them that this was the time for them to submit their infrastructure requests for s106 funding.

Councillor R Walker referred to the excellent stakeholder and community engagement that had taken place for the Fairham development but recognised that this was not possible for smaller developments and suggested that Ward Members should fulfil a communication role with their communities.

In relation to Deeds of Variation, the Team Manager Planning advised that each signatory was duty bound to not unreasonably refuse amendments tabled and involving non-signatories would risk that and invite comments that could not be acted upon.

The Chair asked if communication about Deeds of Variation could take the form of an information note to town and parish councils following agreement of the variation.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group considered the contents of this report and recommended that the Infrastructure Monitoring report to be brought to Scrutiny on an annual basis.

5 **Work Programme**

The Chair noted that there was an open invitation for the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water to attend a future meeting of this Scrutiny Group.

The Chair noted that Cabinet had resolved at its meeting in May for this Scrutiny Group to review progress against proposals set out in the Management of Open Spaces on New Developments report in spring 2025 and asked for this to be added to the Work Programme.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Group agreed the work programme as set out in the table below.

17 October 2024 (Joint Scrutiny Group)

- Accessible Housing Briefing
- Work Programme

23 January 2025

- Work programme

3 April 2025

- Management of Open Spaces on New Developments
- Work programme

Action Table – 17 July 2024

| Minute No. | Action | Officer Responsible / Update |
|-------------------|---|--|
| 3. | Circulate financial information about the Crematorium, including costs, to the Group | UPDATE: Financial information has been circulated to the Group |
| 4. | Information about the process for s106 agreements, particularly in relation to town and parish council input, be included as an agenda item for the next Town and Parish Conference | Team Manager Planning UPDATE: An update will be provided at the meeting |
| 4. | A briefing note to be included in consultations on large developments for town and parish councils to provide information about S106 and highlighting their opportunity to request support. | Team Manager Planning UPDATE: An update will be provided at the meeting |
| 4. | A Deeds of Variation information note to be circulated to town to town and parish councils on developments in their areas. | Team Manager Planning UPDATE: An update will be provided at the meeting |

The meeting closed at 9.18 pm.

CHAIR



MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
JOINT COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY GROUP AND
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY GROUP
THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2024

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

PRESENT:

Councillors P Matthews (Chair), L Plant (Vice Chair), M Barney, J Billin, R
Butler, K Chewings, S Dellar, G Fletcher, C Grocock, R Mallender, D Mason,
H Parekh, A Phillips, D Soloman, R Walker, G Williams, L Way

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| D Banks | Director of Neighbourhoods |
| C Evans | Head of Economic Growth and Property |
| D Burch | Head of Neighbourhoods |
| D Dwyer | Strategic Housing Manager |
| R Mapletoft | Planning Policy Manager |
| C Ratcliffe | Housing Strategy & Development Team Leader |
| G Whitton | Housing Solutions Team Leader |
| E Richardson | Democratic Services Officer |

APOLOGIES:

Councillor S Ellis

5 Appointment of Chair

Councillor Williams nominated Councillor Matthews for the position Chair and this was seconded by Councillor Way.

6 Appointment of Vice-Chair

Councillor Williams nominated Councillor Plant for the position Vice Chair and this was seconded by Councillor Way.

7 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

8 Accessible Housing

Councillor Thomas presented her scrutiny request and explained the reasons for submitting it. She said that there were two main arms to the submission, one related to adapting existing housing and one related to adaptations in new

homes being built. She noted that the Council was no longer going to top up the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) which would lead to increased waiting times for access to adapted housing. She said that key questions for the Council were whether it would consider reinstating topping up the DFG in the next budget and whether there was opportunity to look at the funding pot and allocation locally. She added that it was also important to consider new housing being built and supported the Nottinghamshire Strategic Plan suggestion that that all new houses be built to the adaptable standard.

The Strategic Housing Manager and the Planning Policy Manager presented the Report of the Director for Neighbourhoods and provided a presentation overview of key features to the Group, which covered the following aspects:

- What is accessible housing?
- Understanding disabilities
- Housing needs
- Building new accessible homes
- Adaptation of existing homes
- Disabled Facilities Grant
- Rehousing as an alternative option
- Barriers to accessible housing
- Future options for change

Members of the Group thanked Officers for providing a comprehensive explanation of the different aspects of accessible housing.

Members of the Group asked a range of questions, in relation to: registered providers making financial contribution to adaptations in their properties and whether there was any reason or law or regulation to make them contribute; whether the Council received Safe and Secure grant allocation from Government; viability considerations in relation to the Greater Nottinghamshire Strategic Plan; more information about local land charges; more information about Nottinghamshire County Council top up budget; why the Council's Accessible Housing allocation was the lowest locally even though it delivered a high number of adaptations, was this due to a local of Government formula.

The Strategic Housing Manager explained that there were no regulations prohibiting registered providers from financially contributing to adaptations in their properties and that they had an equality duty to provide accessible homes where required for their tenants, which supported the argument for them to make contributions. In relation to the Nottinghamshire County Council top up budget, she advised that referrals were considered on a case by case basis at a Board meeting. In relation to accessible housing funding, she said that this was set through a 2011 national formula and that the County Council's role was to passport the allocation to the local district councils accordingly, and that to change the allocation amounts would require agreement by all the district authorities. In relation to land charges, she said that the Council had previously used £500k of capital receipts from stock transfer but had no further receipts to continue this practice.

In relation to local land charges, the Planning Policy Manager said that this was where a charge was affixed to the adapted house with whomever buying it

having to pay that cost. In relation to viability requirements on developments as part of the Local Plan Policy, he explained that adding costs for adaptations could lead to a development no longer being viable to deliver and as such it was a balance between added costs and viability, with costs based on typical scenarios from which assumptions were made for each development depending on its size and number of houses.

Members of the Group asked for clarification in relation to requirement to provide 1% adaptable housing per 100 dwellings, noting that eleven had been built in the Borough since 2019, and asked whether the target could be increased. Members of the Group also referred to the cap set at £30k as per the Government mandate from 2008 and noted that the recommendation from a White Paper in 2011 to increase it had not happened. The Group expressed disappointment that the £20k grant had been cut in Rushcliffe and asked how this compared to other local district councils.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the 1% was not a target set through policy and said that the 1% only applied to sites over 100 dwellings and only from October 2019, which was after most large developments in the Borough had been approved. He said that a review of the percentage could be conducted as part of the Local Plan review process. The Strategic Housing Manager said that the other local authorities still offered the discretionary grant and that some did not spend all of their grant allocation and that one had introduced a waiting list.

Members of the Group asked for clarity in relation to the application process and delivery of works for adaptations. The Strategic Housing Manager said that the Council was working closely with Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing (MTVH) who were the largest housing provider in the Borough to review what DFG work had taken place historically and the cost of those works, to look at what MTVH could do to assist the Council with the shortfall in funding and to assist in bringing outstanding works forward. The Council was also considering whether it may be possible to make costs savings by using MTVH internal contractors to deliver the works rather than external contractors.

The Housing Strategy & Development Team Leader explained that applications for adaptations were usually made by tenants and that the tenants chose the independent contractors to carry out the works.

Members of the Group asked how the Council could influence standards of adaptations and the Planning Policy Manager said that this would be through the Local Plan Policy process.

The Strategic Housing Manager said that the Council had a capital programme which could be used to support registered providers and that the Council informed new housing site developers that this could be used to support their delivery of accessible housing.

Members of the Group asked about the locations of adaptable dwellings and the Planning Policy Manager said that they were located across the Borough, in Ruddington, Radcliffe on Trent, Cotgrave and East Leake. He said that there was potential future provision at the Gamston site.

Members of the Group asked about the local funding agreement, differences in expenditure by different councils and whether the allocation amounts could be changed. The Group asked whether it would be impacted by the introduction of the Combined Authority. The Strategic Housing Manager explained there was a Strategic Oversight Group locally with representatives from the County Council and the District Councils sitting on it. She said that a report had gone to the respective Chief Executives setting out the difficulties with the funding, following which a more detailed review of the system had been requested. She said that a workshop had been held to review the process locally and that the Council had lobbied Government regarding the national allocation. She said that she would take the questions about differences in expenditure across the various District Councils to the Strategic Oversight Group and seek further analysis.

The Head of Economic Growth and Property said that the Combined Authority was not currently looking at DFG.

Members of the Group referred to community awareness and understanding of the process and how this could be improved, particularly for people who had learning difficulties and were not IT literate. The Strategic Housing Manager explained that there was currently a split between County Council and Borough responsibilities, with the Borough Council having a mandatory duty for DFG and the County Council having a mandatory duty for disabled people and children, which led to a split in processes. She noted that some counties had combined these processes. She thought it important that local authorities continued to look at ways of simplifying the process.

Members of the Group suggested that Councillors could raise awareness of DFG with their residents and the Strategic Housing Manager confirmed that there was an information sheet available on the County Council website for applicants (<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/adult-social-care/social-care-publications/disabled-facilities-grant>) which provided simplified information about the process. She confirmed that a person's Occupational Therapist was the first point of contact for any adult or child DFG application and noted that there was currently an eleven month waiting list.

Members of the Group asked about costs, how they were assessed and why there were differences in delivery between developers and whether there was anything that the Council could do to increase the percentage of M4(2) adaptations.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the cost figures had not been set by the Council but were secondary detail standard costs, with real costs often greater or lower depending on the development. He said that it may be possible to revise the percentage of adaptable housing in the future as part of the Local Plan process. He said that M4(1) adaptations were mandatory for all new housing but that making M4(2) the national standard would mean that this higher level of adaptation did not need to be applied at a local level. He suggested that the Council could write to Government asking for M4(2) to be the mandatory level for adaptation for all new housing.

Members of the Group asked whether any other local District Councils were topping up their DFG and whether they were able to carry forward their underspend. The Strategic Housing Manager said she was not aware of any other local councils topping up their DFG and said that there was no requirement for funding allocations to be paid back or redistributed. She confirmed that it would require the agreement of all local authorities for the allocation and redistribution process to be changed. The Housing Strategy & Development Team Leader said that councils with council housing stock funded their council housing through the Housing Revenue Account and so were not using their DFG budget to fund those adaptations.

Members of the Group asked about the discretionary allowance and for information about people with complex needs who could not afford to cover any costs above the grant allocation. The Strategic Housing Manager said that DFG was mandatory and that local authorities had a statutory duty to provide it and therefore the only way to manage provision when there was insufficient funding was to introduce a waiting list, as such the Council had an eleven month waiting list. The Housing Strategy & Development Team Leader confirmed that the waiting list was for all referrals and said that for works that cost more than the £30k DFG allocation, residents could look at whether there were any alternative forms of funding available to them to cover those costs.

Members of the Group asked how adapted houses were available to the people who needed them. The Planning Policy Manager said that the Council did not have any control over private sector houses and hence it tried to secure adapted properties through accessible housing provision on development sites to give the Council more control over them. He added that if M4(2) was applied to all properties all would have potential for future adaptation. The Strategic Housing Manager said that in terms of the Council's housing register, the Council had nomination rights to adapted properties and if made aware of a resident's needs and adapted properties becoming available, it would try to match them up wherever possible.

Members of the Group referred to national policy regarding DFGs and the Director for Neighbourhoods said that the Levelling Up Housing and Communities Committee had released a report in May 2024 about disabled people in the housing sector, which the Council had contributed to, which set out a number of recommendations. He said that he would share the document with the Group (please see the link here: [Disabled people in the housing sector \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk)) and hoped that it would inform future Government policy. He confirmed that the Council was working with County and District colleagues to coordinate a change locally.

The Group discussed the Council bringing back council housing stock in the Borough, in part as this would allow it to access the Housing Revenue Account. Members of the Group noted that this matter had been discussed at a recent Full Council meeting and had been rejected. The Director for Neighbourhoods said that it was not a Council policy position currently but that Members of the Group could raise it separately with the Portfolio Holder.

The Chair confirmed that the presentation slides from this meeting would be shared with Councillors.

The Chair took the Group through the Recommendations and also the four suggestions made as part of the presentation, to:

- Increase the supply of accessible and adapted homes, including wheelchair user dwellings
- Advocate for an increase in funding relative to local need to address the current funding disparities
- Review of the customer pathway and exploration of joined up systems to create efficiencies and risk sharing
- Cross sector investment (health & social care) to reduce demand on health care systems and enable people to remain independent at home

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) the Communities Scrutiny Group & Growth and Development Scrutiny Group scrutinised the information provided by officers to enhance the provision of accessible housing; and
- b) explored actions that the Council can take to meet the housing needs of residents with disabilities

Actions Table: 17 October 2024

| No. | Action | Who Responsible/Update |
|-----|---|--|
| 8. | Share the presentation from the meeting with Councillors | Democratic Services have emailed a copy of the presentation to all Councillors |
| 8. | Increase the supply of accessible and adapted homes, including wheelchair user dwellings | Officers to take forward suggestions for future versions of the Local Plan to look at increasing the number of properties adapted to M4(2) and M4(3) - Ongoing |
| 8. | Advocate for an increase in funding relative to local need to address the current funding disparities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers to request additional data and analysis about differences in expenditure across local councils – Update information has been emailed to members of the Joint Committee • Portfolio Holder to write to Government regarding the funding formula - The Portfolio Holder has written to the Deputy Prime Minister, Angela |

| | | |
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| | | Raynor – please find information here: RBC calls on Deputy Prime Minister to end postcode lottery for Disabled Facilities Grants - Rushcliffe Borough Council |
| 8. | Review of the customer pathway and exploration of joined up systems to create efficiencies and risk sharing | Comms Team to help advertise the DFG to ensure residents are aware that they can apply for it - Information has been publicised about an increased £200k of DFG funding: COG reviewing the £200k increased funding . Information will be shared more widely in 2025. |

The meeting closed at 9.01 pm.

CHAIR

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Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 29 January 2025

The Health of our Town and Village Centres

Report of the Director Development and Economic Growth

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of the recent retail reviews commissioned for each of our 7 larger town/village centres. It includes current challenges and opportunities and sets out recommendations, identified in the retail review, for areas the Council can focus on in the short, medium and long term.
- 1.2. The report also identifies the priorities and actions from the recently published Economic Growth Strategy that have been selected to help support and enhance the offer in our town and village centres. The action plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis and therefore the initial list of actions is not exhaustive, however suggested additional areas of work need to consider the role of the Council and the available resources.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

- a) Review the information and data provided on the town and village centres across the Borough.
- b) Consider the identified priorities and initial actions from the Economic Growth Strategy and suggest actions to be prioritised.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The town and village centres across the Borough have continued to perform well despite challenges over the last few years. However, the Council knows it cannot be complacent and it is important therefore that current performance is reviewed and action to support and enhance them is considered.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. In 2023 the Council commissioned reviews of its 7 main town centres; Bingham, Cotgrave, East Leake, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent, Ruddington and West Bridgford. This work was completed by Save the High Street. The

purpose of this was to understand the current offer, challenges, opportunities and some recommendations were identified.

4.2. Key data contained in the reviews is highlighted in the following table (data from April 2023):

| Centre | Footfall (average per month) | Vacant units | % of independents |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Bingham | 466,000 | 5 | 70% |
| Cotgrave | 213,000 | 0 | 73% |
| East Leake | 206,000 | 3 | 65% |
| Keyworth | 86,000 | 3 | 70% |
| Radcliffe on Trent | 263,000 | 3 | 73% |
| Ruddington | 314,000 | 4 | 82% |
| West Bridgford | 1,300,000 | 13 | 46% |

- 4.3. The data shows a generally very positive picture for the town/village centres:
- Most have more independents than the regional and national averages (West Bridgford's figure is more in line with the averages)
 - Vacancy rates are low and those identified in West Bridgford, the majority did not stay vacant for long and have now been re-let.
 - Footfall is low in Keyworth, but this could be linked to the size of the town centre and the fact that it is split between 2 areas.
 - In all centres, compared to national averages, there is a higher proportion of service businesses e.g. hairdressers, estate agents, dry cleaners etc.

This data provides a useful baseline which can be reviewed in future to help to identify the impact of any actions. A summary of key insights from the 7 retail reviews can be found at appendix A.

- 4.4. The retail reviews recommended some actions that the Council could take to support the town and village centres. This includes:
- Working closely with defined stakeholder groups e.g. landlords to proactively influence the future of town centres.
 - Providing targeted business support programmes for high street businesses.
 - Carrying out feasibility studies for possible future uses of long-term empty units.
 - Establishing a formal trader's group where these don't already exist.
 - High street incubator/pop up space to support start-up businesses where space exists.
- 4.5. These recommendations and the data from the retail reviews has fed into the Economic Growth Strategy. The recommendations will become part of the action plan supporting the strategy and will be developed over time. As Councillors will be aware some of the above activity is already in place in some town centres e.g. East Leake Traders Group and Ruddington Village Centre Partnership. These already established groups provide some best practice that can be learned from and shared with other areas of the Borough.

- 4.6. The Council have produced an Economic Growth Strategy which was adopted by Cabinet in October 2024. The Strategy has 3 priorities:
- Place and Experience: what it is like to live, work and visit Rushcliffe including our town centres and high streets, housing growth and our culture and heritage.
 - Investment and Infrastructure: attracting new businesses to the Borough and securing the right transport and other infrastructure to support growth.
 - Business Support, Growth and Skills: providing the right support to our existing businesses and understanding our current and future skills needs
- 4.7. As can be seen town centres and high streets is clearly referenced in the first priority of place and experience. However, it also links to the other priorities including transport and accessibility as well as business support, growth and skills. Town centres are about more than economic growth they are a fundamental part of what makes a great place to live. It is important therefore that we consider the future of our town centres and what we can do, working with our partners, to support and enhance them.
- 4.8. Specific actions identified within the Economic Growth Strategy to support town and village centres includes:
- Deliver appropriate recommendations contained within the 7 district centre retail reviews (as identified at paragraph 4.4)
 - Landlord/agents forums
 - Retail groups/forums - including bringing together different areas to share best practice etc.
 - Review of empty space and opportunity to work with landlords to promote available space
 - Public realm improvements on Central Avenue in West Bridgford working towards the opportunity for pedestrianisation
 - Creation of vision documents for each of our 7 largest town and village centres, starting with West Bridgford because of the significant plans for the area over the coming years including: new pedestrian and cycle bridge and the relocation of County Council away from County Hall and new and future housing growth in the area.
- 4.9. Other linked actions which are relevant to town and village centres are included under a number of the ambitions. However, ones linked to tourism are particularly relevant:
- Create a Rushcliffe Destination Management Plan/Tourism Strategy to inform local activity and priorities
 - More promotion of the tourism offer in Rushcliffe, working with partners e.g. City and County Councils as required.
 - Tourism brochure/s
 - Roundtable discussions with sports clubs and ongoing dialogue
 - Meeting/workshop/networking with visitor economy businesses

- Review of 'West Bridgford Way' and exploring opportunities for its future
- Review of markets in the Borough, exploring opportunities to bring greater benefit to our town and village centres and development of a strategy

4.10. There are many actions to be delivered and due to resources available these will need to be prioritised; it is a 5 year strategy and so not everything will or can be delivered immediately. Over the next 12 months it is intended that the Economic Growth Team focus on the following areas to support our town and village centres:

- Masterplan/vision document for West Bridgford
- Progressing the pedestrianisation of West Bridgford following public realm work completed using UK Shared Prosperity Funding.
- Establishment of town centre groups including learning from best practice from groups already established in the Borough
- Establishment of landlord forums
- Meeting/workshop/networking with visitor economy businesses to include those in the hospitality sector, including considering more that can be done on accessibility and training to support this.
- Tourism brochure/s to promote the offer in our town and village centres and the opportunity to better promote heritage assets across the Borough.

4.11. As this list demonstrates there is a lot of engagement planned with businesses which feels like an important first step to listen and understand where the Borough Council can have an impact and add value.

4.12. In addition the team will spend some time researching best practice from other areas including:

- Discussions with other boroughs and districts across Nottinghamshire
- Association of Town Centre Management
- Institute of Place Management
- Case studies from the High Street Taskforce
- Stronger Towns Funding and the process and governance that surrounds that

At the time of writing the Council is waiting to hear how much, if any, UKSPF it will receive in 2025/26. Government have confirmed that East Midlands County Combined Authority will receive £25,170,819 (£7,872,911 capital and £17,297,908 revenue). EMCCA have indicated that Borough Councils will receive an allocation of this and have suggested councils work on the basis of receiving 60% of the allocation received in 2023/24. For Rushcliffe that would be £980,400 (with 4% allowed for management and admin costs). If received this could help with delivering some of these actions, it would also impact on the capacity of the team which may slow delivery on some actions so aligning allocations with planned activity will be important. Confirmation is expected following the EMCCA Board meeting on 10 February.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. There is a risk that some of the actions identified cannot be delivered. However, the intention is that the action plan is developed over time and this could mean changing and updating actions as work progresses.
- 5.2. There is a risk that plans that are developed are not deliverable due to a lack of public sector or private funding. It is important however that these plans are in place so that funding can be applied for should the opportunity arise. These plans enable the Council to highlight the ambitions of Rushcliffe and the opportunity the area presents.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

- 6.1.1. The Economic Growth Strategy identifies actions and ambitions to support and enhance town and village centres over the next 5 years. These actions could have potentially significant financial implications for the budget and should be considered within the context of the Council's priorities and medium-term budget resources.
- 6.1.2. Additional capital funding of £500k has been earmarked from efficiencies identified in the Q1 revenue report to support pedestrianisation of West Bridgford identified at paragraph 4.10. The use of this is predicated on attracting further external funding as pedestrianisation and ongoing highways maintenance costs would be the responsibility of the Highways Authority.
- 6.1.3. Further budget requirements will need to be resourced potentially from future efficiencies and incorporated into the 5-year Medium Term Financial Strategy. Many of the actions are expected to be funded from existing resources (e.g. existing staffing costs).

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no direct equalities implications associated with this report. As actions from the retail reviews and Economic Growth Strategy are progressed equality impact assessments will be carried out as required.

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

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

6.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

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

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

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|--------------------|---|
| The Environment | |
| Quality of Life | The offer in town and village centres is an integral part of quality of life in the Borough. Giving residents access to the amenities and services they need as well as providing space for communities to come together. |
| Efficient Services | |
| Sustainable Growth | As the Borough is growing with new homes planned across the Borough it is important we support our town and village centres to respond to the opportunity and also challenge that this presents. |

8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

- a) Review the information and data provided on the town and village centres across the Borough.
- b) Consider the identified priorities and initial actions from the Economic Growth Strategy and propose any additional areas of work.

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| For more information contact: | Catherine Evans Head of Economic Growth and Property 0115 9148552 cevans@rushcliffe.gov.uk |
| Background papers available for Inspection: | None |
| List of appendices: | Appendix A – overview of key findings from retail reviews. |

Appendix A

Key insights from the Retail Reviews**Bingham**

- The review considered 102 high street business locations in the centre of Bingham, falling within an area bounded by Fairfield Street to the west, Cherry Street to the east, the railway to the north and Long Acre to the south.
- The average monthly footfall in Bingham is around 466,000 people, in a range of 424,000 to 535,000.
- There are around 12,400 people in 5,100 households within a five-minute drive time of Bingham Centre.
- At around £36,600, the average household income for Bingham is about 13% higher than the national average household income, though about 2% below the Rushcliffe average.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Bingham grew by 12%, reflecting local housing development during that period.
- In comparison to GB, the retail mix in Bingham is biased toward service businesses (47% in Bingham versus 26% in GB), has a lower vacancy rate (5% in Bingham versus 14% in GB), and has a smaller share of convenience and leisure businesses.
- Bingham Centre has a higher proportion of independent high street businesses than the national and borough averages.
- The overall vulnerability¹ of Bingham centre to the high street's evolution is moderate, with a relatively balanced mix of businesses across different vulnerability categories. In April 2023, Bingham centre had 5 vacant units, distributed across the area and had minimal impact on the high street experience.
- The review has given rise to key recommendations around mobilising stakeholder groups around town centre curation opportunities, providing targeted support programmes for high street traders, and carrying out a feasibility study to reimagine 21 and 22 Market Place.

Cotgrave

- The review considered 40 high street business locations found in the centre of Cotgrave in and around the Cotgrave Shopping Centre (including Scotland Bank and Cotgrave Business Hub), on and near Woodview, and around Main Road, The Cross and Bingham Road including neighbouring Plumtree Road, Candleby Court and Candleby Lane.

¹ As the high street evolves, the vulnerability of some high street businesses to the emergence of experience-based shopping, online offerings, and digitally enabled business models is likely to increase. For example, product retail has seen a retreat from physical locations to online sales, accelerated by the pandemic. Service businesses handling physical goods (e.g. dry cleaning, parcel shipping, picture framing) are adopting collection/return models, operating from non-high street locations. A high street of the future is likely to be less dependent on Product retail and more dependent on Experiences, In-person services and Right now! offerings.

- Average monthly footfall in Cotgrave is around 213,000 people, in a range of 190,000 to 250,000.
- There are around 6,800 people in 2,900 households within a five-minute drive time of Cotgrave centre.
- At around £35,400, the average household income for Cotgrave is about 10% higher than the national average household income, though about 5% below the Rushcliffe average.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Cotgrave increased by 14%, the second fastest growth rate across the seven Rushcliffe centres after East Leake.
- In comparison to GB, the retail mix in Cotgrave is biased to service businesses (48% in Cotgrave versus 26% in GB), has a smaller share of comparison businesses (13% in Cotgrave versus 24% in GB), and appears to have no vacant units at the time of review.
- Cotgrave centre has a much higher proportion of independent high street businesses than the national and borough averages.
- The overall vulnerability of Cotgrave centre to the high street's evolution is relatively low, with a balanced mix of businesses across different vulnerability categories. In April 2023, no vacant units were identified in Cotgrave.
- The review has given rise to key recommendations around mobilising stakeholder groups around town centre curation opportunities, establishing a formal traders group, and providing targeted support programmes for high street traders.

East Leake

- The review considered 48 high street business locations in the centre of East Leake concentrated around Main Street and Gotham Road.
- The average monthly footfall in East Leake is around 206,000 people, in a range of 181,000 to 252,000.
- There are around 9,112 people in 3,766 households within a five-minute drive time of East Leake centre.
- At around £41,400, the average household income for East Leake is about 28% higher than the national average household income, and about 11% higher than the Rushcliffe average.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of East Leake increased by 32%, the fastest growth rate across the seven Rushcliffe centres.
- In comparison to GB, the retail mix in East Leake is biased to service businesses (40% in East Leake versus 26% in GB), has a lower vacancy rate (6% in East Leake versus 14% in GB), has a smaller share of convenience and comparison businesses, and larger share of leisure businesses.
- There is a balanced distribution of independent, regional, and national businesses, aligning with national and regional averages.
- The overall vulnerability of East Leake centre to changes in the high street is relatively low to moderate, with a balanced mix of businesses across different vulnerability categories.

- In April 2023, East Leake centre had 3 vacant units with minimal impact on the high street experience, and its retail vacancy rate was lower than the East Midlands average, indicating a stable retail environment.
- The review has given rise to key recommendations around mobilising stakeholder groups around village centre curation opportunities and providing targeted support programmes for high street traders.

Keyworth

- The review considered 38 high street business locations in the centre of Keyworth, concentrated around Main Street The Square and Bunny Lane.
- Average monthly footfall in Keyworth is around 86,000 people, in a range of 75,000 to 97,000.
- There are around 8,800 people in 3,900 households within a five-minute drive time of Keyworth centre.
- At around £41,300, the average household income for Keyworth is about 28% higher than the national average household income, and about 11% higher than the Rushcliffe average.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Keyworth increased by 0.3%. T
- In comparison to GB, the retail mix in Keyworth is biased to service businesses (43% in Keyworth versus 26% in GB), has a lower vacancy rate (8% in Keyworth versus 14% in GB), and has a smaller share of comparison and leisure businesses.
- Keyworth centre has a higher proportion of independent high street businesses than the national and borough averages.
- The overall vulnerability of Keyworth centre to the high street's evolution is moderate, with a relatively balanced mix of businesses across different vulnerability categories
- In April 2023, Keyworth centre had 3 vacant units, distributed across the area
- The review has given rise to key recommendations around mobilising stakeholder groups around village centre curation opportunities, establishing a formal traders group, providing targeted support programmes for high street traders and implementing a high street incubator.

Radcliffe on Trent

- The review considered 73 high street business locations in the centre of Radcliffe-on-Trent, concentrated around Main Road, Bingham Road and Shelford Road and on adjacent roads including Cropwell Road, Hunt Close, New Road, Richmond Terrace, Station Terrace, Vicarage Lane and Walkers Yard.
- Average monthly footfall in Radcliffe-on-Trent is around 263,000 people, in a range of 233,000 to 290,000.
- There are around 9,200 people in 4,100 households within a five-minute drive time of Radcliffe-on-Trent centre.

- At around £33,600, the average household income for Radcliffe-on-Trent is about 4% higher than the national average household income, though about 10% below the Rushcliffe average.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Radcliffe-on-Trent decreased by 1.3%.
- In comparison to GB, the retail mix in Radcliffe-on-Trent is biased to service businesses (47% in Radcliffe-on-Trent versus 26% in GB), has a lower vacancy rate (5% in Radcliffe-on-Trent versus 14% in GB), and has a smaller share of comparison businesses.
- Radcliffe-on-Trent centre has a higher proportion of independent high street businesses than the national and borough averages
- The overall vulnerability of Radcliffe-on-Trent centre to the high street's evolution is low to moderate, with a relatively balanced mix of businesses across different vulnerability categories.
- In April 2023, Radcliffe-on-Trent centre had 4 vacant units, distributed across the area and had minimal impact on the high street experience, and its retail vacancy rate was lower than the East Midlands average, indicating a stable retail environment
- The review has given rise to key recommendations around mobilising stakeholder groups around village centre curation opportunities, establishing a formal traders' group, providing targeted support programmes for high street traders, and carrying out a feasibility study to reimagine 1A Bingham Road.

Ruddington

- The review considered 85 high-street business locations in the centre of Ruddington concentrated around High Street, Church Street, Kempson Street, Wilford Road, Easthorpe Street, Charles Street, Shaw Street, Chapel Street, Distillery Street and The Green.
- The average monthly footfall in Ruddington is around 314,000 people, in a range of 287,000 to 360,000.
- There are around 28,400 people in 12,000 households within a five-minute drive time of Ruddington centre
- At around £34,000, the average household income for Ruddington is about 5% higher than the national average household income, though about 9% below the Rushcliffe average.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of Ruddington increased by 10%.
- In comparison to GB, the retail mix in Ruddington is biased to service businesses (39% in Ruddington versus 26% in GB), has a lower vacancy rate (5% in Ruddington versus 14% in GB), has a larger share of leisure businesses (32% in Ruddington versus 25% in GB) and has a smaller share of comparison and convenience businesses.
- Ruddington centre has a much higher proportion of independent high-street businesses than the national and borough averages. Ruddington has the highest share of independent businesses of all seven Rushcliffe centres considered, reinforcing the independent nature of Ruddington centre.

- The overall vulnerability of Ruddington centre to the high street's evolution is moderate, with a relatively balanced mix of businesses across different vulnerability categories.
- The review has given rise to key recommendations around mobilising stakeholder groups around village centre curation opportunities and providing targeted support programmes for high street traders.

West Bridgford

- The review considered 138 high-street business locations in the centre of West Bridgford, within an area bounded by the junction of Bridgford Road with Millicent Road to the north, to Gordon Square in the south, from the junction of Rectory Road with Bridgford Road to the west to the M&S Foodhall on Albert Road in the east.
- The average monthly footfall in West Bridgford is around 1.28 million people, in a range of 1.18 million to 1.45 million.
- There are around 16,300 people in 6,800 households within a five-minute drive time of West Bridgford centre
- At around £42,700, the average household income for West Bridgford is about 32% higher than the national average household income, and about 15% above the Rushcliffe average.
- Between 2011 and 2021 the population of West Bridgford decreased by 1.7% (note - the output area geography changed slightly between the 2011 and 2021 census, which means the two data sets are not a complete like-for-like comparison).
- In comparison to GB, the retail mix in West Bridgford is biased to service businesses (46% in West Bridgford versus 26% in GB), has a lower vacancy rate (9% in West Bridgford versus 14% in GB), and has a smaller share of comparison, convenience and leisure businesses.
- The overall vulnerability of West Bridgford centre to the high street's evolution is moderate to high, with a relatively balanced mix of businesses across different vulnerability categories In April 2023,
- West Bridgford centre had 13 vacant units, distributed across the area, with a concentration around Tudor Square and the south end of Central Avenue, with a vacancy rate lower than for the East Midlands and for GB, though higher than for other Rushcliffe centres.
- The review has given rise to key recommendations around mobilising stakeholder groups around town centre curation opportunities, establishing a formal traders' group, providing targeted support programmes for high street traders, implementing a high street incubator, and carrying out a feasibility study to reimagine from a short list of units at 1 Central Avenue, 68 Bridgford Road, 26 Tudor Square and 24a Gordon Road.

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|  <p>Rushcliffe Borough Council</p> | <p>Growth and Development Scrutiny Group</p> <p>Wednesday, 29 January 2025</p> <p>Work Programme</p> |
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Report of the Director for Finance and Corporate Services

1. Summary

- 1.1. The work programme is a standing item for discussion at each meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Group. In determining the proposed work programme due regard has been given to matters usually reported to the Group and the timing of issues to ensure best fit within the Council's decision making process.
- 1.2. The table does not take into account any items that need to be considered by the Group as special items. These may occur, for example, through changes required to the Constitution or financial regulations, which have an impact on the internal controls of the Council.
- 1.3. The future work programme was updated and agreed at the meeting of the Corporate Overview Group on 19 November 2024, including any items raised via the scrutiny matrix.

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

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

2. Recommendation

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

26 March 2025

- Management of Open Spaces and New Developments
- Work Programme

3. Reason for Recommendation

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

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