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**Our reference:**  
**Your reference:**  
**Date:** Friday, 4 May 2018



**Rushcliffe Community  
Contact Centre**  
Rectory Road  
West Bridgford  
Nottingham  
NG2 6BU

To all Members of the Cabinet

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Tuesday, 15 May 2018 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber Area B, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen O'Connell'.

Glen O'Connell  
Monitoring Officer

## **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 March 2018 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

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

5. Citizens' Questions

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

6. Care Leavers' Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Pages 9 - 18)

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

### Membership

Chairman: Councillor S J Robinson  
Vice-Chairman: Councillor D Mason  
Councillors: A Eadyvean, G Moore and R Upton

**In person**  
Monday to Friday  
8.30am - 5pm  
First Saturday of  
each month  
9am - 1pm

**By telephone**  
Monday to Friday  
8.30am - 5pm

**Telephone:**  
0115 981 9911  
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[customerservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk)

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Rushcliffe Arena  
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West Bridgford  
Nottingham  
NG2 7YG



7. Draft Off-Street Car Parking Strategy 2018 - 2022 (Pages 19 - 68)

The report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods is attached.

8. Parkwood Leisure Ltd - Lex Leisure Community Interest Company Proposal (Pages 69 - 72)

The report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods is attached.

9. Report of the Corporate Peer Challenge (Pages 73 - 96)

The report of the Chief Executive is attached.

### 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.



## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**TUESDAY, 13 MARCH 2018**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber Area B - Rushcliffe Borough Council,  
Rushcliffe Arena

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors S J Robinson (Chairman), A Edyvean, G Moore and R Upton

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillors

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

L Webb	Constitutional Services Officer
D Banks	Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods
A Graham	Chief Executive
J Crowle	Solicitor
G O'Connell	Monitoring Officer
A Pegram	Service Manager - Communities

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillors D Mason

#### **49 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **50 Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 February 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 February 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **51 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2017/18 - Quarter 3 Update**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services, to provide an update on the Council's budget position for both revenue and capital accounts as at 31 December 2017. It was noted that the budget position had already been considered by the Corporate Governance Group on 8 February 2018 (Corporate Governance Group Minute No.34 2017/18)

The Portfolio Holder advised that projected revenue outturn amounted to £577,000, of which £454,000 related to additional government funding due to business rates relief changes. It was also noted that capital scheme re-phasing and potential savings were £10,587,000. The Portfolio Holder advised that at its meeting on 19 February 2018 the Strategic Growth Board had supported a

request be made to Cabinet to allocate £50,000 of the current projected underspend to the Strategic Growth Board budget. It was noted that there was currently £44,622 remaining in the budget, with commitments amounting to £19,000. The Portfolio Holder noted that the current budget position of the Council encouraged growth whilst also delivering high quality services to residents.

In seconding the recommendations Councillor Edyvean was pleased that the Council was maintaining well controlled finances whilst also delivering first class services to residents. Councillor Edyvean stated that despite ambitious capital expenditure plans such as the finalisation of the Cotgrave regeneration project, testament should be paid to the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services and the rest of the Finance team for being able to manage the Council's finances effectively.

Councillor Robinson was pleased to note the excellent accounts of the Council and to see the realisation of capital expenditure in transformation projects such as the regeneration of Cotgrave town centre and the Land off Chapel Lane, Bingham.

**It was RESOLVED that:**

- a) the projected revenue and capital budget positions for the year of £577,000 revenue efficiencies, and £10,587,000 from capital scheme re-phasing and potential savings be noted.
- b) £50,000 to be taken from the current year's projected underspend position to replenish the Strategic Growth Board budget.

**Reasons for decisions**

To demonstrate good governance in terms of scrutinising the Council's ongoing financial position and compliance with Council Financial Regulations.

**52 Progress Report and Review of the Planning Peer Challenge Recommendations**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning presented the report of the Executive Manager – Communities which provided an update on the progress made in the delivery of the actions which were set in accordance with the recommendations of the planning peer challenge which had taken place in February 2017. It was noted that the main recommendation of the Planning Peer Challenge had been to introduce controlled public speaking at Planning Committee. The Portfolio Holder also noted the other recommendations as outlined in the officer's report.

The Portfolio Holder was pleased to note that majority of the actions that addressed the recommendations had been completed, including changes to the Development Control Committee which included its renaming as the Planning Committee, the implementation of an earlier start time, a reduction in the size of the committee and the removal of ex-officio roles. It was also noted that an updated public speaking protocol had been attached to the report in which the Cabinet were asked to approve so that the amended protocol could

be formally adopted.

In seconding the recommendations, Councillor Moore endorsed the work of those who took part in the Planning Peer Challenge and noted that it was healthy for the Council to take part regularly in peer challenges in order to learn from best practice. Councillor Moore also endorsed the introduction of controlled public speaking at Planning Committee which he believed had improved the perception of transparency of the decision making process and of the Council.

Councillor Edyvean in endorsing the recommendations believed that the changes made with regard to the Planning Committee had enhanced the role of the ward Councillor and was pleased to note that the introduction of controlled public speaking was being delivered effectively.

Councillor Robinson was pleased to report positive feedback on the new procedures received from the Parish Councillors who had spoken at the Planning Committee. Councillor Robinson also noted his support for the introduction of the equal length of timings of those wanting to speak at Planning Committee.

**It was RESOLVED that:**

- a) the progress made in delivering the actions identified in the Action Plan on the Planning Peer Challenge recommendations be noted.
- b) the proposed changes to the public speaking protocol for Planning Committee, as detailed at Appendix 3 of the officer's report be approved.
- c) that the Executive Manager – Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing and the Chairman of the Planning Committee be delegated authority to make minor changes to the public speaking protocol for Planning Committee.

**Reason for decisions**

The continued delivery of the action plan will ensure the Council's planning services are aligned to delivering the significant growth agenda. Furthermore, public engagement with the planning service has been enhanced through improved committee procedures, including but not limited to controlled public speaking.

**53 Affordable Housing Review**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning presented the report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods. The report provided Cabinet with a review of affordable housing including progress to date, forward projections and the emerging opportunities to create additional affordable housing in the Borough.

The Portfolio Holder noted that the availability of affordable housing was a current national debate but was pleased that officers were being proactive in the growing need of affordable housing within Rushcliffe. The Portfolio Holder advised that the Council's main sources of new affordable housing had been Section 106 sites, the redevelopment of garage sites, in partnership with Metropolitan Housing and the development of rural exception sites. It was also noted that the affordable housing projection for 2017/18 to 2021/22 was 805 new properties.

The Portfolio Holder noted that there was currently £1.6 million available in the capital fund programme set aside to support affordable housing. The Portfolio Holder recommended that if approved, funding should be used to seek suitable sites in small communities within the Borough for affordable housing sites. The Portfolio Holder was pleased to recommend to Cabinet the disposal of two sites at Malwood, Cotgrave and Walcote Drive, West Bridgford at nil value to Metropolitan Housing in order for 7 affordable housing units to be developed.

The Portfolio Holder suggested an alteration to recommendation b) outlined in the report. The Portfolio Holder proposed that recommendation b) should read

“approve the commissioning of rural housing needs surveys and exception site development in consultation with Parish Council’s.”

The Portfolio Holder believed that after consideration that rural housing needs surveys should not be commissioned independent from support of Parish Councils.

In seconding the recommendations Councillor Edyvean noted his support for using small amounts of Council land to facilitate the provision and supply of affordable housing. Councillor Edyvean also confirmed that the delivery of affordable housing was a priority of the Council and was pleased that the Council's commitment to affordable housing meant that affordable housing was being delivered more successfully in Rushcliffe than in other neighbouring authorities.

Councillor Robinson welcomed the alteration to recommendation b) and was pleased that it was projected for the Council would deliver 805 affordable by the end of 2021/22.

Councillor Moore supported the delivery of affordable homes through rural exception sites and supported the amendment to the recommendation as he believed that working with the Parish Council's was an effective method to understand the housing needs of rural areas.

**It was RESOLVED that:**

- a) the Council owned site at Marlwood, Cotgrave and of the Council's part ownership of a site at Walcote Drive, West Bridgford be disposed of to Metropolitan Housing at a nil value to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing as determined by the Council, subject to advertising the proposed disposals as set out in paragraph 7.2 of the officer's report.
- b) that the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Business be

delegated authority to consider any representations received in regard to a) above.

- c) the commissioning of rural housing needs surveys and exception site development, in consultation with Parish Councils, be approved.
- d) the package of measures as detailed at paragraphs 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 of the officer's report to increase the provision of affordable housing, utilising the Council's approved capital programme allocation for affordable housing, be approved.

#### **Reason for decisions**

To assist with the Council's delivery of affordable housing.

#### **54 Draft Character Appraisal and Proposed Conservation Area for Kneeton**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning presented the report of the Executive Manager – Communities. The Portfolio Holder explained that upon the request of local residents and Councillor Lawrence as ward Councillor, Kneeton had been considered as a conservation area because of its architectural and historic interest which would fulfil the criteria of section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The Portfolio Holder advised that public consultation had taken place on a draft conservation area and an associated appraisal and management plan following approval by Cabinet in July 2017 (Minute No.12 2017/18). It was noted that there had been one objection during the consultation on behalf of the trustees to the Kneeton estate and which was detailed in section 3.4 of the officer's report. The Portfolio Holder advised that the trustees felt that any conservation area proposal should be put on hold until the Council had considered the private 'plan' produced by the trustees. It was noted that the Council were not willing to make any changes to the draft proposal as any suggested changes would be less successful in achieving the purposes of a conservation area designation. The Portfolio Holder noted that the adoption would not be officially completed until notices were published in the Nottingham Post and London Gazette.

In seconding the recommendations Councillor Moore advised that rural life should be protected and influenced by residents who cared about and were willing to preserve where they lived. Councillor Moore commended the work of the residents to protect the village.

Councillor Robinson noted that Rushcliffe was fortunate to have exceptional and attractive rural villages that should be protected through the planning process and was also pleased to note that a great many residents had expressed their views during the consultation period.

#### **It was RESOLVED that:**

- a) the village of Kneeton, as shown edged red on the Plan at Appendix A of the officer's report, be designated as a conservation area under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- b) the Conservation Area Character Appraisal at Appendix B of the officer's report be adopted, as the document which outlines and describes the special architectural and historic character of the conservation area of which it will be desirable to preserve or enhance.

### **Reason for decision**

To comply with Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## **55 Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning presented the report of the Executive Manager – Communities. It was noted that the Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to the Borough Council in July 2017 and following consultation it had proceeded to independent examination. The Portfolio Holder explained that subject to a number of proposed modifications the Plan could now proceed to a referendum if approved by Cabinet.

It was noted that the Borough Council agreed with the proposed modifications and was satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan met the basic conditions and statutory requirements for neighbourhood plans. The Portfolio Holder noted that comments had been made by some Keyworth Parish Councillors in regards to the independent inspector's modifications but confirmed that the Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan could now not be significantly modified as it had already been inspected in its draft form and therefore any further changes would create significant time delays.

The Portfolio Holder advised that if taken to a referendum that resulted in a vote in favour of it becoming part of the local development plan, a report would be presented to Council with a recommendation that the Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan be made part of the statutory development plan for Rushcliffe.

In seconding the recommendations Councillor Edyvean congratulated the residents who helped produce the Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan and noted that Keyworth Parish Council believed that some of the modifications outlined in the examiner's report were not wholly driven by the requirements of a Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Edyvean advised that despite this Parish Council was satisfied with the proposed plan and that it should now be put to a referendum.

Councillor Robinson noted that the Council were very supportive of the implementation of neighbourhood plans because they produced a voice for local communities within the Borough in the planning process.

### **It was RESOLVED that:**

- a) the Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's recommended modifications to the Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan be accepted.
- b) a referendum for the Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan, with the area for



the referendum being the Parish of Keyworth, be held.

- c) the 'Keyworth Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement' be approved and published.


**Reason for decisions**

The Borough Council, as Local Planning Authority, has a statutory duty to assist in the production of Neighbourhood Plans where communities wish to produce them under the Localism Act 2011.

The meeting closed at Time Not Specified.

CHAIRMAN

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 <p><b>Cabinet</b></p> <p><b>15 May 2018</b></p> <p><b>Care Leavers' Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b></p>	<h1>5</h1>
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## **Report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services**

### **Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance Councillor G Moore**

#### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. This report sets out the proposals to introduce a discretionary Care Leavers' Council Tax Reduction Scheme to supplement the Council's existing Council Tax Reduction scheme.
- 1.2. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 establishes a set of principles aimed at bringing the focus back to the looked after child and confirms the "corporate parent" statutory function of the Council. Whilst this Act is not yet fully in force, the intended requirement is clear; local authorities will have a duty to offer the proposed support to this recognised vulnerable group of people. The Council can use existing powers to offer the proposed discretionary relief.
- 1.3. Nottinghamshire County Council has indicated that there are approximately 33 care leavers currently living within the Borough, and whilst difficult to determine at this stage, it is highly likely that the majority of care leavers will either be receiving council tax relief under the Council's existing scheme or through the Council's housing benefit scheme, if the care leaver resides within housing in multiple occupation.
- 1.4. The Care Leavers' Council Tax reduction scheme proposes to provide a reduction, up to 100%, where a care leaver has a liability for council tax within the Borough. The amount of reduction awarded will be the relevant amount (after all other discounts, reductions and exemptions) required to reduce the care leaver's council tax liability amount to zero. Where the reduction is awarded, it will remain in place until the care leaver reaches the age of 21 years (the care leaver's 21st birthday) or ceases to be liable for the council tax.

## **2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) approve the Council's guidance set out in Appendix 1 for determining an application for a reduction in council tax for persons leaving care and living in the Borough effective from the 1 April 2018; and
- b) delegates to the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services, the authority to determine applications for discretionary reduction in council tax under section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in relation to persons leaving care and living in the Borough of Rushcliffe in accordance with the guidance at Appendix 1.

## **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1. The Council has a corporate parenting responsibility and it is considered that this reduction in council tax contributes to the fulfilment of this role.

## **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The Children's Society report "A local offer for care leavers" (November 2017) reports that care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group and can find the transition to independent living challenging and often experience financial hardship as a result of council tax liability which can lead to arrears and loss of tenancy.
- 4.2 The Government strategy "Keep on Caring" – supporting young people from care to independence (July 2016) confirms that the corporate parenting should apply in relation to provision of all the services that the local authority provides, not just the Children's Services department. The strategy recommends that local authorities consider discounts and exemptions from council tax for care leavers as a way of providing financial support and assisting them with establishing stability in their home lives. These principles have subsequently been incorporated within the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and although the majority of the provisions (requirements for local authorities) within the Act are yet to be in force, the Government and Children's Society are encouraging local authorities to offer the proposed support.
- 4.3 The Council has the discretion to reduce council tax for individuals and prescribed groups in accordance with Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 4.4 For the purposes of this report a care leaver is defined as a person who is currently resident in the Borough with a council tax liability and has been in the care of a local authority (looked after) for a period, or cumulative periods equalling at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and which ended on or after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

4.5 The following table shows the number of defined care leavers for each local authority as at the 5 February 2018.

Local Authority	Nottinghamshire County Council defined care leavers
Ashfield District Council	104
Bassetlaw District Council	77
Broxtowe Borough Council	43
Gedling Borough Council	44
Mansfield District Council	103
Newark and Sherwood District Council	65
Rushcliffe Borough Council	33

4.6 The Council currently operates a council tax reduction scheme (CTRS) which grants a reduction to council tax payers based on an assessment of their means to pay. It is estimated that a significant proportion of care leavers, indicated above, will fall within the scope of the CTRS and will already be receiving a reduction in their council tax. However, there is no specific policy for care leavers' and the approval of the proposed scheme would act as a top up for any care leavers' who currently do not receive CTRS at 100%.

4.7 The policy will apply to Rushcliffe care leavers' only, however care leavers from other local authorities, now living in Rushcliffe can apply for relief under the Council's current CTRS, as well as seeking support, including financial assistance, from the local authority that formerly looked after them.

4.8 This discretionary relief will not be means tested and will be granted to anyone meeting the eligibility criteria as set out in Appendix 1, the guidance for how the discretion should be exercised. In summary:

- Where the reduction is awarded, it will remain in place until the care leaver reaches the age of 21 years (the care leaver's 21st birthday) or ceases to be liable for the council tax, whichever date occurs first. In these circumstances, the bill will be apportioned.
- Where a care leaver has a liability for council tax, the reduction in that liability will be up to 100%. The amount of reduction awarded will be the relevant amount (after all other discounts, reductions and exemptions) required to reduce the care leaver's council tax liability amount to zero.

## 5. Other Options Considered

5.1. An alternative would be not to offer a council tax reduction to care leavers, but this is not in accordance with best practice and potentially means the council is falling short of its corporate parenting requirements.

## 6. Risk and Uncertainties

6.1. There is a risk, if not approved, of the Council not meeting its corporate parenting responsibilities as set out in Children and Social Work Act 2017.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Finance**

Carer leavers' discounts are administered under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, which means they are discretionary local reliefs and must be paid fully by the local authority. An adjustment will be made between the General Fund to the Collection Fund at the end of each financial year to ensure that the cost position is neutral for the Borough Council's preceptors.

As indicated by Nottinghamshire County Council, there were 33 care leavers in Rushcliffe as at 5 February 2018. The Borough Council does not yet have a full understanding of this demographic, but it is probable that the majority of care leavers will fall within the scope of the existing CTRS or receive support through the Council's housing benefit scheme, if resident within housing in multiple occupation (where the council tax charge is passed on through their rent as the owners are liable). If the proposed scheme is approved it is envisaged that an arrangement will be put in place with Nottinghamshire County Council and the individuals to allow information to be shared to enable the Care Leavers' discretionary relief to be awarded.

As an illustration of the worst case scenario a decrease in the collected council tax could be in the order of £40k per annum (assuming Band A). This is based on 33 care leavers in 2018/19 living independently for a full year in a Band A property. However, as previously stated, it is extremely unlikely that the cost will be this high and it is anticipated that the actual costs will be much lower and will be able to be contained within existing budgets.

The Borough Council's software for council tax does have the facility to administer the proposed reduction at no additional cost.

### **7.2. Legal**

Where it considers appropriate, a local authority in England must publish information about services for care leavers offered by others which the local authority has power to offer as a result of its functions under the Children Act 1989. Information required to be published by a local authority under this section is to be known as its "local offer for care leavers."

Under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Council has the power to reduce (or further reduce) liability for council tax for a chargeable dwelling for a specified period of time in any case as the local authority for the area in which the dwelling is situated thinks fit. Subsection (6) confirms that such reduction includes the power to reduce the liability to nil. Subsection (7) confirms that the power may be exercised in relation to a particular case or by determining a class of cases.

### **7.3 Other Implications**

None.

## 8. Corporate Priorities

- 8.1 The relief schemes will contribute to Council's corporate priority of maintaining and enhancing our residents' quality of life.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Nigel Carter Service Manager – Finance and Commercial 0115 914 8430 ncarter@rushcliffe.gov.uk
<b>Background papers Available for Inspection:</b>	Department for Education, Keep on Caring – July 2016  The Children's Society – A local offer for Care Leavers – November 2017  Children and Social Work Act 2017
<b>List of appendices (if any):</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Care Leavers' Council Tax Reduction Scheme

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# Care Leavers' Council Tax Reduction Guidance

Effective from 1 April 2018

Version	V1
Approved	
Review date	31 March 2019

# 1. Introduction

Rushcliffe Borough Council has the discretion to reduce the council tax of any such persons as it sees fit. This discretion is allowed by section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Council has determined that it will provide a reduction in council tax to those persons liable to pay council tax within the Borough who are defined as care leavers.

Providing this support will help care leavers manage the social and financial transition from local authority care to independent living.

## 2. Delegation

The authority to determine applications for council tax reduction for care leavers is delegated to the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services.

Each request for relief will be considered on its own merits.

## 3. Who is eligible for council tax reduction?

For the purposes of this guidance a care leaver is defined as a person who is currently resident in the Borough with a council tax liability and has been in the care of a local authority (looked after) for a period, or cumulative periods equalling at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and which ended on or after their 16th birthday.

## 4. How will council tax reduction be applied?

The council tax reduction will take effect from 1st April 2018. Care leavers who become responsible for council tax after this date will be granted a reduction from the date their council tax liability begins.

Care leavers who are liable for council tax on 1st April 2018 will be granted a reduction from 1st April 2018.

The reduction will be awarded after all other relevant discounts, reductions and exemptions to the council tax liability have been awarded.

Where the reduction is awarded, it will remain in place until the care leaver reaches the age of 21 years (the care leaver's 21st birthday) or ceases to be liable for the council tax, whichever date occurs first. In these circumstances, the bill will be apportioned.

Where a reduction has been awarded, a council tax bill will be issued showing the detail of the reduction. If a request for reduction is refused, a letter will be issued detailing the reasons for the refusal.

## 5. How much council tax reduction will be applied?

Where a care leaver has a liability for council tax, the reduction in that liability will be up to 100%.

The amount of reduction awarded will be the relevant amount (after all other discounts, reductions and exemptions) required to reduce the care leaver's council tax liability amount to zero.

If, subsequent to an award, the care leaver's liability for council tax reduces during the period of the award, for example if the care leaver becomes entitled to a single person discount, the care leaver's reduction will be amended to ensure the award does not exceed the care leaver's council tax liability for the period.

Where there is a shared liability for council tax, the reduction will only be paid to cover the share for which the care leaver would be liable.


## 6. Right of appeal

Under Section 16 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, a person applying for a reduction in council tax who is not happy with the decision of the Council may appeal the decision.

This appeal in the first instance should be made to the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service. If after this the person making the request for reduction is still not satisfied, they may then make an appeal to the Valuation Tribunal for England (VTE).

The VTE is an independent body which adjudicates between taxpayers and the Council. Appeals to the VTE must be made directly to the VTE.

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	<p style="margin: 0;"><b>Cabinet</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;">15 May 2018</p> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>Draft Off Street Car Parking Strategy 2018 - 2022</b></p>	7
<p><b>Rushcliffe</b> Borough Council</p>		

## Report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods

### Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community and Leisure Councillor D Mason

#### 1 Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out the key elements of the new draft Rushcliffe off street car parking strategy and the future plans for how Rushcliffe will continue to manage it's off street car parking provision. This report also includes a copy of comments received in Appendix A, as part of the consultation process carried out, and the draft strategy in Appendix B along with a summary and action plan of short, medium and long term objectives to cover the period 2018 through to 2022.
  
- 1.2. Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to an ambitious programme of work aimed at contributing to the economic prosperity of the borough and off street car parking is an important supporting factor. To underpin this, the Council has developed its first draft off street car parking strategy. The development of this strategy is based on a comprehensive understanding of the off street parking, supply and demand position in Rushcliffe, as well as the parking experience of local residents, businesses and visitors to our towns and countryside.

#### 2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet;

- a) approve the draft Off Street Car Parking Strategy (Appendix B), and
- b) the Executive Manager be delegated to make minor amendments to the strategy, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to ensure the technical and legal accuracy of the document during its lifespan

#### 3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1. The draft Off Street Car Parking Strategy seeks to:

- Formulate policy and provide guidance and direction for the future delivery of the off street car parking service across the Borough.
- Raise awareness among Members, officers, partners and the public about the car parking challenges facing the Borough and the Council's actions in response.
- Position the Council as forward-looking in regard to how it continues to focus on off street car parking provision.

- Cover the framework for the operational day to day running of parking services across Rushcliffe which has been delivered since September 2014 through a shared services partnership agreement with Broxtowe Borough Council.
- Continue to deliver cost effective and efficient off street car parking provision.

#### **4 Supporting Information**

- 4.1 This strategy addresses the supply and management of the Council's off street car parks. It is a living document and as such, it will constantly change and flex to meet the challenges, needs and best interests of Rushcliffe. The strategy does not cover on street parking which is the responsibility of Nottinghamshire County Council. However it is noted that they are closely linked alongside other elements of the Local Transport Plan therefore discussions and feedback has taken place and the comments received from the County Council have been incorporated in the development of this draft Off Street Car Parking strategy.
- 4.2 The Council operates twelve off street, regulated and enforced car parks, and currently levies pay-and-display charges at six of the locations. Linking in with supporting economic growth the Council seeks to prioritise short stay car parking over long stay provision in its current car parking assets. Whilst there is a range of stay provisions from up to 2 hours to 12 hours maximum, the Council takes into account a range of place based factors and operates a non-uniform tariff policy based on local need and usage.
- 4.3 In these regulated and enforced car parks over 660 public spaces are situated in West Bridgford, Bingham, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent and Rushcliffe Country Park, for use by shoppers, visitors and residents. Currently only the West Bridgford car parks, Bingham (Union Street and Needham Street) and Rushcliffe Country Park are pay-and-display; all others are free, although there are plans to introduce some form of short stay parking at Bunny Lane Car Park in Keyworth following local demand, liaison with local ward members and the Parish Council.
- 4.4 It should be noted that whilst the Council owns other car parks in various parts of the Borough, these are not regulated and therefore enforcement cannot currently take place. One of the short term aims identified is to consider regulating other council owned car parks across the Borough under one new parking order. This will enable decisions to be made in the future over potential charging and enforcement should it become consider necessary based on local need and usage factors.
- 4.5 The strategy lists ten new car parking objectives clearly linked to the Council's three Corporate Priorities, the ten new objectives are outlined below:
- Manage parking in order to maintain the vitality and viability of district and town centres by ensuring the needs of shoppers and visitors are prioritised

- Manage parking provision to ensure that it encourages short stay rather than all-day parking
- Manage parking enforcement in a fair and consistent manner
- Manage parking in order to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion
- Manage parking to encourage the use of more sustainable modes and smarter choices
- Provide access to key services for people with special needs and mobility difficulties by providing appropriate parking spaces
- Contribute to the reduction of Carbon Dioxide and Nitrogen Dioxide emissions
- Minimise the negative impacts of parking on the streetscape and environmentally sensitive areas
- Improve the efficiency of the Council's parking services
- Provide revenue to reinvest in parking services to support local economic and social vibrancy

4.6 This new overarching draft strategy encapsulates how the Council will effectively manage its car parks to reflect local circumstances, promote sustainable transport choices through provision of sustainable parking options, maintain high quality and safe parking facilities, set parking charges which facilitate commercial vibrancy and economic growth, promote sustainable and active travel, and enforce parking regulations consistently and effectively, in a transparent manner.

4.7 In order to help shape the final document a public consultation exercise was carried in accordance with the details in Table 1 below. This incorporated a report presented to the Community Development Scrutiny Group, and the document has been changed where applicable to reflect both comments received from the Community Development Group and as part of the overall consultation process. Further detail on the consultation comments received and the Council's response can be found in the summary table in Appendix A whilst the final the Off Street Car Parking Strategy is attached at Appendix B.

**Table 1**

Send out for public consultation	12 February 2018 to 9 March 2018
Share and receive feedback from Community Development Group	20 February 2018
Collate feedback from consultation	12 – 16 March 2018
Present final off street car parking strategy to Cabinet for formal adoption	15 May 2018

4.8 A number of comments were received as part of the consultation exercise which related to matters outside of the scope of the Off Street Car Parking Strategy. Such examples of feedback are included below however all such comments will be shared with Nottinghamshire County Council as the Highway and Transport Authority and any other relevant agency.

- Various comments received in regard to cycle lanes and road safety for cyclists
- Comments received on the future provision of more park and ride locations
- Comments received on more resident permit schemes and reducing the speed limit in areas within West Bridgford
- Lack of parking restrictions and yellow lines in various locations

## **5 Other Options Considered**

5.1 The Council could continue to not have an Off Street Car Parking Strategy, as it is not a legal requirement; however the reasons stated in paragraph 3.1 provide a strong driver to support the adoption of this strategy to help shape future off street car parking provision and its operational delivery.

## **6 Risks and Uncertainties**

6.1 There are no new risks associated with the adoption of this strategy and any risks associated with the delivery of the Council's car parking function are routinely assessed and where necessary captured in the Council's corporate and operational risk registers.

## **7 Finance**

7.1 Given the current economic climate and financial challenges, it is envisaged that the vast majority of the actions outlined in the new strategy will be achieved within existing secured and projected resources and budget available to the Council and its partners.

7.2 Off street parking provides the Council with an income stream through car parking charges and the issuing of fixed penalty notices which is offset against the costs of running and maintaining the car parks and associated resourcing. Income from parking charges for 2017/18 was £673,000 which included the introduction of new tariffs and compulsory charging at Rushcliffe Country Park. The Council also receives an income from the surplus generated by enforcement activities carried out for off-street parking. In 2017/2018 this amounted to £39,000.

7.3 Changes to car parking provision will have cost implications and may lead to changes in car parking charges. These will be dealt with through the Council's usual reporting processes regarding the budget.



## 8 Legal

- 8.1 There is no statutory requirement to produce an Off Street Car Parking Strategy. However, feedback from the Council's Senior Solicitor has been incorporated into the formulation of the Off Street Car Parking Strategy.

## 9 Corporate Priorities

- 9.1 The new draft Off Street Car Parking Strategy links in and directly supports all three of the Council's corporate priorities which are:
- Deliver economic growth to ensure a sustainable, prosperous and thriving local economy
  - Maintain and enhance our residents' quality of life
  - Transform the Council to enable the delivery of efficient high quality services.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	David Banks Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods 0115 914 8438 email <a href="mailto:dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk">dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers Available for Inspection:</b>	None.
<b>List of appendices (if any):</b>	Appendix A – Consultation Comments Appendix B – Off Street Car Parking Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 2022

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## Appendix A – Consultation Comments

The Council received 18 responses to the public consultation on the Off Street Car Parking Strategy. Responses often had multiple comments in them. The comments have been summarised into areas/themes, and any associated amendments to the strategy are summarised here:

Themes	Notes	Amends to the Strategy
<p><u>Joint Strategy with NCC:</u></p> <p>Received 5 comments that the Off Street Parking Strategy should be developed jointly with NCC, to provide a joined up approach to parking.</p>	<p>The strategy aims to address how RBC manages council-owned, off street car parking capacity across the Borough. The strategy was developed in consultation with NCC and meets the NCC Transport Plan objectives for Nottinghamshire (LTP3, 2011-2026; Table 2 – p. 10).</p>	<p>No amends</p>
<p><u>Public Transport</u></p> <p>Received 5 comments about the lack of public transport from the villages to main centre areas, which means people have to use their cars.</p>	<p>Section 2.1 and 3.12 of the strategy acknowledges that high use of private vehicles in Rushcliffe is influenced by the rural locality and lack of viable public transport alternatives. The Council agrees that it is essential that suitable parking is provided (Section 2.2).</p>	<p>No amends</p>
<p><u>Car Parking Charges in Village Centres</u></p> <p>Received 3 comments that as people living in villages needed to use their cars to get to the shopping areas, parking charges would deter people from coming into the town centres and supporting local businesses, forcing them to use free parking provided by large supermarkets and retailers.</p>	<p>The Council takes a non-uniform approach to setting charges or a no-fee tariff (Section 6.7 – p. 18), taking into account the location, economic and social needs of each specific area. Only 50% (6/12) of the car parks have charges.</p>	<p>No amends</p>
<p><u>The Role of Enforcement:</u></p> <p>Received 4 comments related to enforcement for parking outside the lines of bays, parking in dedicated space for market traders who are not using the spaces, the need for enforcement to support the proposed policies if they are actually going to work, and enforcement of charging spaces for electric vehicles.</p>	<p>Comments have been noted and also forwarded to car parking services and NCC.</p>	<p>No amends</p>
<p><u>Sustainable and Green Agendas:</u></p> <p>Received 4 comments on the number of spaces that would be allocated for electric charging when most people still use fossil fuels and why the Council is concerned with this as people cannot afford electric vehicles.</p>	<p>The number of spaces typically installed for electric charging is between 1 to 3 spaces. For example, at Bridgford Road car park with 156 parking bays, 2 electric charging spaces represents 3% of the parking available, leaving 97% for anyone, including diesel and petrol vehicles.</p> <p>Rushcliffe also has 2 areas where Nitrogen Oxide levels exceed national air</p>	<p>No amends</p>

	quality levels, due to the high use of petrol and diesel run vehicles. The Council is committed to addressing Rushcliffe's air quality. Part of this is providing parking areas for motorcycles and cycles, encouraging and supporting the use of these vehicles (section 6.23-6.24 – p. 23).	
<u>Long Stay Parking:</u> Received 4 comments on the need for long term parking to support employment, commuters and ease road congestion.	The strategy recognises this area. Section 6.6 and Recommendations (top of p. 18) and the Action Plan (p. 31) show that long stay options for Bingham, Keyworth and West Bridgford will be reviewed.	No amends
<u>Disabled Parking Provision</u> Received comments regarding the provision of additional disabled parking spaces in Keyworth	The Council follows national guidance on the number of allocated disabled parking spaces in a car park in relation to the overall number of parking spaces in each of its car parks. Planned short stay changes to Bunny Lane car park will also allow for usage monitoring to take place to ensure that provision meets local need	No amends
<u>Fee Structure at West Bridgford</u> Received 2 comments on the £20 fee starting only after 3 hours. Could we please consider 4, 6, and 8 hour options?	The comments have been noted and forwarded to the car parking team.	No amends
<u>Evening Tariff in West Bridgford:</u> Received 2 comments on sorting out the night tariff and cross-over in ticketing to the evening.	The strategy identifies the complexity of the tariff and it will be reviewed in 2018-19 (Section 6.9, recommendations p. 19 and Table 8 action plan on p.31).	No amends
<u>Extending the Secure Cycle Hubs:</u> Received 2 queries on whether the secure cycle hubs would be extended to Bingham and Rushcliffe Country Park (RCP)?	The Council will review extending the secure cycle hub to its other car parks – this will include Bingham and RCP (section 6.24, p. 23 and recommendations top of p. 25).	No amends
<u>Terminology:</u> Received 3 comments that the terms <i>Digital Toolbox</i> and <i>Modal Shift</i> were not widely understood.	Terms have been reviewed in the document.	Definitions, examples and plain English terms have been provided as alternative words in the Exec Summary, and sections 3.12 and 6.7.
<b>Additional Comments Received</b>		
Has the Council assessed the cost of using cashless rather than standard	Pay-by-phone options with costing and	

coin payment systems? Would the Council ever go cashless only?	economic analysis have been done. Contactless payment systems are already available (Section 6.14 – p. 20). It is important to the Council that we provide a range of payment options so everyone can access and use the car parks in a way that meets their needs.	No amends
The strategy needs to clarify the role of the Borough Council in providing car parking for the future in light of expanding communities and employment.	As standard procedure, the Council assesses its role in providing infrastructure for any new developments. Car parking is considered as part of any new developments and community infrastructure.	Clarified in Section 3.11, p.11 – additional sentence added: “ <i>Car parking is also considered as part of any new developments and community infrastructure on a case-by-case basis.</i> ”
The strategy recognises the importance of economic vibrancy but also needs to realise the potential for community and leisure activity which also plays a role.	Section 3.14 sets out the Council’s vision including social, cultural and leisure regeneration and that Rushcliffe is served by a range of services including cultural enterprises and meeting places. The use of the term <i>economic vibrancy</i> has been reviewed in the strategy and where appropriate, expanded to include social vibrancy and/or quality of life, which both include community and leisure.	Amends made in the Foreword, Executive Summary, Sections 3.15 and 6.1.
The strategy should take into account the views of the Parish and Town Councils.	Rushcliffe Borough Council was pleased to send out a draft copy of the strategy to all Parish and Town Councils for their review and comments.	No amends
Use of messaging signs to show the location and available spaces at car parks would be good.	The recommendation has been noted.	No amends
Received recommendation to use LED lighting in the car parks.	This has been listed on the car parking maintenance schedule for review and also sent through to the Estates Department.	No amends
Will you be putting electric charge points in all car parks?	All of the Council’s car parks are being reviewed by ChargeMaster for electric charge points, where feasible.	No amends
How much will it cost RBC to put the charge points in?	There is no cost to the Council; it is being funded by Nottingham City Council’s grant for ultra-low initiatives (p.23 - grey box out).	No amends
The provision of parking in West	The comment has been noted. Long stay	

Bridgford needs reviewing given the location of 2 major sports teams and a third just over the river.	provision for West Bridgford will be reviewed further in 2019-2020 (p. 31, Table 8, medium term aims).	No amends
If you are implementing pay-by-phone, please make sure that it does not cost more to park.	The convenience charge for using Pay-by-Phone will be covered by the Council. Optional extras, e.g., reminder texts when parking is about to expire, are at the user's discretion and choice.	Clarified in Section 6.14 (grey box out) that the Council will cover the convenience charge. Added: "a convenience charge of £0.20p per transaction, which would be covered by the Council."
Please consider some free parking in West Bridgford.	Suggestion has been noted.	No amends
Ruddington Parish Council supports the proposals relating to Rushcliffe Country Park.	Thank you for the feedback.	No amends
Radcliffe on Trent Parish Council kindly asks that any future car parking developments are discussed with them at an early stage and they would not like charges implemented in the area.	Comments have been noted.	No amends
Opening paragraph 2.1 – please consider adding a table with the population of all areas, not just West Bridgford.	Additional population figures have been added.	Section 2.1 – additional population figures for the main town areas have been added.
Why does the section 6.13 only report parking patterns for West Bridgford and not form any other parking machines like in Bingham?	The car parking machines in Bingham were only installed in September 2017. The Council is starting to generate usage patterns from them and will include the data in future documents.	No amends
Why does Section 6.32, Table 7 recommend monitoring only usage statistics for West Bridgford. Why does it not mention Bingham?	Section 6.32, Table 7, section on Monitoring, Usage & Turnover – the 1 <sup>st</sup> action plan recommendations says: "Review the pattern of car park use, informing the development of flexi parking pilots to boost car park usage and local spend in off-peak months." This is for all car parks.	No amends
West Bridgford has about the same number of parking spaces as Bingham,	The Council takes a non-uniform approach to setting charges (Section 6.7), taking into	No amends

but the usage is higher. Have you considered that that the West Bridgford fee structure might be useful for Bingham?	account the location, economic and social needs of each specific area. As part of this, 2-hour free, short stay parking was brought in at Bingham in Sept 2017. Section 6.6 and Recommendations (top of p. 18) and the Action Plan (p. 31) show that long stay options for Bingham are to be reviewed, and this may include a parking fee structure.	No amends
Cycle safety can be increased by reducing/not extending off street parking.	The comments have been noted.	No amends
Will the review of car parking prices on influencing behaviour in section 8.1, be across the Borough?	Yes, it will be across the Borough, where feasible.	No amends
Will the shopping & parking rewards schemes be considered for Bingham and how will you do that if Bingham doesn't have a parking fee structure?	Bingham long stay parking will be reviewed (section 6.6, recommendations top of p.18 and Table 8, p. 31) and as part of this review, the role of parking fees will be considered. After this, the review of shopping rewards schemes will be completed (2020-2021; Table 8, p.31 – long term actions) and will look at all car parks, including Bingham.	No amends
Car sharing is laudable but rarely works.	Comments have been noted.	No amends
Off street car parking in Cropwell Bishop with the new Co-op and new developments, has been missed from the strategy.	The application for the new Co-op, as part of its material development, will have included visitor parking with NCC making any necessary assessments on parking provision, displacement and associated road safety. Rushcliffe considers car parking as part of any new residential developments on a case-by-case basis. There is limited space and land availability for off street parking in Cropwell Bishop.	No amends
We are concerned that reviewing the need for very short stay, free parking may result in further increased vehicle-generated air pollution.	The review will include impact assessments, where feasible.	No amends
Changes to the parking restrictions in Radcliffe and Bingham have improved the chances of finding a park.	Thank you for the feedback.	No amends
Pedals welcomes proposals for active and sustainable travel, improving air quality, extending the secure cycle parking hubs to other car parks and Pocket Park and Ride sites and commitments to encouraging people to use sustainable transport and linking in	Thank you for the feedback.	No amends

with NCC's personal travel plan project for West Bridgford.		
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# OFF STREET CAR PARKING **strategy** 2018–2022





*"Car parking is a complex and emotive area. At Rushcliffe Borough Council, we believe its success is based on partnership with users, businesses and stakeholders. Car parks that are tailored to meet the needs of local areas have a significant role to play in the economic and social vibrancy of Rushcliffe."*

## FOREWORD

Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to an ambitious programme of work aimed at contributing to the economic and social prosperity of our different local communities. To underpin this, the Council has developed its first off street car parking strategy. The development of this strategy is based on a comprehensive understanding of the parking, supply and demand position in Rushcliffe, as well as the parking experience of local residents, businesses and visitors to our towns and countryside. It is the Council's intention that this strategy is a living document; changing over time with the changing needs and reflecting the unique characteristics of our different communities. As part of this, the Council is committed to developing innovative and entrepreneurial management of its car parks to ensure they are fit for purpose.

The Council is committed to ensuring that Rushcliffe is a great place to live and work, offering an excellent range of lifestyle choices to all our residents. It is the aspiration of this Council that the tariff, length of stay and enforcement processes in our car parks reflect the needs and circumstances of each community and that a *one size fits all* approach is not appropriate. We believe that our car parks are for everyone; as such, the car parking strategy reviews parking for electric and hybrid vehicles, the role of mobile payment systems, designated off street parking for motorcycles and wheel-chair-assisted vehicles, and the role of car parks as the gateways to our Borough.

This strategy is intended to stimulate vibrant discussion and raise questions which will keep us searching for better and better answers, ensuring we deliver the very best car parking solutions. This is an exciting time for our Borough and our car parks are an important part of building a resilient legacy.

*Cllr Debbie Mason*

Deputy Leader  
Portfolio Holder for Community & Leisure

## PARAMETERS

The parameters of the Off Street Car Parking Strategy lists what is and is not included in the strategic and operational policies for purposes of clarity and transparency.

### Included:

- Civil-enforced car parking; as listed on the Councils' Civil Enforcement Off Street Parking Places Orders.
- Off street parking.

### Not Included:

- On street parking; this is the responsibility of Nottinghamshire County Council.
- Unregulated/non-enforceable car parking; the strategy does not include car parks which are not on the Council's Civil Enforcement Off Street Parking Places Orders, because the Council does not have a legal remit to enforce charges and restrictions through penalties at these car parks. As such, the operational policies related to restrictions, pricing and enforcement cannot be applied.
- Private car parks, including private retail provision parking, e.g., supermarkets.

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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- National and county transport policy emphasises the importance of parking strategies and the role they have to play in supporting local economic growth, reducing carbon emissions, encouraging smarter life and sustainable transport choices, social well-being and access to essential services for all.
- This car parking strategy addresses the supply and management of the Council's off street car parks. It is a living document and as such, it will constantly change and flex to meet the challenges, needs and best interests of Rushcliffe.
- The Council operates 12 off street, regulated and enforced car parks, and levies pay-and-display charges on 6 of the locations. The Council prioritises short stay car parking over long stay provision. While there is a range of stay provisions from up to 2 hours to 12 hours maximum, the Council operates a non-uniform tariff policy based on local need and usage.
- Patterns of car park usage and turnover have identified times when the car parks are used the most and the least. Retail and community events could be targeted to encourage people into areas at different times. Vehicle turnover rates indicate the need to assess the appropriate distribution of vehicles across all three car parks in West Bridgford.
- The link between economic vibrancy and parking in local areas is recognised but there are conflicting views as to how to maximise the effectiveness of both. A range of flexi parking schemes to address these issues is being piloted and should be reviewed in relation to their appropriateness for Rushcliffe.
- The Council recognises the link between car parking and development of a digital High Street (e.g., Wi-Fi access and high speed mobile coverage so people can use smart apps for identifying parking spaces before arrival or use pay-by-phone/cashless services). Digital High Streets provide different options for the person to engage with their shopping and visiting experience – both online and on the street - all at the same time. Introduction of pay-by-phone services is recommended.
- The Council's off street car parking strategy would like to influence and encourage people, where feasible, to consider their transport choices, including the use of active travel and low emission vehicles, e.g., electric, hybrid, small motorcycles, cycling, walking and the use of public transport. It is acknowledged that the Borough's rural location and lack of rural public transport makes it more viable for people to use their cars.
- The installation of low emission vehicle charge points across the Council's car parks, designated motorcycle parking, the extension of secure cycle hubs into more car parks and linking with local community schemes to improve air quality in Rushcliffe hotspots, will make considerable gains in meeting local and regional sustainable targets.
- Future recommendations include reviewing long stay provision at Bingham, dedicated off street parking for wheelchair-assisted vehicles, safety award/ Park Mark® for all car parks, and the role of flexi parking schemes and parking rewards in supporting the economic and social vibrancy of the Borough.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Rushcliffe Borough has a population of over 115,000 with over 40% of households owning two or more cars. The main centre of population is West Bridgford with 39,767 residents. The Borough, however, is largely rural with over 75,000 residents living across small towns and villages (Bingham 9,803, Radcliffe on Trent 8,207, Cotgrave 7,781, East Leake 7,303, Ruddington 7,220, other villages 35,398). The 2011 Census data identifies that 85% of households in Rushcliffe have access to a car or van, with 44% having access to two or more cars. Seventy-two percent of residents in Rushcliffe usually travel to work by driving a car or van with 54% of residents travelling less than 10 kilometres to work. Only 11% of Rushcliffe residents take public transport to work. While Rushcliffe has seen a 2% reduction in traffic mileage between 2010 and 2016, the Borough is significantly dependent on private vehicles, which reflects the rural nature of its location and the lack of viable transport alternatives.
- 2.2 It is essential that the Council provides suitable car parking facilities for residents, visitors and businesses across the Borough. Parking influences the decisions people make about where to go and how to get there. The Council needs to provide enough parking to support local economies but not too much to encourage congestion and more car use. The aim of parking is to let people make the trips they need to, without negatively impacting on residences and developments, and making the environment unattractive or difficult to navigate.
- 2.3 Rushcliffe Borough Council owns and manages 12 off street car parks, with over 660 public spaces situated in West Bridgford, Bingham, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent and Rushcliffe Country Park, for use by shoppers, visitors and residents. Currently only the West Bridgford car parks, Bingham (Union Street and Needham Street) and Rushcliffe Country Park are pay-and-display; all others are free. The Council also manages enforcement of on-street parking on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council through the Notts Parking Partnership.
- 2.4 Nottinghamshire County Council is the local Highway Authority for Rushcliffe and is responsible for the management and maintenance of all adopted roads in the county (other than motorways and trunk roads, which are the responsibility of The Highways Agency), and managing traffic flows on the non-strategic road networks. Rushcliffe Borough Council has the delegated responsibility from Nottinghamshire County Council for civil parking enforcement which is delivered under the Traffic Management Act 2004, and managed through a joint agreement with Broxtowe District Council Parking Services.
- 2.5 This car parking strategy addresses the supply and management of the Council's off street, regulated and enforceable car parks under the Civil Enforcement Parking Places Orders. It is intended to set out the Council's parking objectives with a transparent statement of current operations, policies, and future recommendations. This includes parking for motorcycles, cars, cycles, blue badge holders and a number of other vehicles which have special requirements. It has been prepared using current data showing parking demand, use and ticketing from the Council's payment systems and user consultation.
- 2.6 This strategy is intended to be a living document, and as such, it will consistently change and flex to meet the challenges, needs and best interests of Rushcliffe as well as county and central government directives.

### 3. BACKGROUND AND POLICY CONTEXT

#### National

- 3.1 Central government has provided a significant national steer for transport strategies across the country during the past decade. While the design and implementation of parking policies is a local decision, national policy and guidance help place these decisions in context. The Stern Review (2006) examined the potential cost of climate change to the economy, with a specific focus on economic costs and benefits of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. As transport is responsible for 21% of domestic UK emissions, it is a significant factor in the reduction of greenhouse gases and parking is one way of contributing to this. The Government's responses to the Stern Review (i.e., *Towards a Sustainable Transport System* and *Delivering a Sustainable Transport System*), identified the management of traffic congestion, reduction in emissions and greenhouse gases, the promotion of active travel and equality of access by everyone to all transport modes, as priority objectives. Managing the demand for parking is one way of influencing the travel choices that people make.
- 3.2 In 2011, the Department for Transport published a white paper called 'Creating Growth and Cutting Carbon: Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen', advocating a package approach, giving people choice at the local level for short trips and encouraging them towards more sustainable choices. The paper also encouraged local authorities to provide electric vehicle charging in new infrastructure developments and suggests designated parking for car club and share vehicles. The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) set out the Government's steer for transport policies with a significant emphasis on the part they have to play in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. The framework highlighted:
- Smarter use of technologies to reduce the need to travel,
  - Having transport systems balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes - giving people a choice in how they travel,
  - Transport solutions that support reduction in greenhouse gases and reduce congestion, and
  - Plans that exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes, e.g. facilities for charging vehicles and the needs of people with disabilities to access all modes of transport.
- The framework also directly challenges local authorities to improve the quality of parking in town centres, making it convenient, safe and secure, with provision for motorcycles and appropriate parking charges that do not undermine vitality.
- 3.3 The national transport strategy set out in *The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030* (July 2014), presents the long term goals for modern, efficient and sustainable transport systems. The paper states that local authorities should have a clear idea of what its parking policy is and what it intends to achieve by it, and when setting and appraising the policy, should give consideration to:
- Existing and projected levels of parking demand,
  - Availability and pricing of on and off street parking,
  - Justification for and accuracy of existing traffic regulation orders, and
  - Accuracy and quality of traffic signs and road markings that restrict or permit parking.
- 3.4 The Traffic Management Act (2004) imposes a duty on local authorities to manage their networks in a way that reduces congestion and disruption. It also provides local authorities with additional powers related to parking. The Department of Transport Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans (2004) is clear that local authorities should have policies aimed at tackling congestion and changing travel behaviour, including restricting and or charging for parking. The criminal deregulation of the Traffic Management Act (2004) enables Local Authorities to enforce some offences previously undertaken by the Police, and as such, manage local parking to meet local requirements. The National Planning Policy Guidance (2013), looking at supporting a prosperous rural economy, urges Councils to understand the important role parking facilities play in rejuvenating shops, high streets and town centres by providing convenient, safe and secure parking with proportionate enforcement. The economic vibrancy and sustainability of



commercial areas are also significantly assisted by enforcement which ensures parking turnover to help local businesses.

- 3.5 Both the Portas (2011) and Grimsey Reviews (2013) agree that there is a link between the commercial issues of High Streets, Main Streets, towns and market centres, and parking. The Portas Review readily acknowledges that while people are nationally and locally encouraged not to use their cars for environmental reasons, realistically cars are the primary mode of transport for shoppers and visitors. The ease with which retailing can be reached is correlated with economic turnover. Grimsey believes that parking charges are damaging for the High Street and that local shoppers want a level playing field with out-of-town convenience parking, e.g., two hours free in the supermarket car park. Increased parking charges and reduced free parking have been found to reduce the appeal of retail areas to shopping consumers, compromising long-term economic viability and well-being of the area.

*“While the digital technology revolution has changed retail business, parking infrastructure is a tool for economic change, supporting each retail and community area to find its own bespoke response to economic and social revival.” (Portas)*

- 3.6 The British Parking Association report *Re-Think! Parking on the High Street* in 2013, counters the view of free parking, arguing that economic growth of town centres is multi-faceted and that car parking charges should be viewed holistically as part of an overall accessibility strategy. This may result in a strategy for free parking or it could equally mean the alteration of charges to moderate demand. While free all-day parking is not the solution, as it may be open to long stay use by employees and commuters, Portas recommends that Authorities investigate different types of flexible parking schemes that include free parking options for local shoppers. For example, Chester’s and Loughborough’s ‘Free After Three’ car parking schemes are aimed at helping local businesses in recognised off-peak times.
- 3.7 Car parking research by Yorkshire Forward (Renaissance Market Towns Programme), found that the availability of parking and ease of use were more important aspects of parking provision than charges. The report also recognised that a parking ‘free for all’, with no restrictions or controls on parking and lack of enforcement was seen as a failure to manage assets effectively and provide good customer service. The Association of Town Centre Managers (ACTM), which undertook a review of the relevance of parking in the success of urban centres (2010), identified 7 factor sets that should be considered for town parking. Table 1 presents a comparison of the ATCM parking success factors with Rushcliffe Borough Council’s current parking scene.

Table 1. Success Factors for Town Parking Matched to Rushcliffe’s Current Off Street Parking Services

Seven Parking Factors	Description	Matched to Rushcliffe’s Current Parking Services
Quantity & Convenience	Quantity must match the size of the town centre and in smaller centres, be no more than 5 minutes’ walk away from shops.	✓
Payment & Control	Payment on exit encourages a longer shopping trip and greater spend.	For Future Review
Free very short stay	A very limited amount of free parking (first few minutes) helps short visits and user satisfaction.	For Future Review
Pricing Structure	Tariffs should be limited to up to three hours to discourage the use of parking spaces by commuters.	✓
Security	Car parks need to be well designed, maintained and managed, with uniformed patrols and CCTV.	✓
Quality	Car parks are the gateways to town, market and visitor centres and should meet high customer expectations.	For Future Review
Signage	Directional signage including variable messaging boards to highlight available parking space	For Future Review

## County

3.8 Central government's commitment to economic growth and citizen well-being through transport is reflected in the Nottinghamshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2020 and Council Plan 2017-2021, identifying six priorities centred on greener, safe, prosperous, stronger communities, where children reach their potential with health and well-being for all. The Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-2026, is unified with these priorities to improve the quality of life for local people and to encourage sustainable communities. Transport is not an end in itself within this framework, but a means to enable people to access employment, training, health, shopping, leisure and other essential services; parking is central to delivering these access points. The local transport vision for Nottinghamshire is presented at three spatial levels – neighbourhood, district centres and the wider links to regional and national movement. The first two spatial levels have direct implications for Borough parking:

1. Local neighbourhoods - provide safe and sustainable access to local facilities and services, e.g., local shops, schools and health, with a noted priority for pedestrians, cyclists and people with mobility difficulties, and
2. Provide safe and sustainable transport options for movement within and between towns and centres and this includes appropriate parking provision for private cars.

3.9 County-wide consultation (public, stakeholders and elected members) for the LTP3 endorsed the five national priorities as outlined in point 3.2 above, and did not identify further primacies for Nottinghamshire. Supporting the economy was identified as the highest transport priority for Nottinghamshire. The overarching transport goals for Nottinghamshire are:

1. Provide a reliable, resilient transport system which supports a thriving economy and growth whilst encouraging sustainable and healthy travel,
2. Improve access to key services, particularly enabling employment and training opportunities, and
3. Minimise the impact of transport on people's lives and maximise opportunities to improve the environment and help tackle carbon emissions.

Consultation also identified 12 local transport objectives to delivering the strategic goals which have local implications for parking. Table 2 presents the association between Nottinghamshire's transport plan objectives with off street parking in Rushcliffe.

Table 2. Nottinghamshire Transport Priorities Matched to Rushcliffe Parking Deliverables

Strategic Objectives	Transport Objectives	Rushcliffe Parking Deliverables
Support Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tackle congestion and make journey times more reliable</li> <li>▪ Improve connectivity to inter-urban and regional networks</li> <li>▪ Address the transport impacts on housing &amp; employment growth</li> <li>▪ Encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport through promotion and provision of facilities</li> <li>▪ Support regeneration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Adequate parking provision in main areas</li> <li>➤ Appropriate balance of short &amp; long stay parking</li> <li>➤ Address parking issues specific to individual areas and locations</li> <li>➤ Appropriate use of enforcement to encourage vehicle turnover</li> <li>➤ Appropriate number and type of spaces for people with mobility difficulties</li> </ul>
Protect the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce transport's impact on the environment</li> <li>▪ Adapt to climate change and the development of low carbon transport systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Minimise circulating traffic with appropriate parking signage and directions</li> <li>➤ Reduce parking queues with adequate parking provision</li> <li>➤ Appropriate balance of on-street</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and off-street parking to reduce traffic circulation</li> <li>➤ Review need for electric/hybrid vehicle chargers in car parks</li> </ul>
Improve Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve levels of health and activity by encouraging active travel (walking or cycling) instead of short car journeys</li> <li>▪ Address and improve personal safety when walking, cycling or using public transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Safe, secure well-maintained parking for active travel – e.g., cycles, electric cycles</li> </ul>
Improve Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve access to employment &amp; other key services, particularly from rural areas</li> <li>▪ Provide an affordable, reliable and convenient public transport network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Car sharing schemes</li> <li>➤ Adequate parking to ensure public transport flows freely</li> </ul>
Maintain & improve infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain the existing transport infrastructure (roads, footways, public transport services etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Maintaining off-street car parks</li> <li>➤ Digital infrastructure developments</li> <li>➤ Supporting infrastructure for environmental issues, e.g., hybrids &amp; electric</li> </ul>

3.10 The Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) supports the development of locally-driven parking strategies as opposed to one singular, county-wide set of standards; parking standards should be set at a local level through each Council's Local Development Frameworks. The transport plan identifies and values the role that local district authorities have to play in identifying and responding to current and future parking needs at a local level.

### Rushcliffe Borough

3.11 Future development in Rushcliffe Borough will increase the demand for parking. Rushcliffe Borough Council's Local Plan Part 1: Rushcliffe Core Strategy (2016) identifies that 13,450 new homes will have been built by 2028 with ongoing expansion of the public transport systems, new and improved walking and cycling links; effectively linking neighbourhoods to major employment and town centres. To aid the planned growth, more strategic transport and highway network improvements will be completed. Car parking is also considered as part of any new developments and community infrastructure on a case-by-case basis.

3.12 Data from the 2011 Census shows that Rushcliffe is significantly dependent on private vehicles. The Census identified that seventy-two percent of Rushcliffe residents usually travel to work by driving a car or van, with 13% travelling less than 2km, 31% less than 5km, and 54% less than 10km. The Census also showed that 32% of residents actually work within the Borough, with 72% working within the Nottingham built-up area (Broxtove, Gedling, Rushcliffe and Nottingham City). A small percentage of residents travel to work by walking (8%), cycling (3.5%) or public transport (11%). While the dependency on private vehicle use reflects the rural nature of the Borough and the lack of viable transport alternatives, the current growth in car use is likely to be unsustainable. Cars contribute to local air pollution, traffic danger, congestion and poor physical health due to lack of exercise. Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to influencing and encouraging changes in the type of transport people use, where feasible.

3.13 Clean air is important for good health. Rushcliffe Borough Council monitors air pollution levels and work with other agencies and partners to develop and implement air quality action plans to reduce air

pollution and improve air quality. An Air Quality Management Area, is an area of land where air quality levels are breaching the national limits and require action to address this. The Council has two air quality management areas in the Borough. The Council has an action plan which contains measures aimed at working towards reducing traffic pollution in these areas. As part of that action plan, car parking plays a role in delivering the Council's objectives. Car parking will:

- Improve traffic flows
  - reduce road congestion with well-signed and accessible parking
  - provide designated motorcycle parking provision
- Provide viable alternatives to making an entire journey by car:
  - provide safe and secure cycle parking at Park and Ride sites
  - encourage people to use more public transport
- Encourage the use of 'greener' vehicles
  - provide electric and hybrid charging in car parks
  - review car park charges for zero and low emission vehicles
  - provide safe and secure cycle parking in car parks
  - provide designated space for motorcycles, especially small motorcycles with low CO<sup>2</sup> emissions
- Rethink single journey occupancy/Encourage the use of car sharing
  - review preferential parking schemes and charges for car share vehicles

3.14 The Greater Nottingham Retail Study in 2008, commissioned by five local authorities including Rushcliffe Borough Council, identified the district centres of West Bridgford and Bingham as providing a good service to their local area within the limit of their size and retail offer. The Council's Local Development Plans through to 2028, identify a clear vision for the employment, transport, retail, social, leisure and cultural regeneration and growth of West Bridgford, Bingham, Newton, Clifton and Cotgrave. It is recognised that Rushcliffe is served by a range of distinctive district and local centres, all of which have an important role to play in meeting the various needs of the Borough through accessibility to shops, presence of key services, cultural enterprises, meeting places and employment opportunities. Parking will also play a significant role in achieving that vision.

3.15 To support the West Bridgford Growth Board in maintaining the economic and social vibrancy of the area, three commissioners were appointed to assess a diverse range of opinions (residents, businesses, partners and community groups) on the retail street scene and atmosphere in West Bridgford (The West Bridgford Commissioners' Report, November 2017). The work captures the view of users and stakeholders in six key themes. Theme 1, regarding Accessibility, identified parking problems as a key concern. Participants had mixed opinions about the need to create more flexible parking, reduce facilities for cars altogether and encouraging greener approaches to town access. Results from an online survey also showed that:



Residents also had a number of suggestions about how they believe parking could be improved:

- Free parking at both Gordon Rd and Bridgford Rd car parks for 2 hours during the day,
- Increase the size of the Co-op park, and
- Revise the parking rules.

### Flexi Parking Schemes: Where are we now?

The commissioners of the report also suggested that the Council introduce and trial a range of flexible parking schemes, as outlined in the paper 'Re-think! Parking on the High Street' (2013; Ojay MacDonald):

- During January, a particularly slow retail month, Colchester introduced a £2 charge from 10am to 3pm, noting a 1.2% increase in car park ticket sales.
- Colchester also encouraged afternoon shoppers to stay longer and avoid adding to the evening congestion by introducing a £2 ticket for people arriving after 2pm and departing from 7pm.
- A number of pilots are underway where a preferential parking rate for people driving lower emission vehicles has been introduced.
- Mansfield District Council run free parking sessions in the shopping lead-up to Christmas, publicised to local residents.

### MOLO Awards and Parking

Technology Specialists, MOLO, are piloting a system in partnership with local businesses to reward customers for shopping locally. MOLO Rewards give retailers the capability to reward their customers by making a small contribution to their parking charges. Values or points are collected from participating stores and can be redeemed by the consumer at parking pay points to reduce the cost of a parking.

- 3.16 This car parking strategy addresses the supply and management of the Council's off street car parks. The strategy supports the Council's corporate objectives and should be read alongside the Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, Rushcliffe Borough Council's Corporate Strategy 2016-2020, Rushcliffe Local Plan Parts 1 and 2, and individual Town Centre Masterplans to provide a complete view of the Council's commitment to balance appropriate parking with environmental sustainability, economic growth, accessibility, quality of life, social vibrancy, health improvement and social inclusion.
- 3.17 This strategy is intended to be a living document, and as such, it will consistently change and flex to meet the challenges, needs and best interests of Rushcliffe.

#### 4. KEY OBJECTIVES

4.1 Rushcliffe Borough Council has identified 10 parking objectives, presented in Table 3, matched to the Council's overarching corporate themes.

Table 3. Parking Policy Objectives Matched to the Council's Corporate Themes.

CORPORATE THEMES		RUSHCLIFFE PARKING - POLICY OBJECTIVES
<b>OB1</b>	Deliver economic growth to ensure a sustainable, prosperous and thriving local economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manage parking in order to maintain the vitality and viability of district and town centres by ensuring the needs of shoppers and visitors are prioritised</li> <li>2. Manage parking provision to ensure that it encourages short stay rather than all-day parking</li> <li>3. Manage parking enforcement in a fair and consistent manner</li> <li>4. Manage parking in order to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion</li> </ol>
<b>OB2</b>	Maintain and enhance our residents' quality of life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Manage parking to encourage the use of more sustainable modes and smarter choices</li> <li>6. Provide access to key services for people with special needs and mobility difficulties by providing appropriate parking spaces</li> <li>7. Contribute to the reduction of CO<sup>2</sup> and NOx emissions</li> <li>8. Minimise the negative impacts of parking on the streetscape and environmentally sensitive areas</li> </ol>
<b>OB3</b>	Transform the Council to enable the delivery of efficient high quality services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Improve the efficiency of the Council's parking services</li> <li>10. Provide revenue to reinvest in parking services to support local economic and social vibrancy</li> </ol>

4.2 These policy objectives are the strategic framework driving the Council's operational policies and management of the Council's off street car parks, as presented in the following sections.

## 5. THE NOTTS PARKING PARTNERSHIP & BROXTOWE AGREEMENT

- 5.1 Rushcliffe Borough Council's parking enforcement operations for both on- and off-street parking is delivered through a partnership arrangement which started in May 2008. Rushcliffe is a member of The Notts Parking Partnership (NPP) which comprises Nottinghamshire County Council and all seven District and Borough Councils within Nottinghamshire. The partnership is based on a local authority shared service, forming an agreement of delegation under the Local Government Act. The partnership was formed to ensure consistency and fairness in operating parking enforcement across the County, and with the aim of reducing the Council's staffing and overhead costs while delivering a cost-neutral service to the Borough.
- 5.2 Rushcliffe Borough Council is also part of the shared procurement contract for Parking Enforcement Services through the partnership. The partnership employs NSL Services Ltd to supply Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) to enforce parking restrictions across the County. Rushcliffe Borough Council manages enforcement of its own off-street car parks and the County Council's on-street parking through the Civil Enforcement Officers.
- 5.3 The partnership also operates a Central Processing Unit (CPU), run by the County Council which undertakes all administration relating to the Penalty Charge Notices ensuring a fair and consistent approach across the Nottinghamshire area.
- 5.4 In September 2014, Rushcliffe Borough Council officially started a shared services partnership with Broxtowe Borough Council to deliver its parking services provision; Broxtowe recharge a percentage of their management costs to Rushcliffe. The arrangement covers day to day tasks, including:
- Monitoring of the Pay & Display machines through bespoke software and rectifying faults
  - Managing enforcement patrols including location schedules and resources
  - Responding to PCN queries and appeals
  - Arranging permits (both on-street dispensations and car park permits), and
  - Scheduling and auditing cash collections from the machines

This arrangement provides significant resilience in the overall management of Rushcliffe-owned car parks. Appendix 1 presents a detailed list of the tasks and services managed by Broxtowe.

- 5.5 The partnership management of the Council's car parking services is summarised in Figure 1.

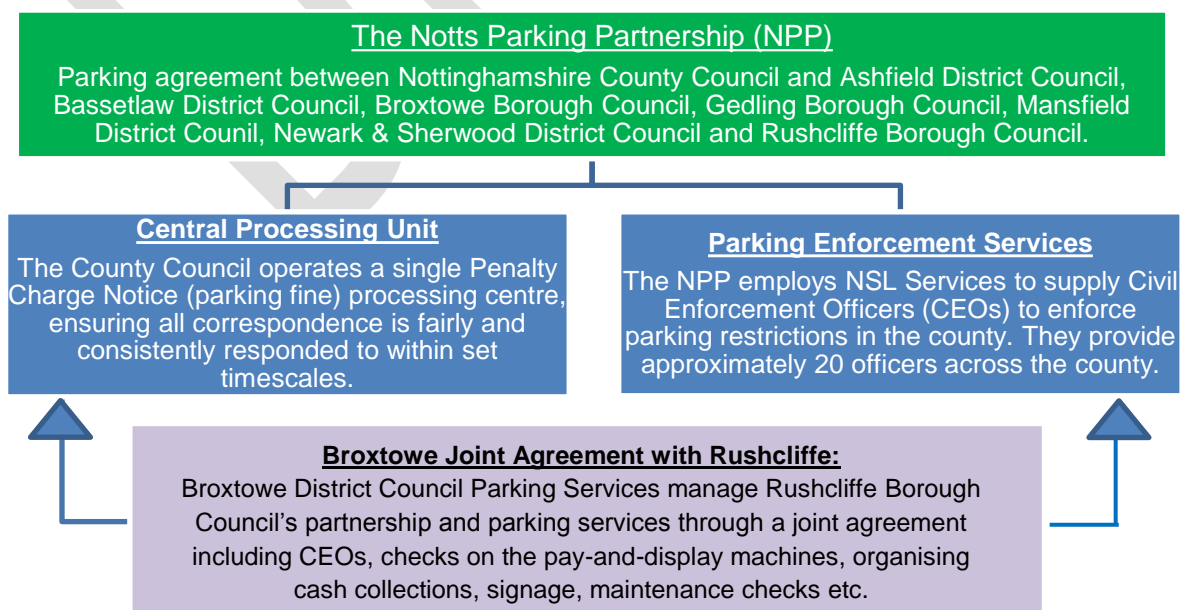


Figure 1. Summary of the Partnership Management of Rushcliffe Car Parking Services

## 6. OFF STREET PARKING

### Overall Management Policy:

Rushcliffe Borough Council manages its off street car parking facilities to ensure that the supply, maintenance, charging and enforcement procedures contribute to the Council meeting local objectives.

6.1 The Council's approach to car parking is to *manage by demand*, responding to differences in local need and circumstance. The operational policies in the car parking strategy are intended to support the vitality of local economies and promote more sustainable transport choices. This overarching parking policy means that the Council will:

- Effectively manage its car parks to reflect local circumstances,
- Promote sustainable transport choices through provision of sustainable parking options,
- Maintain high quality and safe parking facilities,
- Set parking charges which facilitate commercial and social vibrancy, economic growth and promote sustainable and active travel, and
- Enforce parking regulations consistently and effectively, in a transparent manner.

### Parking Locations

6.2 The Council operates a total of 12 regulated, off-street car parks providing a total of 664 spaces for use by shoppers, visitors and residents. At present, the Council levies charges on 6 car parks through pay-and-display. The Council's car parks are located in Bingham, Keyworth, Radcliffe-on-Trent, West Bridgford and Rushcliffe Country Park. Bingham Market Place off street parking is suspended for public use on Bingham Market Day, allowing authorised trader vehicles to park there with a valid permit between 06:00 to 16:00. Table 4 shows a summary of the Council-operated car parking provision with marked parking bays. The table does not include the number of parking spaces at Rushcliffe Country Park as this is an open, non-bayed parking site.

**Table 4. Council-Owned/Off Street Car Parking Provision in Rushcliffe Borough – With Marked Bays\***

Location	Parking Spaces	Disabled Spaces	Total Spaces
Bingham: Market Place	20	0	20
Bingham: Newgate Street	106	7	113
Bingham: Needham Street	19	4	23
Bingham: Union Street	20	0	20
Keyworth: Bunny Lane	60	4	64
Keyworth: Church Drive	29	1	30
Radcliffe-on-Trent: Health Centre	54	3	57
Radcliffe-on-Trent: Walkers Yard	43	3	46
West Bridgford: Bridgford Road	153	6	159
West Bridgford: Nursery, Albert Road	87	8	95
West Bridgford: Gordon Road	35	2	37
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>664</b>

\* Rushcliffe Country Park is not included in this table as it does not have marked bay parking.



6.3 Typically, the regulated parking stock is supplemented by the Council's unregulated car parks and private parking. There are a number of private companies which operate public car parks in Rushcliffe, for example, shopping centres and supermarkets, NCC and public houses operating private pay-and-display car parks. These car parks have their own rules and regulations for use. Private car parks assist the Council in maintaining the balance of supply and demand across the Borough. The Council monitors private car parks (including location, parking rules and tariffs) to help inform the operational and policy management of its off street car parks.

## Parking Length of Stay Designation

### Length of Stay Parking Policy

The Council prioritises short-stay car parking (up to two/three hours) on sites within a suitable walking distance of shopping and local services to ensure appropriate accessibility to services.

6.4 This policy means that the Council will:

- Set car parking charges that encourage short stay parking and discourage long-stay parking,
- Reduce the number of long-stay spaces while managing the number of short-stay spaces, and
- Evaluate the location of long-stay spaces.

6.5 The Council's off-street parking policy is designed to encourage short-stay parking and to reflect local variations in the demand for parking. The shoppers and short-stay car parks are intended to have a higher number of users per day, encouraging use of local shops, businesses and community services. Parking spaces need to be readily available to support the economic vitality and resilience of market town centres, with the higher turnover of spaces allowing more users to be accommodated per space. In addition, shoppers and visitors are more likely to travel during inter-peak periods when there is spare capacity on the road network.

6.6 The Council intentionally limits long stay parking in 8 of its 12 car parks: Bingham Market Place, Bingham Needham Street, Bingham Union Street, Bridgford Road, Nursery and Gordon Road car parks in West Bridgford, and Radcliffe-on-Trent Health Centre and a section of Walkers Yard. The Council has four free long stay (12 hour) car parks: Bingham Newgate Street, two in Keyworth at Bunny Lane and Church Lane and a section of the Walkers Yard in Radcliffe-on-Trent. Length of stay and tariff control is also used where commuter and employee parking typically occupies parking spaces for the whole day and long stay parkers typically travel at peak periods when the road network is most congested. Off street parking designation for long stay in Bingham and Keyworth should be reviewed alongside the Council's policy. Table 5 overviews the length of stay designations across the Council's off street car parks.

Table 5. Length of Stay Designations across the Council's Off Street Car Parks

Location	Long Stay	Short Stay Provision	No Return Within
<b>Bingham:</b> Market Place Newgate Street Needham Street Union Street	No long stay Max stay 12 hours free Max stay 12 hours £20 Max stay 12 hours £20	Up to 2 hours Any length up to 12 hours free 2 hours free with voucher 2 hours free with voucher	2 hours 3 hours 3 hours 3 hours
<b>Keyworth:</b> Bunny Lane Church Drive	Max stay 12 hours free Max stay 12 hours free	Any length up to 12 hours free Any length up to 12 hours free	3 hours
<b>Radcliffe-on-Trent:</b> Health Centre	No long stay	3 hrs max + 15 min wait bays free	2 hours

<b>Radcliffe-on-Trent:</b> Walkers Yard	12 hr stay in 28 bays free	3 hour stay in 15 spaces free	2 hrs short & 3 hrs long stay
<b>West Bridgford:</b> Bridgford Road Gordon Road Nursery/Albert Road	Max stay 12 hrs - ££ Max stay 12 hrs - ££ Max stay 12 hrs - ££	Up to 3 hours - ££ Up to 3 hours - ££ Up to 3 hours - ££	2 hours
<b>Rushcliffe Country Park</b>	Max stay 12 hrs - £1	Up to 12 hours - £1	1 hour

- Recommendations: ➤ Review Bingham and Keyworth's long stay parking.  
 ➤ Review long stay motorcycle parking to encourage more sustainable travel.  
 ➤ Review the need for long stay provision in West Bridgford district centre which is well served by buses and has good walking and cycling connectivity.

## Parking Charges

### Parking Charges Policy

Parking charges are set by the Council in accordance with the Council's fees and charges process each year. The Council considers factors like the amount of parking provision in the area (including private), supporting sustainable and low emission transport, access to key services, and supporting local businesses and social vibrancy.

- 6.7 The Council sets non-uniform parking tariffs across the Borough to reflect and support local turnover and differences in patterns of economy. Car parking charges are viewed holistically and a range of factors are considered to ensure that an appropriate or no tariff fee is applied. The overall aim is to encourage short-stay parking with high car turnover. To support the Council's commitment to sustainability and air quality, the pricing charges will be reviewed to ensure that they encourage people to think about the type of transport being used. Appendix 1 summarises the pay-and-display tariffs.

### Using Car Parking Costs to Influence Transport Choices - What are other Councils doing?

- Westminster City Council is trialling emissions-based charging for diesel parking within Marylebone. The surcharge adds 50% to the hourly rate.
- North Hertfordshire District Council operates a *no fee* parking charge for low emission vehicles in a parking bay that are plugged into the charging post.
- Colchester Borough Council Air Quality Team introduced a new parking scheme offering dedicated bays for car sharers in preferential locations in four town centre car parks.

- 6.8 At present, only 6 of the Council's 12 car parks are pay-and-display: Bridgford Road, Nursery/Albert Road, Gordon Road, Bingham Union Street, Bingham Needham Street and Rushcliffe Country Park. All other car parks are free and do not have any pay-and-display requirements. Four of the Council's car parks are free with 12-hour long stay provision: Bingham Newgate Street, Keyworth Bunny Lane, Keyworth Church Lane and a section of Walkers Yard in Radcliffe-on-Trent. An annual season ticket (parking permit) is offered at Rushcliffe Country Park for £30, allowing users to park without the need for a daily payment at the pay-and-display machines. Over 300 season tickets have been issued in the opening 8 months of the scheme since April 2017. It is clear that the number of permits available per annum and the cost will need to be reviewed, annually.

- 6.9 West Bridgford car parks operate a night tariff from 18:00 to 23:59, charging an additional £1 to park up to 23:59. The evening tariff is processed as an add-on fee for users arriving before 6pm; this means that users need to purchase a ticket up to 17:59 and add on an additional evening tariff purchase to cover parking after 18:00. The complexity of this process has been recognised and is under review; suggestions include extending the afternoon tariff to 19:59, with no pay-and-display required after 20:00.
- 6.10 A fundamental review of parking charges is undertaken by the Council every five years. Annual interim reviews will also be completed as needed, based on user, business and stakeholder feedback. In addition to operational costs, sufficient income needs to be generated to cover future major maintenance projects such as resurfacing, remarking and replacing of equipment such as lighting and ticket machines.
- Recommendations: ➤ Review the use of car parking charges to influence and encourage people's transport choices.  
 ➤ Review the evening tariff and procedure at West Bridgford car parks.  
 ➤ Review annually, the number of season tickets being issued and the permit cost for Rushcliffe Country Park.

### Parking Usage and Turnover

- 6.11 There were 59,630 visits to the Council's pay-and-display car parks in November 2017, with 63,035 visits in December. Total usage statistics for 2016-2017 showed 521,118 people used the pay-and-display car parks in West Bridgford and Rushcliffe Country Park. In 2017-2018, with the addition of Bingham Needham Street and Union Street coming online as pay-and-display, this number is set to increase; total usage year-to-date/end of December 2017 is 497,629, with three months still remaining to financial year end. Table 6 shows the number of users by pay-and-display car park in November and December 2017. The usage statistics underestimate the number of users across the Council's car parks as the numbers are taken from the ticket machines in the 6 pay-and-display car parks only.

Table 6. Number of Car Park Users at the Pay & Display Car Parks in November and December 2017

Pay & Display Car Park Locations:	Number of Users:	
	November 2017	December 2017
♦ West Bridgford Car Parks	44,217	46,908
♦ Bingham Needham Street & Union Street Car Parks	11,804	12,371
♦ Rushcliffe Country Park	3,609	3,755
<b>Total Number of Users</b>	<b>59,630</b>	<b>63,035</b>

- 6.12 The pattern of usage across the pay-and-display car parks is very similar year-on-year. Figure 2 (on page 20) shows the pattern of use at West Bridgford car parks from 2013 to 2017. There are a high number of users in the summer months (June-July) and Christmas time (December) with average, consistent use in March-April-May and August-September. It also shows that use of the car parks declines in November, January and February; these are well-documented low retail spend months before and after the Christmas period. These low usage months could be targeted for piloting flexi parking schemes to encourage users into the retail areas. The Council reviews the car parking usage statistics to explore and inform the timing of community and retail events to support local vibrancy.
- 6.13 The turnover of cars at West Bridgford pay-and-display car parks shows an average of 6.4 cars per day in each space for 2017-18. The individual turnover statistics for each car park suggests that Nursery/Albert Road car park has the highest turnover at 8.3, Gordon Road with 6.7 and Bridgford Road with 4.1. The higher turnover rate at Nursery Road should be reviewed given the consistent queue of cars waiting to park when spaces are available at the Bridgford Road car park.

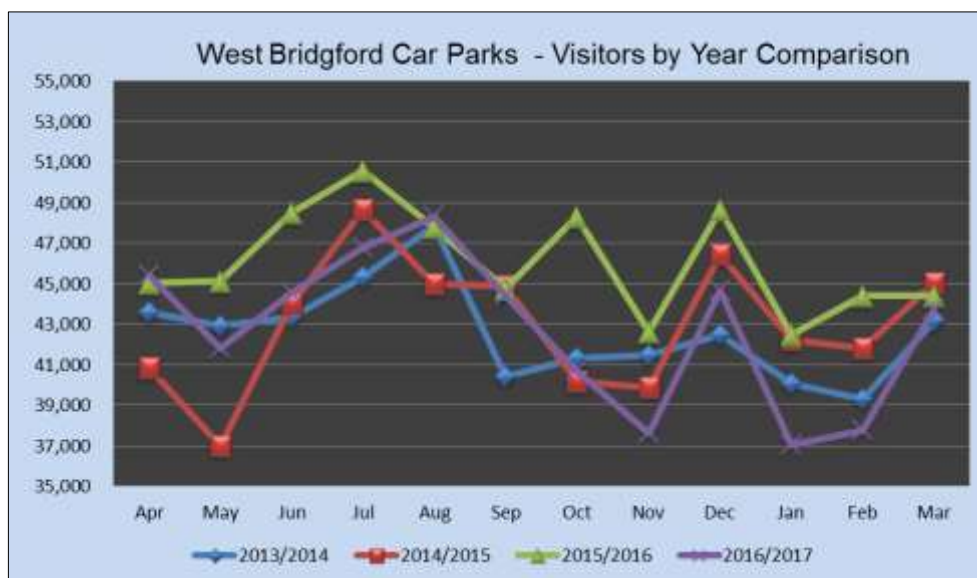


Figure 2. Pattern of use at West Bridgford pay-and-display car parks from 2013 to 2017.

- Recommendations:
- Review the pattern of car park use, informing the development of flexi parking pilots to boost car park usage and local spend in off-peak months.
  - Review the Nursery/Albert Rd high turnover and usage statistics to make sure that the car park tariffs and local parking signage are appropriately distributing users across all 3 West Bridgford car parks.

## Payment Methods

6.14 In 2017, the Council installed new ticket machines in its West Bridgford and Rushcliffe Country Park pay-and-display car parks, introducing the option to pay by debit or credit card and contactless (including apple pay), as well as coins. User payment for parking in Bingham Needham Street and Union Street is currently by coin machine only and were installed in September 2017. Coin transactions remain the preferred method of payment (88.3% of users), with 11.3% of people using cashless in October 2017. There has been a steady increase in the number of visitors using cashless since it was introduced in January 2017, from 5.3% to 11.3% in October. Low priced tariffs (e.g., 0.50p, £1.00) are known to reduce the likelihood that people will pay by card or contactless, however, the Council should review that appropriate support and promotional campaigns are in place to encourage use of these payment methods as they help to reduce the cost of cash collections and the associated carbon footprint. There are currently no facilities for pay-by-phone/mobile payment. Introducing new payment methods could make a difference in terms of the convenience and experience of the car park user.

### Pay-by-Phone: Where are we now?

Pay-by-phone provides customers with a convenient and secure payment method, alongside the ability to extend parking tariffs without the need to return to the site for additional payment. The inclusion of pay-by-phone in the Council's payment options would reduce the amount of cash handled through the machines as well as reducing cash collection frequency, machine servicing and consumable costs. Depending on uptake, pay-by-phone may also extend the 15-year life of the Council's ticket machines. These savings would off-set the cost to operate the service (a convenience charge of £0.20p per transaction, which would be covered by the Council). Despite the flexibility offered by mobile phone payments, it is apparent that planned marketing and user support campaigns are needed to increase awareness and uptake.

Links with Digital High Street Development - Mobile, flexible payment systems should be seen as part of an omni-channel retailing and leisure experience that offers flexibility to customers through a

digital high street programme. User-friendly smart phone payments, where ultimately payment is made automatically online, should be seen as an extension of the innovations being developed for implementing the consumer's digital in-store and street trading experience.

6.15 There is an opportunity to build on the recommendation of the West Bridgford Commissioners and the West Bridgford Masterplans for a digital High Street, which would support car parking developments. Car parking ticket machines will be able to run through the Wi-Fi networks, increasing communication reliability and capacity, as well as supporting mobile payment systems.

- Recommendations:
- Review the uptake of cashless payment and possible promotional campaigns.
  - Implement Pay-by-Phone payment options at West Bridgford.
  - Link the development of the West Bridgford digital High Street to digital parking developments and marketing promotions.

## Parking Enforcement

### Enforcement Policy

The council enforces parking effectively and efficiently under its civil parking enforcement procedures, ensuring that enforcement of all parking rules is fair, consistent and transparent.

6.16 Rushcliffe Borough Council understands that disproportionate enforcement impacts significantly on people's perception of the car parking experience. Research shows that loyalty to a place is often built on experiences and rigid enforcement is an easy way of turning consumers away from the retail sectors. As such, the Council employs a proportionate enforcement policy, meeting statutory requirements for a grace period.

6.17 Enforcement procedures support an appropriate pattern of car turnover and purchasing time to encourage the right shopping experience for the right location. It also helps to relieve highway congestions around town centres caused by on street parking and ensures that the car parks are being used correctly for the safety of all visitors. Through membership of the Notts Parking Partnership, the Council is also part of a shared procurement contract for parking enforcement services. The partnership currently employs NSL Limited to supply Civil Enforcement Officers who are managed by Broxtowe Parking Services on behalf of the Council.

6.18 A team of enforcement officers monitor the car parks for use and safety. The officers have the responsibility for issuing Penalty Charge Notices but do not have quotas or targets; instead, they work to clear guidelines. The guidelines can be viewed on the Nottinghamshire County Council website. Income from the payment of Penalty Charge Notices is used to finance operational costs of the Council's parking service including ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the parking services.

6.19 The Council operates 12 car parks that are enforceable under Civil Enforcement Off Street Parking Places Orders, giving it the legal remit to enforce restrictions, tariffs and length of stay, etc. Car parks with parking places orders are required to meet a recognised enforceable standard. The Council also owns 14 car parks that are not enforceable. These car parks are open use sites with no enforceable restrictions. The Council will undertake a review of these car parks to identify which ones should be placed under a civil enforcement parking places order. Appendix 3 lists the Council's car parks by civil enforcement status.

- Recommendations:
- Identify the car parks to be placed under a parking places order and complete the necessary infrastructure to bring them to regulatory standards.
  - Review the remaining non-regulatory car parks to ensure they are fit for purpose.

**Equitable and Accessible Parking Policy:**

The Council prioritises, where appropriate, the needs of people who have no choice but to use a vehicle to access essential services, reviewing and improving as necessary, the quality and provision of disabled parking in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). Local conditions and demand are considered in determining the number, type and location of spaces provided.

6.20 The Council has 38 spaces exclusively for people with mobility difficulties to park safely and securely



without the need to park on congested roads, particularly on yellow lines. Blue Badges allow cars carrying people who are registered blind, or people who have severe walking difficulties, to be parked near shops and other essential services. People using the disabled bays must display a valid blue badge with the time clock set appropriately. The policy is assessed periodically when the terms and conditions of parking orders are reviewed.

The issue and management of Blue Badges is a Nottinghamshire County Council function.

6.21 Disabled bay spaces are designed with additional hatched safety zones for safe exit from or entry into the vehicle. People with Blue Badges can also park in a general bay without the need for a parking ticket or voucher, as long as they display a valid blue badge. Blue Badge holders are allowed to park up to two hours free of charge in the Council's Bingham Needham Street, Bingham Union Street, West Bridgford Gordon Road and West Bridgford Nursery/Albert Road car parks, and for up to 3 hours at the West Bridgford-Bridgford Road car park. After these time periods, users are required to pay or leave.

6.22 At present, the Council's off street car parks do not accommodate medium- and large-sized wheelchair assisted vehicles. Large wheelchair assisted vehicles exceeding 6'6" in height, 1.5 tonnes in weight with an extended wheel base, contravene the current regulations for parking in the Council's off-street car parks. Mobility vehicles with a blue badge can park on the street on either single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours. However, vehicles with rear entry requiring up to 2-3 metres for a wheelchair ramp are often blocked re-entering their vehicle by other motorists or delivery vehicles parking too close, prohibiting access.



*Examples of wheel chair assisted vehicles which exceed Council off-street parking restrictions.*

Recommendations: ➤ Review the parking demand for medium and large wheelchair-assisted vehicles in the Council's off street car parks.

**Sustainable Parking Policy:**

Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to embracing new technologies and methods to provide appropriate sustainable facilities to meet the needs of users and promote reduction in CO<sup>2</sup> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions, improving the environmental quality of the Borough and residents' health and well-being.

6.23 The Council's sustainability policy is committed to reducing the environmental impact of travel across the Borough including reductions in CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, Nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) air pollution, and lowering levels of congestion, while encouraging active travel for shorter car journeys and improving residents' health and well-being. The Council has an action plan which contains measures aimed at reducing traffic pollution and encouraging the use of greener vehicles and low emission zones, addressing the Council's commitment to enhancing residents' quality of life. The Pocket Park and Ride sites at Cotgrave and Stragglethorpe with free parking and ongoing hybrid bus travel, also contribute to the improvement of air quality in the Council's target areas.

6.24 Immediate areas for consideration are the provision of facilities for motorcycles, cycles and electric/hybrid vehicles, including charging points, reserved spaces and secure cycle hubs. Smaller motorcycles make a lower contribution to CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and congestion than most standard cars, and the Council needs to review designated off street motorcycle parking. The Council is also currently working with Nottingham City Council on the implementation of electric/hybrid charging across its car parks. To further support sustainable travel agenda, Rushcliffe is part of the Citycard Cycles scheme providing secure hubs for cycles. The first hub is in place at Bridgford Road car park opposite the Co-op on Central Avenue, providing cycle parking for any bike, 24-hour CCTV and Citycard access controlled doors. The Council should review extending the cycle secure hubs to its other car parks and also Pocket Park and Ride sites; supporting Rushcliffe's commitment to maintaining residents' quality of life through healthy activity for short journeys and improved air quality.



*Secure Cycle Hub in Bridgford Rd Car Park*

**Sustainable Facilities for Low Emission Vehicles: Where are we now?**

There are approximately 83 different types of alternatively fuelled cars available in Britain. Alternatively fuelled car registrations have grown more than threefold over the past five years from 2012 to 2017, recording the highest ever market share at 4.2% in January 2017. A YouGov survey commissioned by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders in 2017, found that more people would like to buy an electric car because of low running costs (51%) and cheap or zero tax (46%), but 48% were concerned they would not find a working or compatible charge point.

In 2016, a Nottingham City Council-led consortium was awarded £6.1million to encourage thousands of people to consider switching to a plug-in car, supporting the UK's thriving green vehicle sector, improve air quality in local hotspots and help the government meet its emission cutting targets. Go Ultra Low Nottingham is a Government funded campaign to promote the use of electric and hybrid vehicles across the Nottinghamshire area; investment will take place between 2016 and 2020. Rushcliffe's Borough Council car parks are being reviewed for inclusion in the network and the Council will receive an installation proposal, including the location and number of charge points per site, in early 2018. The charge point installation and operation for a 10-year period will be at zero cost to the Council and initially paid for out of the Go Ultra Low fund.

The installation of charge points in Rushcliffe provides the Council with a unique opportunity to develop parallel and supporting innovative programmes to encourage residents toward sustainable transport

opportunities, for example:

- Reduced parking charges for residents driving low emission vehicles. Manchester City Council introduced a Green Badge scheme where low emission vehicles benefit from lower parking costs.
- Free parking. Leeds has introduced a permit scheme to allow free parking for ultra-low emission vehicles in the city centre.
- Preferential parking schemes for car share and particularly sharers using low emission vehicles.

Electric charging provision across the Borough is currently provided at Asda in West Bridgford, Lidl's in Bingham and Central College, Ruddington.



*Electric charge points at West Bridgford ASDA and Bingham Lidl's*

#### Community Support for Sustainable and Active Travel – Where are we now?

Nottingham City Council, in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and other local delivery partners, were awarded £1.5million from the Department for Transport's (DfT) Sustainable Travel Access Fund in 2017. The Access Fund was launched by the DfT to support sustainable transport projects that help to grow the economy by boosting levels of cycling and walking, and by improving access to jobs, skills, training and education. Nottinghamshire County Council received £150,000 to undertake personal travel planning with residents in Daybrook and West Bridgford to help address air quality issues in these areas by changing the way people travel, encouraging the use of walking, cycling and public transport.

#### Cycle Uptake Schemes – What are other Councils doing?

**Hackney London Borough Council** created a moveable mini park that can be installed temporarily at the roadside. It includes parking space for six bicycles as well as seating and plant pots, and has already brought increased trade to local businesses.



*Cycling Parklets in Local Business Areas*



**Birmingham City Council** gave away 3000 bikes to local people. The Council realised that although many children had bikes, some parents could not afford bikes of their own. The Council wanted to contribute to employment accessibility, improvement in air quality, reduction of car use for short journeys, while increasing the health and well-being of local residents. Each recipient had to promise to use their bike regularly and were given cycling and maintenance training. The bikes were fitted with GPS devices so the council and academics could collect anonymised data on how much they were being used.

- Recommendations:
- Review the schemes for preferential parking spaces, free and/or cheaper parking for low emission vehicles.
  - Review the options, cost and need for designated motorcycle parking.
  - Review the expansion of the secure cycle hubs/Citycard Cycle Scheme to other car parks and the Park and Ride sites.
  - Link in with Nottinghamshire County Council's personal travel plan project to promote the use of active and sustainable travel to improve air quality in West Bridgford hotspots.
  - Review cycle uptake and parking schemes being used by other Councils for Rushcliffe.

## Quality of Off Street Parking Provision

### Parking Quality\* Policy

The Council continues to develop and maintain quality parking facilities in Rushcliffe by ensuring that:

- Parking facilities are clearly signed and information on the location is provided,
- Parking facilities support a wide range of transport choices – e.g., electric vehicles, cycles,
- Parking facilities are people- and vehicle-safe for different types of transport, e.g., cycles,
- Parking facilities are accessible for people with mobility difficulties,
- Clear pedestrian entry and exit to the car parks for all users,
- Parking areas are lit and clean,
- Designated bays are enforced, and
- A rolling programme of maintenance and investment is undertaken.

*\*The definition of quality is informed by the People's Parking Accreditation criteria.*

- 6.25 The quality of the off street parking experience incorporates a number of diverse factors from ease of finding the car park, through to the car park's look-and-feel, feelings of personal and vehicle safety, signage, accessibility for people with mobility difficulties, pedestrian entry and exit into the parking area, safe and secure parking for cycles and charging points for electric vehicles. Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to delivering high quality off street car parks to ensure the car park experience is positive and supportive of all residents and visitors to the area.

### Signage and Wayfinding

- 6.26 Effective signing can be a significant tool in managing parking; clear signs to car parks can reduce unnecessary driving thereby reducing congestion and other traffic impacts. Signs play an important role for both local residents and visitors to the Borough. A comprehensive review of signage is completed every five years. As part of routine car park inspections, signs are reviewed on a rolling basis for their condition, graffiti or obstructions, and repairs are undertaken immediately.
- 6.27 Variable message signs can help to encourage or discourage the use of particular car parks and roads. By influencing driver choice, signage can ensure that all car parks in an area are better promoted and used. Research has shown that where demand for parking spaces is approaching or exceeding that

demand, the use of variable message signs can redirect drivers to other car parks close by. The Council has identified that the Nursery/Albert Road and Gordon Road car parks in West Bridgford are quickly reaching capacity while Bridgford Road can be under-utilised throughout the day. Motorists are queuing at the Nursery/Albert Road car park causing congestion on the highway when space is available at the Bridgford Road car park. The role of a variable messaging sign in this car park should be reviewed and more widely considered as part of the overall masterplan development of West Bridgford.



### Signage and Wayfinding: Where are we now?

Wayfinding for Car Park Users – i.e., signs to key locations for people leaving the car parks. While local residents may be familiar with pedestrian routes from car parks to key locations, visitors to the area are not. By signing key locations, exit from, safety and town navigation will be improved. This is consistent with the West Bridgford Commissioner's report suggesting a town map for ease of local navigation, which could be placed at strategic car parking points.

### Live Parking App for Checking Space Availability

AppyParking have worked in conjunction with councils across the UK to allow motorists to see all of the on-street and off-street parking options, including controlled parking zones, car parks, disabled bays and free zones. The AppyParking app now covers London, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Coventry, Edinburgh, Manchester and Norwich and will be extended further – one to watch. Rushcliffe could also develop its own parking app. Using the live number feeds from the variable message sign car counters, car park availability could be relayed back to a section of the Council's website and made available through a downloadable smart app. The role of smart apps for parking should be integrated with the innovations in marketing technologies and content for places in the digital High Street strategy.

### Safety

- 6.28 The safer parking scheme (Park Mark®) is a nationally recognised award to car parks that have been vetted by the Police and the British Parking Association that have measures in place to create a safer environment for users and vehicles. The aim of the safer award is to recognise and publicise to users that a defined measure of excellence has been achieved. In order to obtain the award, a parking facility must achieve an effective combination of active management procedures and commensurate preventative security measures. Customers are assured that there is a commitment to providing a high-quality, safe parking facility. The Council will start a rolling programme of obtaining safer awards for all of its car parks.



### Maintenance

- 6.29 The Council regularly inspects all of its car parks and is committed to an ongoing programme of reinvestment, ensuring they remain at a high standard, safe and user-friendly. It is important that the Council's car parks create a good first impression for local residents and visitors.

- Recommendations:
- Review the car parking investment and infrastructure maintenance plan.
  - Review the role of variable message signs to modify parking queues at Nursery/Albert Road car park.
  - Review the role of variable message signs in partnership with the proposed West Bridgford Masterplan.
  - Monitor smart technological developments for showing car park users where the spaces are in advance of their arrival.

## Parking Permits

6.30 At present, the Council only offers car parking permits at Rushcliffe Country Park. The Council should review the demand and possibilities for permits in other areas, e.g., apartment stays and wedding parties at Bridgford Hall.

### Rushcliffe Country Park

6.31 The Council offers the option of purchasing an annual season ticket for Rushcliffe Country Park, allowing users to park without the need for a daily payment at the pay-and-display machines. Season tickets for the country park are open to all applicants, but due to limited space, tickets are processed on a first come-first serve basis. The season ticket does not guarantee the availability of a parking space to the season ticket holder. The ticket is only available for a full year from the date of purchase, costing £30 and is vehicle and car park specific.



Recommendations: ➤ Review the demand and process for offering parking permits for other venues.

## Overview

6.32 Table 7 presents a summary of the Council's operational policies and action plan recommendations.

Table 7. Overview of the Council's Operational Car Parking Policies and Action Plan Recommendations

<b>Overall Management Policy:</b> <b>Rushcliffe Borough Council manages its off street car parking facilities to ensure that the supply, maintenance, charging and enforcement procedures contribute to the Council meeting local objectives.</b>	
Policy	Action Plan Recommendations
<b>Length of Stay:</b> The Council prioritises short-stay car parking (up to two/three hours) on sites within an acceptable walking distance of shopping and local services to ensure adequate accessibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review Bingham and Keyworth parking designations as long stay.</li> <li>➤ Review long stay motorcycle parking to encourage more sustainable travel.</li> <li>➤ Review the need for long stay provision in West Bridgford district centre which is well served by buses and has good walking and cycling connectivity.</li> </ul>
<b>Parking Charges:</b> Parking charges are set in accordance with the Council's fees and charges process each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review the use of car parking charges to influence and encourage people's transport choices.</li> <li>➤ Review the evening tariff and procedure at West Bridgford car parks.</li> <li>➤ Review annually, the permit cost and number of season tickets being issued for Rushcliffe Country Park.</li> </ul>
<b>Payment Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review the uptake of cashless payment and possible promotional campaigns.</li> <li>➤ Implement pay-by-phone payment options at West</li> </ul>

	<p>Bridgford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Link the development of the West Bridgford digital High Street to digital parking developments and marketing promotions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Monitoring Usage and Turnover Statistics</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review the pattern of car park use, informing the development of flexi parking pilots to boost car park usage and local spend in off-peak months.</li> <li>➤ Review the Nursery/Albert Rd high turnover and usage statistics to make sure that the car parks tariff and local parking signage are appropriately distributing users across all 3 West Bridgford car parks.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enforcement:</b></p> <p>The council enforces parking effectively and efficiently under its civil parking enforcement procedures, ensuring that enforcement of all parking rules is fair, consistent and transparent.</p> <p><b>Unregulated/Non-enforceable Car Parks:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ongoing monitoring and review.</li> <li>➤ Identify the car parks to be placed under a parking places order and complete the necessary infrastructure to bring them to regulatory standards.</li> <li>➤ Review the remaining non-regulatory car parks to ensure they are fit for purpose.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equitable and Accessible Parking:</b></p> <p>The Council prioritises, where appropriate, the needs of people who have no choice but to use a vehicle to access essential services, reviewing and improving as necessary, the quality and provision of disabled parking in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). Local conditions and demand are considered in determining the number, type and location of spaces provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review the parking demand for medium and large wheelchair-assisted vehicles in the Council's off street car parks.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainable Parking:</b></p> <p>Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to embracing new technologies and methods to provide appropriate sustainable facilities to meet the needs of users and promote reduction in CO<sup>2</sup> and NOx emissions, improving the environmental quality of the Borough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review the schemes for preferential parking spaces, free and/or cheaper parking for low emission vehicles.</li> <li>➤ Review the options, cost and need for designated motorcycle parking.</li> <li>➤ Review the expansion of the secure cycle hubs/Citycard Cycle Scheme to other car parks and the Park and Ride sites.</li> <li>➤ Link in with Nottinghamshire County Council's personal travel plan project to promote the use of active and sustainable travel to improve air quality in West Bridgford hotspots.</li> <li>➤ Review cycle uptake and parking schemes being used by other Councils for Rushcliffe.</li> </ul>

### Parking Quality:

The Council continues to develop and maintain quality parking facilities in Rushcliffe by ensuring that:

- Parking facilities are clearly signed and information on the location is provided,
- Parking facilities support a wide range of transport choices
- Parking facilities are people- and vehicle-safe for different types of transport
- Parking facilities are accessible for people with mobility difficulties
- Clear pedestrian entry and exit to the car parks for all users
- Parking areas are lit and clean,
- Designated bays are enforced
- A rolling programme of maintenance and investment is undertaken

- Review the car parking investment and infrastructure maintenance plan.
- Review the role of variable message signs to modify parking queues at Nursery/Albert Road car park.
- Review the role of variable message signs in partnership with the proposed West Bridgford Masterplan.
- Monitor smart technological developments for showing car park users where the spaces are in advance of their arrival.

### Parking Permits

- Review the demand and process for offering external parking permits.

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## 7. ON STREET PARKING

- 7.1 The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the current on street parking in Rushcliffe managed by Nottinghamshire County Council.
- 7.2 Nottinghamshire County Council, as the local highway authority, is responsible for on-street parking provision in Rushcliffe. This provision, along with Rushcliffe Borough Council's car parks, gives drivers the option to park on street, where no restrictions are in place, or in a centrally located car park for a small charge. Broxtowe Parking Services, on behalf of Rushcliffe Borough Council, manages the on street parking enforcement as part of the Notts Parking Partnership. This includes the management of enforcement officers including location schedules and resources, issuing short duration parking dispensations, responding to PCN enquiries and dealing with reported parking issues. Nottinghamshire County Council retains responsibility for the installation and maintenance of Traffic Regulation Orders which include lines, signs, waiting and loading restrictions, no stopping areas, disabled parking and residents' parking zones.

### Parking Dispensations

- 7.2 Parking dispensations are short term parking permits (up to 14 days) for vehicles parking on streets with parking restrictions such as Residents Parking Schemes, single yellow lines etc. Nottinghamshire County Council is currently responsible for all on street resident parking permits. However, Broxtowe Borough Council, on behalf of Rushcliffe, can offer on street parking dispensations to business and trade persons where there is a requirement to park in a restricted area to carry out work activities.

### Residents Parking Permits and Blue Badges

- 7.3 Longer stay dispensations, residents parking permits and Blue Badges are dealt with directly by Nottinghamshire County Council. Further information is available on the Nottinghamshire County Council website.

### Taxi Ranks/Bays

- 7.4 There are over 400 licensed taxis (including hackney carriages and private hire vehicles) currently operating in Rushcliffe. Only hackney carriages are able to ply for hire through on street parking/taxi ranks. Hackney carriage taxi ranks are located in West Bridgford outside the Co-op on Bridgford Road and on Central Avenue outside Central News, from 7pm to 7am, using a shared/dual use parking system with designated delivery parking during the day.

### CCTV Parking Enforcement

- 7.5 CCTV on street parking enforcement in Rushcliffe is carried out by Nottinghamshire County Council using a car in order to address parking around schools and bus stops with enforceable traffic regulation orders, where motorists are putting the safety of others at risk and causing unnecessary congestion.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN

- 8.1 Table 8 presents the operational policy recommendations as immediate, medium or longer-term actions. The recommended actions are also presented as project timescales in Figure 3 on page 33.

Table 8. Operational Policy Recommendations as Immediate, Medium or Long-Term Action Plans

<b>Immediate - Short Term Aims: 2018-19</b>
Improve car park lighting
Review the free long stay/12 hours parking at Keyworth and provide short stay provision
Introduction of new payment methods, e.g., "Pay by Phone" option
Work with Chargemaster to complete installation of charge points across Rushcliffe car parks
Review alterations to the layout of Rushcliffe Country Park car parking area and implement
Review and implement revised evening tariff policy
Review the demand and process for offering external parking permits more widely
Identify the car parks to be placed under a parking places order and complete the necessary infrastructure to bring them to regulatory standards
Link in with Nottinghamshire County Council's personal travel plan project to promote the use of active and sustainable travel to improve air quality in West Bridgford hotspots
Review permit cost and number of season tickets being issued for Rushcliffe Country Park annually
<b>Medium Term Aims: 2019-2020</b>
Review long stay provision in West Bridgford district centre which is well served by buses and has good walking and cycling connectivity
Review long term parking provision at Bingham
Review the use of car parking charges to influence and encourage people's transport choices
Review the options and need for very short stay free parking (just a few minutes)
Review the expansion of the secure cycle hubs/Citycard Cycle Scheme to other car parks
Review cycle uptake and parking schemes being used by other Councils for Rushcliffe
Review designated off street parking for motorcycles including long stay
Review dedicated off street parking for medium and large wheel-chair assisted vehicles
Review usage data on Nursery Car Park to identify reasons for parking queues and address
Review the schemes for preferential parking, free and/or cheaper parking for low emission vehicles
Develop and implement a plan to Safety Award all car parks
Review the West Bridgford car parks in-line with the town centre masterplan and digital High Street proposals
Review the agreed non-regulatory car parks to ensure they are fit for purpose
<b>Long Term Aims: 2021-22</b>
Review local shopping reward schemes which reduce the cost of parking, e.g., parking points collected which results in a free parking voucher
Review flexible parking schemes currently operating across Britain for trial in Rushcliffe
Review the transition to touch and colour screens on current pay-and-display machines
Review the provision of real-time parking information to assist users in finding available spaces
Review Rushcliffe's vision for car parks as town and visitor gateways

Review check-in-check-out payment technology and paying-on exit-schemes

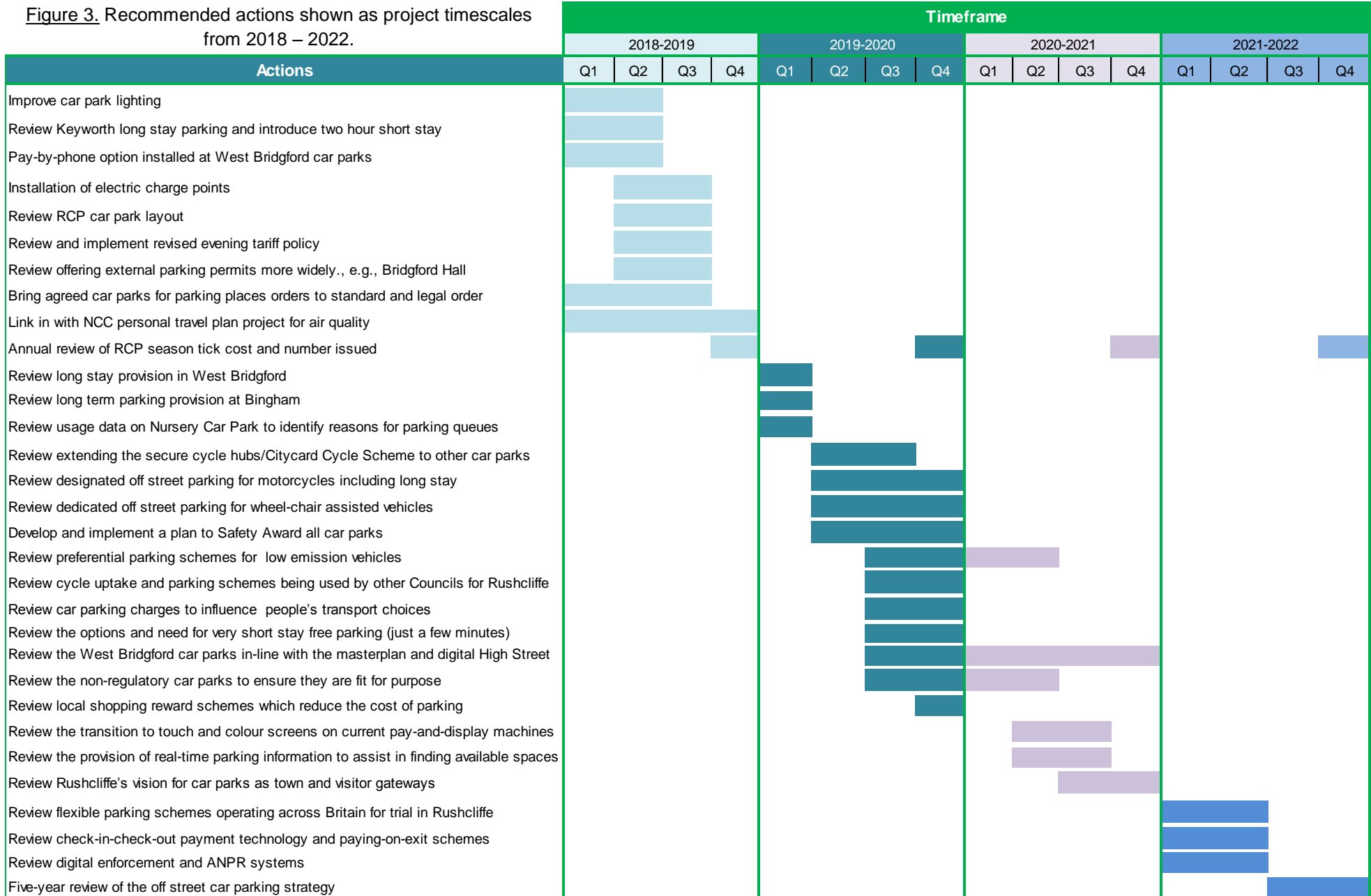
Review digital enforcement and ANPR systems

Five-year review of the off street car parking strategy

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**Figure 3. Recommended actions shown as project timescales from 2018 – 2022.**



## 9.0 APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Broxtowe Borough Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council Business Delivery Targets and Tasks: A Summary

Targets	Services & Tasks
<p><u>ON-STREET</u></p> <p>Achieve good Traffic Management throughout the Borough, ensuring compliance levels are improved/maintained.</p> <p>Provide cost effective enforcement achieving where possible a cost neutral situation.</p> <p>Deliver where possible customer satisfaction whilst managing highway enforcement requirements and expectations.</p> <p>Maintain regular meetings with the contractor, Partner and NCC to measure performance levels and compliance.</p> <p>Manage and control Civil Parking Enforcement across the Borough.</p> <p>Deliver the financial and policy objectives of the Borough Council and County Council in relation to parking enforcement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Effective on-street enforcement</li> <li>➤ Managing beats and schedules</li> <li>➤ Recognising “hot spots” &amp; areas of high non-compliance</li> <li>➤ Inspecting and reporting Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) for defects (signs and lines)</li> <li>➤ Updating contractor of new TRO’s</li> <li>➤ Assist/advise with dispensation requests</li> <li>➤ Participate in ensuring adequate traffic management arrangements are present for local events – football and cricket</li> <li>➤ Deal with customer enquiries</li> <li>➤ Measure compliance levels</li> <li>➤ Cost effective enforcement management</li> <li>➤ Make regular site visits</li> </ul>
<p><u>OFF-STREET</u></p> <p>Provide safe &amp; well maintained car parks with spaces available for visitors.</p> <p>Improve the visitors parking experience by maintaining quality car parks in excellent condition.</p> <p>Ensure that regular checks are made of public car parks and their equipment to ensure that public parking places, arranging repairs where necessary.</p> <p>Introduce and facilitate corporate initiatives, ensuring continuing improvements on service delivery.</p> <p>Apply a fair consistent enforcement regime to build customer/visitors trust and confidence.</p> <p>Encourage visitors to use the car parks and ensure a proportionate turnover of vehicles to meet usage demands.</p> <p>Maintain and monitor pay-and-display machines, ensuring they are fit for purpose, in good working order, and used to their full potential and provide valuable customer based information to improve the services.</p> <p>Maintain effective and efficient management of each borough wide pay-and-display operation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Daily car park inspections and completing weekly defect sheets</li> <li>➤ Reporting defects to RBC Estates department</li> <li>➤ Ensure a CEO presence</li> <li>➤ Effective and fair enforcement of restrictions</li> <li>➤ Checking machines are fully operational</li> <li>➤ Ensuring machines are communicating regularly</li> <li>➤ Liaising with ICT/communications service provider to ensure consistent and good service</li> <li>➤ Reporting and rectifying machine problems with contracted engineers and documenting defects</li> <li>➤ Ordering consumables (ticket rolls) &amp; negotiating sponsorship deals</li> <li>➤ Ensure enforcement contractor carries out appropriate frontline maintenance</li> <li>➤ Undertaking analysis of car park usage and income to assist Rushcliffe Borough Council with decisions on tariff levels</li> <li>➤ Parking place inspections and regular site visits</li> </ul>
<p><u>ENFORCEMENT CONTRACTOR (NSL)</u></p> <p>Manage and measure contractor performance, ensuring a cost effective quality service delivery both on and off-street.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Agree weekly deployment matrix for on and off street enforcement</li> </ul>

Take responsibility for the management and control of externally employed civil enforcement officers.

Plan, organise and direct the day-to-day enforcement activities.

- Monitoring and improving CEO patrol performance
- Regular meetings with CEO supervisor
- Formal meetings with senior contract management team
- Examine penalty charge notice accuracy

#### PENALTY CHARGE NOTICE PROCESSING

Provide advice and assistance to persons in receipt of a penalty charge notice.

Represent Rushcliffe Borough Council in attending and presenting evidence before the Traffic Penalty Tribunal adjudication service.

Consider and respond to parking representations and appeals. Ensure compliance with all professional, legal and financial requirements relevant to the workload.

Monitor and measure appeals process performance levels against national averages and bench marks in relation to neighbouring authorities.

- Consider appeals and representations for both on and off street parking
- Attend any Traffic Penalty Tribunal hearings
- Respond to enquiries from customers both verbally, face to face and in writing
- Monitor appeals performance levels
- Monitor notice processing performance

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Appendix 2. Pay-and-Display Charges across the Council's Car Parks

Pay & Display at West Bridgford	
Up to 30 minutes	£0.50
Up to 1 hour	£1.00
Up to 1.5 hours	£1.50
Up to 2 hours	£2.00
Up to 2.5 hours	£2.50
Up to 3 hours	£3.00
Over 3 hours/Max stay 12 hours	£20.00
Evening Tariff from 18:00 to 23:59	£1.00
Sunday and Public Holidays	£1.00
Pay & Display at Bingham Needham Street & Union Street	
Up to 2 hours	Free with voucher
Up to 12 hours	£20.00
Pay & Display at Rushcliffe Country Park	
Up to 12 hours	£1.00
Season Ticket/Parking Permit	£30 per annum

Appendix 3. A list of the Council's Off Street Car Parks by Civil Enforcement Status

<b>Car Parks Under Civil Enforcement Off Street Parking Places Orders</b>	
Bingham	Market Place Needham Street Newgate Street Union Street
Keyworth	Bunny Lane Church Drive
Radcliffe on Trent	Health Centre Walkers Yard
Ruddington	Rushcliffe Country Park
West Bridgford	Bridgford Road Gordon Road Nursery/Albert Road
<b>Unregulated/Non-Enforced Car Parks:</b> <i>Not Under Parking Places Orders</i>	
Car Parks	Cotgrave Shopping Precinct East Leake Gotham Road
Leisure Facilities	Cotgrave Leisure Centre Edwalton Municipal Golf Club Rushcliffe Arena
Parks, Playgrounds, Sports and Playing Fields	Alford Road Playing Fields Gresham Playing Fields West Park
The Hook	Holme Grove Holme Road – Hook Car Park
West Bridgford	Collington Common Edwalton Avenue Gamston Community Centre Lutterell Hall

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 <p>Rushcliffe Borough Council</p>	<p><b>Cabinet</b></p> <p><b>15 May 2018</b></p> <p><b>Parkwood Leisure Ltd – Lex Leisure Community Interest Company Proposal</b></p>	<b>8</b>
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**Report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods  
Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community and Leisure Councillor D Mason**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 In August 2007 the Council contracted with Parkwood Leisure Ltd to provide leisure centre services at the Councils leisure centres, with the exception of East Leake Leisure Centre which is subject to a separate PFI agreement. Subsequently the Council agreed to permit Parkwood Leisure Ltd (the Leisure Operator) to sub contract the delivery of the leisure services to Parkwood Community Leisure, a non-profit distributing organisation (NPDO). NPDOs are a common business model used to deliver public services at arm's length that ensures profits are re-invested in services or business growth rather than being distributed to shareholders.
- 1.2 Officers have received a proposal from Parkwood Leisure Ltd (the Leisure Operator) to vary the contract to replace the NPDO with a Community Interest Company (CIC) operating model. If accepted, the Leisure Operator will end their sub contract arrangements with the NPDO and transfer staff and undertakings, under a new sub contract, to Lex Leisure CIC.
- 1.3 The Council's primary contract arrangement remains with Parkwood Leisure Ltd who retains all liability for the delivery of the contract and for the actions of their sub-contractor. In making this proposal Parkwood Leisure Ltd has offered the Council an incentive of £70,000 in year 1 and £120,000 per year thereafter, indexed linked, for the remainder of the contract, which expires on 31 July 2025

**2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) Accept the proposal made by Parkwood Leisure Ltd to subcontract the delivery of leisure services to Lex Leisure CIC, and
- b) Give delegated Authority to both the Executive Managers – Neighbourhoods and Finance, and the Portfolio Holder for Community and Leisure to finalise the required legal variations to effect this change.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The proposal represents a total income of £790,000 (index linked) to the Council over the next 7 years to contribute to the Council's Transformation Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 3.2 Officer due diligence on Lex Leisure CIC, both financial and speaking with others who have already allowed such arrangement, has not given any cause for concern over the CICs ability to deliver the Council's leisure services.
- 3.3 The Council's contract will remain with Parkwood Leisure Ltd, assuring the Council that they still have all the benefit of the Parent Company Guarantee given by them.

### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 Lex Leisure is a Community Interest Company (CIC) that was established to build upon the legacy of two successful Paralympic games (London and Rio). The objectives of Lex Leisure are to carry out and deliver activities that benefit the community, and in particular to provide for persons in the UK with physical, mental or health inequalities who are faced by difficulties that limit their ability to access leisure, physical activities and sporting opportunities.
- 4.2 Lex Leisure CIC provide a focus on those persons who are registered or considered disabled, physically or mentally on a permanent or temporary basis as well as those who are at risk of social exclusion, who can be engaged to adopt a more active lifestyle. Lex Leisure CIC operate on a commercial basis with a view to generating a surplus that will be used for the sole purpose of attracting funds or grants from industry, commercial organisations and other bodies, to support persons who meet the criteria of its principle objective.
- 4.3 Lex Leisure CIC is a private company limited by guarantee managed by two Company Directors, both of whom have worked with Parkwood Leisure Ltd and wider leisure clients for over 20 years in legal and operational roles. Whilst independent from the Parkwood group, Lex Leisure CIC is part of a wider Parkwood Partnership Group and as such has secured access to the professional management support services of the Parkwood Group providing reassurance that Lex Leisure CIC can effectively perform the required duties.
- 4.4 Lex Leisure CIC employs around 700 staff across nine leisure facilities in London Borough of Bexley, Torbay, and Solihull. Lex Leisure CIC is budgeted to have a turnover of £14m in its current financial year. As a CIC, Lex Leisure are obliged to re-invest surplus it makes into the community interest objective and is eligible for VAT relief.
- 4.5 A financial check on Lex Leisure has confirmed that the company was registered and incorporated in March 2017. As the company is so young, it does not yet have a significant credit rating or contractual limit. Members are reminded however that the Rushcliffe contract remains with Parkwood Leisure Ltd, and it is therefore Parkwood Leisure's risk to sub contract to Lex Leisure CIC, and the Council will be protected by the indemnities afforded by Parkwood Leisure Ltd.



- 4.6 By being a CIC VAT efficiencies are generated as VAT is not charged on certain activities and therefore additional income is realised. If this proposal is accepted, Parkwood Leisure will pay the sum of £70,000 in year 1 and £120,000 for the remainder of the contract indexed annually in line with the current agreement. The reduced costs in year 1 are to reflect legal and set up costs.

## **5. Risk and Uncertainties**

- 5.1 The Contract with Parkwood Leisure has provision for receiving a share in operating surplus over 9.4%. As the CIC is required to re-invest profit, Parkwood Leisure proposes to retain this arrangement but to amend the baseline at which profit share is paid to the Council. The Contract has not reached a point for several years in which profit share has been awarded. It is felt that whilst there is a risk of slightly less opportunity for profit share, the loss is insignificant, when compared to the guaranteed annual lump sum being offered by Parkwood Leisure.
- 5.2 Lex Leisure CIC is a young company established in March 2017. Whilst all due diligence has shown that it ought to be capable of delivering the leisure services and the risk lies with Parkwood Leisure, it is still a fledgling company. Thorough contract management will remain in place, as always, during the transfer process and beyond, to ensure that any drops in service levels or performance are promptly rectified. All powers available through the contract to resolve performance concerns will remain available to the Council, should they be required.
- 5.3 The aspiration by both parties is to effect the change and complete the legal variation by 1 June 2018. Though the Council will not commit to any change until it is satisfied that all its requirements can be met. If transfer is delayed significantly, then the year 1 benefit may reduce proportionately from the £70,000 offered.
- 5.4 The Council expects VAT liabilities would rest with Parkwood (if for example there was a change in Regulations or HMRC's interpretation of what Parkwood were doing did not meet the CIC criteria) and this should be stated in the agreement.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1 Finance**

The proposal made by Parkwood Leisure Ltd represents a £790,000 income for the Council over 7 years.

Paragraph 5.1 highlights the risk surrounding profit share and it is the Council's view that as the benefit of the proposal is shared the profit share position should remain unaltered.


### **6.2 Legal**

A contract Deed of Variation will be required, to be signed under seal. Parkwood Leisure Ltd is leading the process of legal drafting. The Council's legal team will oversee the Council's input and ensure the Council's position is protected. External legal advice can be sought if it is felt necessary.

## 7. Corporate Priorities

- 7.1 The provision of leisure services supports the corporate priority of 'maintaining our resident's quality of life' and the proposal made by Parkwood Leisure with the associated income stream supports the 'transformation of the Council to enable the delivery of efficient high quality services'.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	David Banks Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods 0115 914 8438 <a href="mailto:dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk">dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers Available for Inspection:</b>	None.
<b>List of appendices (if any):</b>	None.

 <p><b>Cabinet</b> <b>15 May 2018</b> <b>Report of the Corporate Peer Challenge</b></p>	<h1>9</h1>
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## Report of the Chief Executive

### Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership Councillor S Robinson

#### 1. Summary

1.1 This report presents the final report from the Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) which was conducted from 31 January – 2 February 2018. The CPC focused on the following core elements:

- Understanding of local context and priority setting
- Leadership of Place
- Organisational leadership and governance
- Financial planning and viability
- Capacity to deliver

1.2 The final report in **Appendix 1** contains the full final report which includes the Corporate Peer Challenge team's recommendations for consideration by the Council.

1.3 An action plan contained in **Appendix 2** identifies actions to address the recommendations made by the Corporate Peer Challenge team.

#### 2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet

- a) Accept the Corporate Peer Challenge report as detailed in **Appendix 1**
- b) Agree that the Corporate Peer Challenge report be utilised as a key document to drive forward the future priorities, resource utilisation and culture of Rushcliffe Borough Council and
- c) Agree the Action Plan set out in **Appendix 2**.

#### 3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1. The implementation of the Corporate Peer Challenge action plan will ensure that the Council continues to act in the best interests of its residents, whilst utilising and building our capacity, to maximise the outcomes stated within the corporate plan, working towards becoming sustainable, whilst also delivering significant growth with a clear and exciting vision for the borough.

## **4. Supporting Information**

### **Overview of the Corporate Peer Challenge Process**

- 4.1 With the abolition of the inspection and regulatory regime and the national performance framework, there was a shift to local accountability for performance and self-regulation in local government, with sector led improvement through peer challenge at its heart. As part of this shift, the Local Government Association (LGA) began to provide a Corporate Peer Challenge to all member councils once every four / five years. The aim of the peer challenge is to provide external challenge to the council's own self-assessment.
- 4.2 Peer challenges are improvement-focussed and tailored to meet individual council's needs. They are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The peers use their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they meet, things they see and material that they read. The team provide feedback as critical friends, not as assessors, consultants or inspectors.
- 4.3 The peer team was composed of:
- Lead Peer – Nicola Bulbeck, Former Chief Executive of Teignbridge District Council and from January 2018, West Sussex County Council Executive Director
  - Elected Member Peer – Cllr Julian Daly, Former Leader of St Albans City and District Council and current Portfolio Holder for Commercial and Development
  - Officer Peer – Louise Branford-White, Chief Finance Officer at Hambleton District Council
  - Officer Peer – Doug Bamsey, Corporate Director at Sedgemoor District Council
  - External Peer – David Joel, Managing Director of Lanson Consultants specialising in business performance improvement
  - Challenge Managers – Becca Singh and Frances Marshall, Local Government Association
- 4.4 The peer team spent three days with us on site, at the Rushcliffe Arena and visiting other locations including the Abbey Road Depot, Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre, West Bridgford and the Cotgrave Town Centre development.
- 4.5 During their three days with us, the team:
- Spoke to 90 participants including a range of Rushcliffe councillors (both internal and external), staff and key external partners and stakeholders
  - Gathered information and views from more than 40 meetings, visits to key sites and additional research and reading
  - Collectively spent more than 340 hours to determine our findings

- 4.6 The peer team considered the following five questions which form the core components looked at by all Corporate Peer Challenges. These are the areas which the LGA believes are critical to councils' performance and improvement:
- **Understanding of the local place and priority setting:** Does the council understand its local context and place and use that to inform a clear vision and set of priorities?
  - **Leadership of Place:** Does the council provide effective leadership of place through its elected Members, officers and constructive relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders?
  - **Organisational leadership and governance:** Is there effective political and managerial leadership supported by good governance and decision-making arrangements that respond to key challenges and enable change and transformation to be implemented?
  - **Financial planning and viability:** Does the council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?
  - **Capacity to deliver:** Is organisational capacity aligned with priorities and does the council influence, enable and leverage external capacity to focus on agreed outcomes?

- 4.7 In addition to these questions, we asked the peer team to provide feedback on Growth, our approach to Commercialisation, and Streetwise Environmental Ltd.

### **Summary of the Key Recommendations**

- 4.8 The CPC report was overwhelmingly positive regarding the current leadership, priorities, pace and record of delivery. These were reflected through the team's key observations, which included:
- Responsive to, and understanding of, RBC communities
  - Some very engaged and enthusiastic Members who use their knowledge and skills to help make strategic decisions and set the direction of the Council
  - Seen as a 'go to' partner that delivers for a variety of stakeholders spanning different sectors at lots of different levels
  - An organisation that has commercialisation in its DNA leading to multiple and diverse positive outcomes
  - Well-respected and admired corporate brand and reputation with potential to lead, inspire and motivate others
  - Dedicated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and adaptable staff who are proud to work for RBC
- 4.9 Whilst it is pleasing to receive positive feedback it is extremely important to listen and learn from the messages contained within the report and in particular the recommendations for improvement. These are stated as:
- Position Chief Executive and Leader roles to maximise dialogue and engagement at local, regional and national level.
  - Explore scope for greater strategic collaboration with and on behalf of neighbouring district and borough councils.
  - Improve engagement with Nottinghamshire County Council.
  - Continue to implement and develop the Commercial Strategy.

- Clarify, with partners, the role of the Economic Prosperity Committee.
  - Cabinet and EMT should spend team development time identifying and understanding one another's skills, and preferences.
  - Review pay, reward and progression package.
- 4.10 Activity has already begun to remedy some of the issues outlined above and full details of all the recommendations of the peer team and the actions that the Council proposes to address these recommendations are contained in the attached appendices.
- 4.11 As can be seen from the key recommendations above in 6.3 there is a strong theme throughout the CPC report which centres around our engagement with partners, both locally and nationally. While considerable work has already been done in this direction, it is valuable to have this feedback from the peer team, to give the Council's work in maintaining and building relationships a clear focus.
- 4.12 Prior to the CPC, work had already been undertaken by the Chief Executive and Leader to raise Rushcliffe's profile and growth agenda, through partnerships and contacts both locally and nationally, including Ken Clarke MP and lead Civil Servants at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. This work continues to be vitally important in the light of the CPC recommendations and the Council will continue to strengthen relationships with relevant Government departments in respect of frequency, content and focus of our dialogue.
- 4.13 Equally, prior to the CPC, it was clear that monitoring and improving engagement with Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council, whilst promoting collective responsibility for the successful delivery of the stated growth priorities, would be key to continued success for our authority, particular with regards to our significant growth agenda. It is now beyond question that we must continue strengthening joint leadership meetings, making sure they are regular, strategic focused and effective.

## **5 Risk and Uncertainties**

- 5.1 There are a number of identified risks and uncertainties which could ultimately impact upon the success of the Council in delivering the priorities and objectives of the Council. In particular the success of Rushcliffe Borough Council will be determined by the continuation of clarity of priorities, successful collaboration with the community and key partners, co-operation from upper tier authorities, regional bodies and national Government departments.
- 5.2 The capacity and resilience of the organisation will continue to be influenced by robustness, adaptability and good management of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, which is again influenced by the level of government funding, growth in the area and success in income generation.

## 6 Implications

### 6.1 Finance

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. Future resource decisions will be considered as part of future budget reporting and consideration of the Council's broader Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### 6.2 Legal

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## 7. Corporate Priorities

7.1 The implementation of this action plan will ensure the Council is in the best position to deliver on all of its corporate priorities.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Allen Graham Chief Executive 0115 914 8349 <a href="mailto:agraham@rushcliffe.gov.uk">agraham@rushcliffe.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers Available for Inspection:</b>	None.
<b>List of appendices (if any):</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Corporate Peer Challenge Final Report <b>Appendix 2</b> – Action Plan

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# Corporate Peer Challenge **Rushcliffe Borough Council**

**31<sup>st</sup> January – 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018**  
Feedback Report

# 1. Executive Summary

Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) is an agile, commercially-minded council, focused on delivering quality services for its residents and communities. A forward-looking council, it is an exciting and rewarding organisation to work for. People want to move to the borough with its good service provision, leisure and culture offer, employment and businesses, many of which have been facilitated by the council.

There have been two major changes in the last couple of years: moving to its new headquarters in November 2016, and electing a new Leader in May 2017. The change of leader brought a renewed political energy, building on a strong history of success over many years. The Chief Executive has been in place for several years, managing the organisation through the changes brought about by austerity measure, and successfully leading the commercial agenda.

RBC is now based in a new, purpose-built, open plan office space. It is a welcoming place to be, and a flexible place to work. As well as the standard desk arrangements, there are pods for quieter work or private conversations, several glass rooms for meetings, and a large kitchen area which can be (and is) used for social and educational activities. Multimedia screens around the office area broadcast messages to staff and Members – information about changes, publicity about events, thanks to staff for their work, and praise to those who have performed over and above what would be expected of them in the normal course of their work.

Staff are dedicated, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and adaptable and are proud to work for the council. Members and officers alike highlighted the skills and dedication of staff, and their commitment to the council. They report that it is a good place to work and like the new office arrangements. The physical space, along with the Chief Executive's leadership style, has encouraged a 'one council' approach, and positive 'can do' culture, as well as cementing the council's presence in the community.

The office is upstairs from the flagship leisure centre (Rushcliffe Arena), and this has added to the culture of the organisation, encouraging staff to take some physical activity, and promoting health and wellbeing messages. The build was successfully delivered on time, and on budget and is a credit to the council.

RBC spends considerable time understanding the current and future needs of its residents and businesses. Partners feel that it is open and transparent, inclusive and want to work with it. Nearby District councils indicated that they would be happy for Rushcliffe to represent them on a wider platform (such as economic growth partnerships), recognising RBC's skills, knowledge and organisational experience. They feel that the council is keen to explore options that maximise benefits for all stakeholders. It has a commercial head, focusing on work that delivers high social value. RBC's well-respected corporate brand means that it has a good reputation with the potential to motivate, inspire, influence and lead others.

The council is an organisation that has commercialisation in its DNA. It has a sophisticated approach, with various strands, not just income generation. Staff are encouraged to be efficient as well as effective. Projects are managed and focused to maximise savings, encourage growth and generate income. This leads to multiple and diverse positive outcomes for its residents and communities.

There are some very engaged and enthusiastic Members who use their knowledge and skills to help make strategic decisions and set the direction of the council. It would be good to encourage more Members to be actively engaged in taking the council forward. Member skills could be developed and harnessed further.

The new building has provided new opportunities for engaging with each other, staff and the public. However, some Members may have found it difficult to adapt to new ways of working because of reduced budgets, a new Cabinet and Leader, and the new open plan office. Clearer direction on how Members and officers engage with each other would help to address their concerns.

## 2. Key recommendations

There are a range of suggestions and observations within the main section of the report that will inform some 'quick wins' and practical actions, in addition to the conversations onsite, many of which provided ideas and examples of practice from other organisations. The following are the peer team's key recommendations to the Council:

1. **Position Chief Executive and Leader roles to maximise dialogue and engagement at local, Regional and National level.** This would provide an opportunity to showcase and promote your locality, and help to influence policies which affect the council. Make sure you are clear what your objectives are for relevant meetings, and that they benefit the council, partners and residents of the borough.
2. **Explore scope for greater strategic collaboration with and on behalf of neighbouring District and Borough councils.** RBC is already doing this, but neighbouring Districts and Boroughs in particular may welcome Rushcliffe taking a leadership role on their behalf, particularly around the growth and commercialism agenda.
3. **Improve engagement with Nottinghamshire County Council.** This could be through:
  - Supporting Rushcliffe's Members to engage with Members of the County Council
  - Strengthening joint leadership meetings, making sure they are regular, strategic focused and effective
  - Frame schemes that the County Council is able to support, to ensure stated political positions are not compromised
  - Optimise engagement with Nottinghamshire County Council through the positive use of both its Member and officer resources, to build relationships, influence and remove blockages which could be of benefit to both organisations and the public.
4. **Continue to implement and develop the Commercial Strategy.** Further enhance officer skills and capacity to enable them to develop, drive and market commercial initiatives and deliver the growth agenda. This will need continued development of strategies and resources to maximise the delivery of the affordable housing numbers required.
5. **Clarify, with partners, the role of the Economic Prosperity Committee.** Establish if this is still the best and most effective vehicle. If it is, raise its visibility and, where relevant, increase the frequency of meetings to build effective strategic partnerships, alliances and cohesive strategies and plans. If it is not, establish effective relationships with key partners through relevant and effective governance boards with both Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City Councils, to maximise the benefits to the Rushcliffe community.
6. **Cabinet and EMT should spend team development time identifying and understanding one another's skills, and preferences.** Use accredited tools (such as Belbin, or MBTI), and use the results to inform and enhance ways of working to lead the organisation. This could then be extended to other senior managers and politicians, e.g. Chairs / Vice Chairs, Service Managers, Lead Specialists.
7. **Review pay, reward and progression package.** This is becoming critical across all services for recruitment and retention. Alongside this, review flexible and alternative working practices to ensure they are clear, fair, consistent, fit for purpose and communicated clearly to staff and managers in all service areas and locations.

### 3. Summary of the Peer Challenge approach

The peer team:

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected your requirements and the focus of the peer challenge. Peers were selected based on their relevant experience and expertise and agreed with you. The team which delivered the peer challenge at Rushcliffe Borough Council was:

- Cllr Julian Daly - St Albans City and District Council
- Nicola Bulbeck – West Sussex County Council
- Louise Branford-White – Hambleton District Council
- Doug Bamsey – Sedgemoor District Council
- David Joel – Independent Consultant, providing an independent commercial perspective on RBC’s commercial activities, particularly Streetwise
- Frances Marshall – Local Government Association
- Becca Singh – Local Government Association

#### Scope and focus

The peer team considered the following five questions which form the core components looked at by all Corporate Peer Challenges. These are the areas we believe are critical to councils’ performance and improvement:

1. Understanding of the local place and priority setting: Does the council understand its local context and place and use that to inform a clear vision and set of priorities?
2. Leadership of Place: Does the council provide effective leadership of place through its elected Members, officers and constructive relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders?
3. Organisational leadership and governance: Is there effective political and managerial leadership supported by good governance and decision-making arrangements that respond to key challenges and enable change and transformation to be implemented?
4. Financial planning and viability: Does the council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?
5. Capacity to deliver: Is organisational capacity aligned with priorities and does the council influence, enable and leverage external capacity to focus on agreed outcomes?

In addition to these questions, you asked the peer team to provide feedback on Growth, Rushcliffe’s approach to Commercialisation, and the Streetwise company (feedback provided separately).

## The peer challenge process

Peer challenges are improvement-focussed and tailored to meet individual councils' needs. They are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement. The process is not designed to provide an in-depth or technical assessment of plans and proposals. It is important to stress that this was not an inspection. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared for the peer challenge by reviewing a range of documents and information to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent three days onsite at Rushcliffe Borough Council, during which they:

- Spoke to about 90 people including a range of council staff, councillors and external stakeholders
- Gathered information and views from more than 40 meetings, visits to key sites and additional research and reading
- Collectively spent more than 340 hours to determine our findings – the equivalent of one person spending nearly ten weeks in Rushcliffe BC

This report provides a summary of the peer team's findings. It builds on the feedback presentation delivered at the end of their on-site visit (2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018). In presenting feedback to you, they have done so as fellow local government officers and members, not professional consultants or inspectors. By its nature, the peer challenge is a snapshot in time. We appreciate that some of the feedback may be about things you are already addressing and progressing.

## **4. Feedback**

### **4.1 Understanding of the local place and priority setting**

RBC councillors, officers and partners all demonstrated good knowledge of the local place and local community needs. The Local Plan demonstrates understanding of current and future needs of communities and businesses. This is driving priorities and service delivery. Councillors, officers and partners all demonstrated this understanding.

The key priorities of the council are clear: Economic Growth, Quality of Life, and the Transformation of Service Delivery. Staff know and own these priorities, and they drive all work throughout the council. They demonstrated awareness of strategic challenges as well as their own specific areas of focus. The key challenge is the delivery of growth sites (for example, Gamston), particularly for housing. There is a significant gap between housing growth targets and delivery. This affects RBC's plans for growth and may also affect income in years to come.

Resident feedback shows high satisfaction with council services. However, with the increased pressure on staff and resources, as you continually strive to improve delivery, it is getting harder to continue to meet those expectations. Good communications and public engagement may mean that residents will be happy accept some 'good' services – a gold service rather than platinum – if they understand why.

### **4.2 Leadership of Place**

There is strong political and managerial leadership, with both the Leader and the Chief Executive highly visible in the borough. Partners know and seek out both, and speak very positively about their leadership style. They are respected and influential.

External communications have improved recently with additional resource made available. The council could use its communications team to ensure that the public knows what RBC has achieved for its communities and why it is using a commercial approach. Residents may need more help to understand the growth agenda and good, varied communications will be crucial.

There is a creative and positive use of partnerships to deliver operational and strategic outcomes. A growing partnership with the City Council is leading to mutually beneficial developments (e.g. Clifton, and the A453 economic growth area). The Customer Contact Centre is an excellent example of joint working (with the police) leading to improved outcomes for the public and staff development. There is the opportunity to expand the service it provides to other partners, for example, increasing the work it does on behalf of Metropolitan Housing, or providing a service to new partners.

Strategic partnerships are difficult to leverage. Increasing visibility with national politicians, civil servants and other councils, could help to release some of the blockages that RBC experiences. Work with other District and Borough councils to provide clarity and prioritisation to the County and City Councils of what is required to deliver the economic and housing growth whilst also realising the maximum benefits for residents and communities.

### **4.3 Organisational leadership and governance**

Rushcliffe BC's long-standing Chief Executive and Executive Management Team established a strong foundation of successful service delivery and commercial approaches, recently recognised in the LGC Entrepreneurial Council of the Year (2018). The new Leader and Cabinet have injected a new purpose and new clarity of political priorities, along with energy and fresh ideas. As a result, the organisation has recognisable good political and managerial organisational leadership.

The new Leader appointed his Cabinet through a competitive application and interview process. This ensured that executive Members considered carefully how their skills and experience could benefit the community, and that Portfolio Holders are knowledgeable about the services that they are responsible for. The team consider this appointment process to be notable practice. Going forward, it may be necessary to ensure that Portfolio Holders are not drawn into being managers of the services that they oversee, as their role is setting strategic direction and holding officers to account.

The Executive Management Team (EMT) is visible throughout the organisation. Staff consider them to be approachable and enabling, experienced and professionally adept. This team has helped to create a positive organisational culture. There are clear levels of management, without a large bureaucracy, and staff are encouraged to develop their specialist skills and knowledge. Moving to the new office, along with the leadership style of the Chief Executive, has enabled the organisational culture to develop positively. The rest of EMT have embraced and promoted this culture.

Internal communications employ a variety of channels (screens, emails, blogs, newsletters, team meetings, etc). The open plan office has encouraged informal networking and communications, and helped to foster a positive work environment through a mixture of social and informative activities. For example, whilst the team was on site, there was a Mental Health awareness day, which involved information and support, sharing cakes and refreshments in the kitchen area. Although this is welcomed, and successful, it's important to consider those workers who do not work in the main office, and ensure that they are included and stay informed.

There have been significant changes for Members to deal with in recent years. The effects of these changes should not be underestimated. Some more work may be needed to ensure that all of them feel comfortable with these changes, particularly if they have been councillors for many years. The new office, and new political leadership, have brought a different approach to Member / officer relations. Changes to communication methods, and to how Members physically interact with officers, have meant that there are some Members feel that there is a remoteness between officers and Members.

Austerity measures mean that there are reduced staff numbers, and inevitably less face-to-face interaction than in the past. Not all Members understand how the new office works, and what access they have. They are more visible in the open plan environment than in the previous council offices and this may make some uncomfortable. All councils are phasing out paper-based communications, to reduce their environmental impact and save resources and time. In Rushcliffe, the drive for



digital communications with Members is now being supported by the Leader. However, these changes mean that some Members who feel out of the loop and are not actively involved in council business.

There is a core of Members who are actively engaged in the council processes and work, but a significant number who are not. A focused approach to developing Member skills and knowledge would help to harness their experience and complement those of the officers. It would also ensure that all Members understand that their important role setting strategic direction and holding officers to account.

#### **4.4 Financial planning and viability**

Robust financial planning and good corporate governance are in place and working well. This is demonstrated by the analysis in the 2018/19 budget setting report and associated financial strategies. The council currently has no debt; reserves are healthy in comparison to the risk and exposure of the Authority. Reserves are projected to increase and will be required to further support the commercialisation and capital project ambitions, and service reductions mean that it is in a healthier financial position than many District councils.

Members have several opportunities to understand and improve the financial understanding. Monthly meetings between the Section 151 officer and the finance Portfolio Holder. Recent Member budget meetings were well attended which helped Members understand the current and future funding situation. Internal Audit provides a good assurance mechanism. Both Internal and External Audit attend quarterly Governance and Scrutiny meetings. The statement of accounts is supported by good audit working papers. The external audit process works well, with good contact with officers, fulfilling statutory obligations. The external auditors have a high opinion of Rushcliffe and its approach to risk management.

Service delivery savings for 2018/19 are through cash limited budgets. This means that in-service budgets absorb the inflation cost increase of £270k. Service reductions are made even though there is less pressure than some councils as the Authority is in a good place financially. However, RBC is not complacent. It is fully aware of challenges (for example, the impact of the New Homes Bonus reducing) and is proactive in all measures.

Reserve levels are healthy in comparison to the risk and exposure of the Authority. Reserves are projected to increase and will be required to further support the commercialisation and capital project ambitions of the Authority. This is because of a recent review of current and future risks, including an assessment of its risk register. It also considers future pressures upon services, inflation and interest rates. Reserve levels include capital commitments and revenue, and include commercial income generated and all funding streams (for example, Business Rates Retention, Council Tax and Grants). The council currently has no debt, but is considering borrowing, subject to appropriate business cases.

Members and officers understand the financial challenge and the need for checks & balances. Improvements have been made, particularly in 2016/17 compared to

previous years. There are better links between EMT (Executive Management Team) and Cabinet, although there is some scope for greater member engagement in financial planning. Members are not necessarily getting information early enough, which should be addressed to improve the financial planning process.

There is a clear understanding of the importance of risk management, and balancing risk and reward. This is considered when making assumptions to support and maintain the robust budget whilst managing risk at a level that the council is comfortable with. RBC is willing to take some risk, with careful planning and mitigation, to reap rewards for its communities. There are no major concerns, although the council might want to ensure risk management is consistently understood and embedded.

Generating new income streams is progressively more difficult. The obvious quick gains and easy wins have already been taken. Everyone is encouraged to contribute to new ideas and projects, including for income generation. The Chief Executive speaks to staff directly for proposals which have included: delivering green waste services for Newark & Sherwood, maintenance of vehicles with City Council, shared car parking services with Broxtowe, and providing ICT services for small businesses. The team heard a suggestion to have regular (perhaps annual) meetings with individual contractors to discuss ideas that could have mutual benefit to RBC and the contractor.

Due diligence in project appraisal / business case is key, and may need further reinforcing going forward.

## **4.5 Capacity to deliver**

Rushcliffe Borough Council has a strong track record of high quality service delivery, developing its entrepreneurial and commercial approach over recent years led by the Chief Executive.

Staff are proud to work for RBC and are highly motivated to deliver to the highest of standards for residents. The workforce feels empowered and supported by managers, with opportunities for development and freedoms to generate, share and progress new ideas. Significant investment in staff development has contributed to job satisfaction and a high level of workforce retention. All of this means that the council is described as an 'exciting' place to work.

There is a 'whole council' approach, enabled by the open plan office and the open, inclusive ethos. Cross-team working, with ad hoc cross-organisational project teams is common. Individuals are encouraged to generate ideas for efficiency and productivity, and ad hoc teams are brought together to deliver short term goals (for example, to organise green waste renewals).

RBC responds flexibly and swiftly to changing needs and situations. The willingness to bring in external resources or skills where and when required has enabled the council to make the most of new opportunities. The new Communications Officer and the Strategic Delivery Sites Officer posts are good illustrations of this.

There is however risk of organisational overstretch, as the council does more with fewer staff, coupled with high expectation both externally and internally. Whilst there has been a willingness by many staff to go the extra mile, this is not sustainable in the long term and capacity is an issue which requires further consideration.

Like all councils, there are skill shortages in key areas and challenges in recruiting to specialist roles. The competence and culture of current staff is not in question. To remain competitive, the pay and reward package should be reviewed along with other incentives to attract and retain the right talent. Individual managers currently have discretion over flexible working, although this is perceived to be inconsistently approved and applied. Clarifying the position for staff and managers would help to reassure staff.

## **4.6 Commercialisation**

RBC has been on a commercialisation journey for over eight years and is well-advanced compared to many councils. It has a strong commercial mind set which is more subtle and impressive than most, exploring a variety of models to help deliver the RBC services. This includes streamlining processes and decision-making, as well as investments in property, communities, business development and income generation. The link between increased commercial activity and improved service delivery more widely is well understood amongst staff and Members. Creating social value is RBC's purpose, and commercialisation allows them to do this.

RBC has achieved key commercial success and has a good track record, for example Streetwise, Green waste, Property investment (the Point), and Industrial Units at Cotgrave for business start-ups. As a result, RBC is considered a trusted client. For example, Metropolitan Housing Trust cites them very highly amongst the 80 councils it works for.

RBC understands and seizes the wider benefits of commercialisation for Rushcliffe communities. Both staff and Members realise that doing things differently is acceptable and they are encouraged to explore, develop and deliver options beyond the most common commercial models, including investment, property development, income generation and streamlining processes. There are many commercial ideas generated, and RBC prioritises which are delivered, based on evaluation of risk and reward. Even more could be delivered if there were more officers with commercial skills in RBC. Some skills are already developed, empirically and through training (for example, the LGA / Institute of Directors course). Consider how to expand and develop these skills.

To continue to be truly commercial, strategic decision-making needs to be more agile. Delegated authority to the Asset Investment Group (AIG) could help this. If this body does what the Cabinet papers allow, the council should be able to do more. Members have a strategic role, setting policy and vision, and taking overarching decisions, which can bring relevant experience to bear, but need to do so without stepping into an operational role. Consider how to provide clarity to Members and the public on decisions that are made. Implementing robust commercial bid / no bid decisions, perhaps using the grid provided by the Institute of Directors will help to have a clear narrative on why decisions have been made.

Relationships are vital as is engagement with clients and users to establish common purpose and rapport. More training, for officers and Members, on improving organisational relationships, particularly with public sector partners, should be considered.

## **4.7 Growth**

Rushcliffe Borough Council is a trusted brand and a respected and skilled delivery agent with a good reputation. Partners indicate that it is an excellent council to work with, and that it is achieving good outcomes for its residents, communities and businesses. It has taken a proactive positive role delivering tailored, targeted growth.

RBC established Growth Boards in key areas of the borough. These bring together partners from different sectors, including Members, developers, public sector partners, and local businesses for development and regeneration. They are all at different stages, and are learning from each other. Partners welcome this approach, which enables different solutions for different parts of the borough. Consider how the Community and Voluntary Sector could participate in Growth Boards. Harnessing their community activism and knowledge would add value and capacity of social infrastructure.

This creative approach is delivering locally derived solutions. For example, at Cotgrave, RBC is building an economic and community facility. This includes GP surgery, police and council information point, and units to support a variety of new and small businesses. Working closely with Nottingham City Council, RBC is developing employment opportunities for Clifton's residents, along the A453, which involves working with Highways from the County Council. Involving the voluntary and community sector more could enhance social infrastructure, and help to improve community understanding of the need for growth.

RBC has developed a flexible approach to funding, enabling it to divert LEP resources from one site to another (for example, Bingham to Clifton). It has had recent success in a housing infrastructure fund bid to Government.

The action plan from the Planning Peer Challenge has been delivered and is showing results. Reforms to the planning committee have enabled quicker, clearer decision-making. Proactive communications have improved the engagement with public and partners enabling swifter, better informed, decisions to be made.

Housing delivery numbers are a big challenge. There is no five-year land supply, and there have been some sites lost on appeal. Big sites are not delivering as planned, so, in addition to work to accelerate those sites, there is a need to identify and release smaller sites. The target of 30% affordable housing is not being reached, but RBC is doing better than other councils. There may be more work to do on increasing social housing numbers.

The Strategic Delivery Sites Officer has been appointed to clear blockages to delivering growth on strategic sites. He works closely with the dedicated delivery teams for each site, along with key stakeholders to remove barriers to delivery. However, there is a fragmented delivery partner landscape who are not all fully engaged, or engaged early

enough in the process. The Economic Prosperity Committee (EPC) appears to have stalled since the breakdown of the Combined Authority bid. The lack of effective meetings could result in the risk of credibility both at a regional and national level. There is a need for a collective strategic body of this nature to provide leadership, direction and prioritisation in the support of growth. There is also a role for such a body to support authorities in preventing land banking by key land owners both in the private and public sector.

Rushcliffe Borough Council has a key role to play in working with its District council partners to achieve better co-ordination and clarity of priorities, whilst also influencing the re-establishing of the purpose, motivation and governance of the EPC. Due to the size of the growth agenda within Rushcliffe, if the EPC is unable to gain traction then it will be essential for the council to establish an alternative strategy to participate within a relevant vehicle to maximise its influence and delivery.

## **4.8 Streetwise**

Streetwise is a successful social enterprise delivering social value and financial benefit to RBC. It delivers street cleaning and grounds maintenance to the council and to the main social housing provider (Metropolitan Housing). The Managing Director has a strong drive and has instilled a strong commercial culture and people-orientated values. It has delivered external business to good acclaim with its Teckal compliant company.

To deliver a five-year plan, the Managing Director will need the support of a strong leadership team, including an operations director, finance specialist, and possibly an independent non-executive director. We recommend that this is put in place as soon as possible.

Streetwise needs a long-term vision to take it forward. It has benefited from opportunistic growth. A strong strategic vision will help direct its next steps. Once the new strategic management team is in place, they can establish the long-term vision, and plan out the marketing strategy for the company.

Suggestions from the peer challenge team include:

- Review and implement a new strategic management structure to support its growth.
- Review Streetwise and clarify the long-term vision
- Refocus growth strategy, for example through:
  - Market Penetration and Sales Growth
  - Public Sector Growth
  - Review and implement new structure to support Growth
- Develop and deliver marketing and communications strategy
- Establish better bid processes
- Review recharge structure from RBC to ensure best value to Streetwise
- Revise the constitution to ensure it allows Streetwise to be agile
- Relocation is key if margins are to be improved
- Implement Holding Company Structure and review roles and its objectives in relation to Streetwise
- Implement, review and monitor 2018 business plan

## 5. Notable Practice and Signposting

### Notable Practice

- CABMAN meetings – regular Cabinet and EMT meetings for vision setting and as an accountability mechanism
- Cabinet role application process – Members had to apply for a Cabinet role and go through a shortlisting and interview process
- The Pickle Campaign – this communications campaign encouraged people to come to the council for help around benefit changes. The strapline was “don’t get in a pickle” with appropriate images and metaphors. It resulted in both service delivery improvement, improved customer experience and fewer mistakes or late payments.
- Growth Boards – multi-agency, locality based partnerships that identify current and future needs for the area and seek ways to deliver the growth that is needed.
- Cotgrave development – a community based and partnership approach which took vision from Rushcliffe. The community hub facility in Cotgrave will house health services and Rushcliffe services. Whilst focusing on ensuring that the NHS gets what it needs, it is developing into a wider partnership. Business units are available for new and small businesses.
- Imaginative and effective use of the Apprenticeship Levy to empower and develop staff.
- Approach to Commercialisation – commercialisation is used to provide social as well as financial benefit. The financial benefits enable good service delivery. Different models and methods are used; it is not just about income generation. Policies, practices and processes are reviewed with a commercial approach. Investments in communities as well as financial investments are seeing returns. Investment in staff development is broadening commercial expertise within the council. Property development and delivery supports the business growth that RBC is aiming for.
- Link officers at a senior level for Town and Parish council. This leads to positive and fruitful working relationships, effective and efficient ways of addressing challenges and improving collaboration.
- Staff engagement initiatives, such as ‘mocktail making’ during dry January, Chief Executive cooking for staff, the reverse advent calendar, and internal communications such as the TV screens.

### Signposting

- Affordable housing delivery methods – Sedgemoor District Council works with landlords who are not Registered Social Landlords to deliver affordable rents.
- Forum for contractor liaison – St. Alban’s City and District Council has established annual reviews with its major contractors to identify opportunities of mutual benefit, such as better services, greater income generation or lower running costs.
- Joint County Council / District and Borough council management team meetings – West Sussex County Council and its Districts have achieved good outcomes for its residents using this model, through growth deals and HIF funding.

## **6. Next steps**

### **Immediate next steps**

We appreciate the senior managerial and political leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

As part of the peer challenge process, there is an offer of further activity to support this. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on some of the areas for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this. Mark Edgell, Principal Adviser is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association (LGA). He can be contacted by emailing [mark.edgell@local.gov.uk](mailto:mark.edgell@local.gov.uk).

In the meantime, we are keen to continue the relationship we have formed with the Council throughout the peer challenge. We will endeavour to provide signposting to examples of practice and further information and guidance about the issues we have raised in this report to help inform ongoing consideration.

### **Follow up visit**

The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge process includes a follow up visit. The purpose of the visit is to help the Council assess the impact of the peer challenge and demonstrate the progress it has made against the areas of improvement and development identified by the peer team. It is a lighter-touch version of the original visit and does not necessarily involve all members of the original peer team. The timing of the visit is determined by the Council. Our expectation is that it will occur within the next 2 years.

### **Next Corporate Peer Challenge**

The current LGA sector-led improvement support offer includes an expectation that all councils will have a Corporate Peer Challenge or Finance Peer Review every 4 to 5 years. It is therefore anticipated that the Council will commission their next Peer Challenge before February 2023.

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Recommendation from CPC	RBC Action	To be Monitored by	Progress reviewed by
<b>KEY RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			
1. Position Chief Executive and Leader roles to maximise dialogue and engagement at local, Regional and National level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Facilitate regional representational opportunities e.g. LEP, EPC</li> <li>➤ Strengthen relationships with relevant Government Departments in respect of frequency, content and focus of dialogue.</li> </ul>	Leader / Chief Executive  Cabinet	May 2019  May 2019
2. Explore scope for greater strategic collaboration with and on behalf of neighbouring district and borough councils particularly around the growth and commercialism agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Create opportunity document to monitor progress and development split between Strategic collaboration &amp; Commercialism</li> </ul>	Executive Management Team / Cabinet	December 2018
3. Improve engagement with Nottinghamshire County Council <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Supporting Rushcliffe's Members to engage with Members of the County Council</li> <li>b. Strengthening joint leadership meetings, making sure they are regular, strategic focused and effective</li> <li>c. Frame schemes that the County Council is able to support, to ensure stated political positions are not compromised</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Create opportunities for dialogue and input e.g. budget workshops, member briefing events.</li> <li>➤ Create Schedule of strategic meeting opportunities. E.g. Strategic Growth Board, EPC and Leader meetings</li> <li>➤ Create and communicate portfolio of joint projects which</li> </ul>	Portfolio Holder Finance & S151 Officer  Deputy Chief Executive	December 2018  December 2018

Appendix 2 – CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

	require input and engagement form both organisations	Leader / Chief Executive	December 2018
4. Continue to implement and develop the Commercial Strategy and further enhance officer skills and capacity to enable them to develop, drive and market commercial initiatives and deliver the growth agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop action plans, monitoring opportunities, reporting mechanisms and communication plans to balance priorities, opportunity, capacity and scalability.</li> </ul>	Cabinet & Executive Management Team	December 2018
5. Clarify, with partners, the role of the Economic Prosperity Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Integrate with other actions See 2 &amp; 3 above</li> </ul>		
6. Cabinet and EMT should spend team development time identifying and understanding one another's skills, and preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Timetable and preferred way to create development time be prepared and agreed for current year and 2019/20</li> <li>➤ Analytical tools for activity and Preferred analysis tools identified.</li> <li>➤ Provider for implementation, analysis and facilitation commissioned.</li> </ul>	Leader & Chief Executive	September 2018
		Deputy Chief Executive	September 2018
			September 2018
7. Review pay, reward and progression package and flexible and alternative working practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review incorporated into 2018 pay offer.</li> <li>➤ Options to be generated and agreed</li> </ul>	Chief Executive	Jan 2019
			May 2019