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To all Members of the Communities Scrutiny Group

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Group will be held on Thursday, 22 January 2026 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S Pregon'.

Sara Pregon
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 October 2025 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. Exclusion of the Public

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

5. Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMOs (Pages 9 - 18)

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

6. Work Programme (Pages 19 - 20)

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

Postal address

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



Membership

Chair: Councillor H Parekh

Vice-Chair: Councillor L Plant

Councillors: M Barney, J Billin, R Butler, C Grocock, R Mallender, D Mason and P Matthews

Meeting Room Guidance

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

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

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

Recording at Meetings

National legislation permits filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

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



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY GROUP THURSDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2025

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

PRESENT:

Councillors H Parekh (Chair), L Plant (Vice-Chair), M Barney, R Butler,
C Grocock, R Mallender and P Matthews

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor N Regan
Dr J Wells - Principal Officer Flood Risk Management, Nottinghamshire County
Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

D Banks	Director of Neighbourhoods
E Richardson	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors J Billin

5 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6 Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 July 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2025 were agreed as a true record
and were signed by the Chair.

7 Flood Risk Update

The Director of Neighbourhoods introduced the Flood Risk Update report which
provided an update since the last report to the Group in 2020, including
information about flood risk, agency activity and local flood preparation work.

Mr Wells gave a presentation to the Group and outlined the role of
Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) as the Lead Local Flood Authority
(LLFA). He said that NCC coordinated flood risk management related to
ordinary watercourses, surface water and ground water flooding. He explained
that main river flooding was managed by the Environment Agency, sewers were
managed by Severn Trent Water and some land areas by the Trent Valley
Internal Drainage Board.

Mr Wells said that NCC delivered the capital and revenue flood risk

management schemes, published Section 19 reports and were a statutory consultee for surface water to Local and County planning authorities. He said that NCC maintained a register of assets having critical impact on local flooding and published the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan (LFRMS) and worked with communities to learn about local knowledge on flood risk and impact.

Mr Wells explained that NCC managed the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) which assessed the current level of risk in the County, by area, and which provided an overview of areas at risk and assisted in determining where to direct funding. The current PFRA was published in July 2023.

In relation to the planning process, Mr Wells said that NCC was a statutory consultee for all planning authorities in the County for surface water in major developments, but not river or sewer flooding, and that they aimed to ensure that any development offered a betterment downstream and put in place flood mitigation measures such as ponds and attenuation tanks, with a preference for above ground features.

In relation to the flood risk for Rushcliffe, Mr Wells said that this was difficult to assess but noted that Rushcliffe had a mix of flooding from surface, fluvial (watercourse) and sewer sources and had experienced two extreme events (three in the County) since 2023. He said that how flood risk was managed had changed and a more holistic approach was being taken using a range of different measures such as flood walls, natural flood management measures such as ponds and planting trees in watercourses along with more traditional property measures such as flood doors and self-closing air bricks. He said that improving local community resilience and knowledge was also a key aspect.

Mr Wells presented information about the flood impacts from recent storms, storm Babet in October 2023 and storm Henk in January 2024 and also the flooding which occurred in January 2025 where record levels were recorded on the River Soar and he confirmed that there were a number of communities within the Borough that experienced repeated flooding.

Mr Wells informed the Group about flood mitigation works undertaken by NCC across the Borough. At Costock he said that a natural flood management project had been installed in 2024 with three earth bunds, two swales and an attenuation pond put in place. NCC were also working with partners and private land owners to undertake land drainage works. In relation to Cropwell Butler, he said that NCC had successfully been awarded £148k funding from the Environment Agency to install measures such as leaky barriers, storage ponds, wetlands and earth bunds and were also working with local landowners on measures to slow and attenuate the flow of waters downstream and with the local parish council in providing local knowledge. In relation to Tollerton, Mr Wells said that flood resilience measures had been installed on at risk properties and that the number of reported internally flooded properties had reduced in the recent floods in January 2025. He confirmed that a community meeting had been held to review the situation with the works being driven by the community. In East Leake, he said that following the January 2025 flooding a meeting had been held with residents to discuss impacts and a multi-agency meeting held to coordinate watercourse clearing and installation of flood

property resilience measures.

Mr Wells referred to the Property Flood Resilience Programme (PFR) which delivered flood resilience measures to at risk properties, fully funded by NCC and no cost to the homeowner, such as flood doors, air brick seals and boundary protection walls and gates. He said that over 100 properties had had bespoke solutions installed. He confirmed that boundary measures would require all properties within the flood area to agree to the measures, otherwise individual property measures would be required.

In relation to the Community Flood Signage Scheme (CFSS), the Group were informed that this allowed for trained members of the community to close roads during flood events, which could help reduce the impact from bow waves and increase road safety. The scheme improved community resilience, being locally led, but administered by NCC and financed by NCC. He said that there were over 650 registered volunteers across the County, with 46 active schemes, of which 14 were in Rushcliffe.

The Director of Neighbourhoods confirmed that CFSS linked in with the Councils own flood resilience store grant which supported local communities and parishes in purchasing storage buildings to enable them to store sand bags, road closure equipment and flood signage locally.

The Chair thanked Mr Wells for his presentation and guided the Group to focus on strategic level flooding matters.

Councillor Mathews asked about costs for NCC and charges to the home owner including if flooding was due to a lack of maintenance. Mr Wells said that measures were fully funded by NCC with no recharge to the property owner and to be eligible a property needed to be recorded on the list of previously flooded properties. He said that NCC had topped up and gone further than the DEFRA grant and that cases were assessed on a case by case basis. He said that if an asset failed and was not repaired then NCC would monitor the situation.

Councillor R Mallender asked about future weather impacts and flood risk and where best to plant trees. Mr Wells said that it was hard to predict future flooding or where a storm would come from and therefore what its impact would be, but that surface water and flood zone mapping fed into risk assessments and also that NCC kept a record of where houses had flooded since 2007. He added that some opportunity mapping had been carried out as part of the natural flood management and that NCC looked at upstream factors for areas that were at risk of flooding. He thought that tree planting would be beneficial in a wide range of areas, particularly upstream of areas that flooded.

Councillor R Mallender asked about measures such as putting meanders back into rivers that had been straightened and Mr Wells said that NCC had carried out such works elsewhere in the County, such as in Woodborough and Trowell.

The Director of Neighbourhoods referred the Group to the Environment Agency surface flood mapping (<https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map>) which showed areas prone to flooding and which would enable local

communities to be better informed and prepared.

Councillor Grocock asked whether there was any facility for funding of preventative measures before flooding had occurred. Mr Wells said that measures were reactive in the main, with communities at risk being prioritised, but that there were proactive projects taking place. The Director of Neighbourhoods referred to proactive work being done by the Internal Drainage Board in excavating ditches and watercourses, clearing of drainage and working with landowners. He also referred to the NCC Lengthsman scheme which helped to keep highway ditches clear.

Councillor Grocock acknowledged the good work carried out by the Internal Drainage Board but noted the difficulty in communicating and engaging with them at a local level. The Director of Neighbourhoods said that they were strong and active partners of the local Flood Board at a strategic level.

Councillor Regan asked about NCC enforcement powers and Mr Wells said that their powers were based on the Land Drainage Act of 1991 which allowed them to enforce maintenance of ditches with the power to recharge if work had not been completed.

Councillor Regan asked about property development on flood plains and whether there was any evidence of it causing flood problems and whether it would be possible to conduct analysis about impact. Mr Wells replied that policies regarding flooding were stricter than they used to be and noted that newer developments did not experience flooding in the way that older developments did. He said that any analysis would be a wide ranging undertaking which would not be possible currently. The Director of Neighbourhoods noted that the Council rarely had to deliver sand bags to new development estates as they had flood mitigation measures in place but that it would be important to ensure that the mitigation measures were maintained so as to remain effective in the future.

Councillor Butler asked about communication with landowners for mitigation measures on their land and whether there was any resistance. Mr Wells said that resistance was a significant barrier as often measures would take private land out of production. He noted that it was a national problem but that there currently was no national guidance and no compensation for the landowners. He said that NCC paid landowners an upfront payment to maintain the measures for ten years and that they inspected the maintenance every year. He said that much was done on goodwill with landowners wanting to make a positive impact downstream and put in natural habitats.

Councillor Plant referred to building community resilience in local areas and asked what NCC did to encourage local involvement. Mr Wells said that word of mouth and working with local Councillors was a key method of building awareness and recruiting volunteers.

Councillor Barney asked about future management of areas which suffered repeated flooding, particularly with climate change and where there may not be more that could be put in place. Mr Wells thought that national policy may be required and that for some properties, where flooding was not preventable,

measures could focus on recoverability, such as waterproof kitchens, stone flooring and raising of electrics.

The Chair asked about performance measurement across the risk management authorities and whether there was a mechanism to hold partners accountable when actions were delayed. Mr Wells said that monitoring took place through attendance at council scrutiny meetings and scrutiny processes but that there were no powers of enforcement. The Director of Neighbourhood said that the S19 process and reports identified the roles of the different agencies and their responsiveness and Mr Wells confirmed that these were published on NCC's website. He added that communities were also kept updated about activity through drop in and community engagement events and that information was shared with parish councils and through flood wardens.

Members of the Group referred to engagement with agencies and recent difficulty in getting Severn Trent Water to attend a scrutiny meeting. The Director advised that Severn Trent Water were in the process of recruiting a number of community officers who would hopefully provide more local liaison and contact in the future.

The Chair suggested that a letter be sent to Severn Trent Water to communicate the difficulty and frustration experienced by Councillors in contacting them and that the Council would welcome them to attend a Council scrutiny meeting. The Director of Neighbourhoods confirmed that a letter outlining the issues would be sent.

Councillor Grocock said that there was a lack of communication at a community and resident level and suggested that having a centralised local flood communications team could help address this. This was duly noted but the Director for Neighbourhoods confirmed that this would be beyond the remit of the Council.

Councillor Butler referred to information about preparedness for future storms and flooding and the Director for Neighbourhoods confirmed that an article about flooding had been circulated to Councillors today and that there was significant information about flooding available on the Council's website. He encouraged Councillors to inform their communities about the Environment Agency postcode checker for flood risk and the benefit of signing up to it.

Councillor Plant asked about S19 reports and their purpose and Mr Wells said that they were a statutory responsibility and were to document what had happened, that they informed improvements to flood risk management and planning and fed into the funding process but did not critique activity.

Members of the Group raised the issue of communication with agencies at a Councillor level, the difficulty experienced with the process and the lack of responsiveness and engagement and that Councillors may have to write to their MP to receive a response. The Group discussed writing to local MPs to ask them to ensure that the agencies be brought to the table. The Group suggested that having contact details for the main agencies involved would be helpful to Councillors to help them report their local concerns. The Director for Neighbourhood said that he would provide agency contact information.

The Chair asked about modelling used to understand how climate change would increase flood risk over the next ten to twenty years. Mr Wells replied that surface water modelling for surface water flood risk had been completed up to 2026 which had climate change built into it and that it was considered and built in as part of looking at flood resilience and attenuation schemes and that it was driven at a national level by the Environment Agency.

The Chair asked about the local flood risk strategy and when it was due to be updated. Mr Wells said that the FRMS was updated on a 6 yearly basis and that its update would include a review of climate change data and flooding that had occurred since it was last written. He said that the Strategy would be updated in 2027 and the Action Plan in 2029. The Director for Neighbourhoods said that the Council had an emergency response Flood Plan which was an operational plan that it followed during times of flooding. He added that the Environment Agency were continually updating their flood risk and information which was published on their website

The Chair referred to the shared Emergency Planning Officer and asked whether this provision was adequate and asked about contingency plans if more than one flood event occurred in a year. The Director for Neighbourhoods confirmed that the Borough shared an Emergency Planning Officer with NCC and that this arrangement had been in place for a number of years and that it worked well and provided sufficient resource. He highlighted that the Borough had one of the largest stores of sandbags across the County and even through it had been impacted by multiple floods it was well prepared and had been able to respond to events.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) scrutinised the contents of the report and presentation; and
- b) provided feedback to the Lead Local Flood Authority on the latest flood risk profile for the Borough.

8 **Work Programme**

The Director of Neighbourhoods presented the Work Programme and outlined the upcoming scrutiny items. In relation to the Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMO's report, he said that representatives from Serco and the Home Office would be invited to attend.

In relation to any further review of MTVH, the Chair confirmed that a new scrutiny request form requesting a future review was required which would then be submitted for review at Corporate Overview Group.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Communities Scrutiny Group approved the Work Programme as set out below:

22 January 2026

- Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMO's

- Work Programme

2 April 2026

- Carbon Management Plan Update
- West Bridgford Contact Point
- Work Programme

xx October 2026

- Review of debt collection agents by RBC in line with the outcome of the Government's consultation on Council Tax and Enforcement
- Work Programme

Actions – 16 October 2025

Minute No.	Action	Officer Responsible/Update
7.	The Group asked for a letter to be sent to Severn Trent Water regarding the difficulty and frustration experienced by Councillors in contacting them	The Director of Neighbourhoods has written to Severn Trent Water about their responsiveness
7.	The Group asked for contact information for the key flood agencies to be shared with the Councillor group	Information has been circulated to the Councillor Group

The meeting closed at 20:43.

CHAIR

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Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 22 January 2026

Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMOs

Report of the Director for Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. Councillor A Phillips has submitted a request for scrutiny which is provided in Appendix 1.
- 1.2. In response to the key lines of enquiry, it is intended that this report provides members with an overview of current UK asylum dispersal policy, the legislation relating to Houses in Multiple Occupation within Rushcliffe and more specifically their use as accommodation for asylum seekers. Representatives of both SERCO and the Home Office will also attend the meeting to respond to any further questions.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) scrutinise the content of this report, and
- b) provide feedback to the representatives of the Home Office and Serco on the application of government asylum dispersal policy within Rushcliffe.

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1. The Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation programme in Nottinghamshire is managed by Serco under the Asylum, Accommodation and Support Services Contract (AASC), commissioned by the Home Office. This programme supports individuals who have applied for asylum in the UK and are awaiting a decision on their status.
- 3.2. Given the high numbers of asylum seekers and the costs involved, the Home Office is reducing its reliance on contingency hotels. Following the closure of the Haven Hotel near Whatton, there are currently no contingency hotels located in Rushcliffe. Across the East Midlands, there are only 13 such hotels down from 33.
- 3.3. In April 2022, the Home Office introduced the "full dispersal" model, mandating that all local authorities in England, Scotland, and Wales participate in housing asylum seekers. This policy requires councils to accept a proportion of asylum seekers (families and singles) based on several factors

including the housing market, local population size, social impact and viability. A shift that brought many previously non-participating areas into the scheme, primarily via the private rented sector which will often be larger properties with 3, 4 or more bedrooms including Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Initially the scheme was based on a postcode review process whereby councils provided Serco with postcodes which met the exclusion criteria. However, as a result of Rushcliffe's low crime rate very few postcodes met these criteria.

- 3.4. In 2024 the Home Office changed the model to an individual property notification whereby Serco notify the Council when they intend to proceed with the procurement of a particular property. The Council has 5 days to either accept, decline or accept with conditions. Officers will make every effort to notify local ward members, confidentially of the procurement and seek their feedback as local community leaders. It is important to note, however, that the criteria for a property to be declined by the local authority is highly specific, that is to say:
- High chance of Service User(s) being subject to antisocial behaviour (ASB) with recent/relevant evidence preferably, this should be within the last 6 months;
 - Exposure of Service User(s) to extreme right-wing activity with recent/relevant evidence, within the last 12 months;
 - Inability of Service User(s) to access local amenities due to rurality or inadequate public transport;
 - Placement of a Service User(s) in a position where their safety is at risk.
- 3.5. There are currently 7 properties (6 HMOs) being used within Rushcliffe under the asylum dispersal scheme and a total of 35 service users. The majority (5) are situated in West Bridgford, one in Cotgrave and one in Radcliffe on Trent.
- 3.6. The East Midlands region has currently achieved approximately 59% of its asylum accommodation delivery target. These targets are reviewed twice a year, and since the programme is ongoing and rolling, there is no fixed end date for the target setting.
- 3.7. Rushcliffe's current notional delivery target is 182 individuals and 214 bedspaces, a reduction of 58 individuals and 68 bedspaces from previous targets, reflecting government considerations of market conditions, social factors, and viability.
- 3.8. Serco as the landlord is responsible for ensuring compliance with the relevant legal requirements including housing legislation. They are the single point of contact for any "management issues" that may occur during the lease of the property.
- 3.9. Serco will put in place arrangements with local service providers such as the voluntary sector, health, local GP's etc to ensure the migrants wellbeing. Notwithstanding, the dispersal model is discussed at regional Regional Full Dispersal meetings chaired by the East Midlands Councils Strategic Migration Partnership. These discussions aim to:

- Align asylum dispersal with other resettlement schemes
 - Mitigate unintended pressures on local services.
- 3.10. To further support the suitability of leases by Serco and to reduce the risk of localised issues Rushcliffe Borough Council, in partnership with Nottingham Refugee Forum (NRF), has recently commenced a 12-month project (starting 1 December 2025) using government funding to provide enhanced support for asylum seekers placed in dispersed accommodation within Rushcliffe. This initiative introduces a dedicated Dispersal Accommodation Outreach Worker, who will work directly with individuals and families to deliver holistic casework and advocacy.
- 3.11. The Outreach Worker's role includes:
- Developing individual support and move-on plans tailored to each client's needs
 - Facilitating access to essential services such as housing, health care, ESOL provision, and legal advice
 - Promoting community cohesion by addressing issues arising from dispersal placements and fostering positive relationships between asylum seekers and local residents
 - Escalating safeguarding concerns promptly and ensuring integration efforts are prioritised to help individuals transition successfully from temporary accommodation into longer-term housing solutions.
- 3.12. This project represents a proactive response to the Home Office's dispersal model, which aims to reduce reliance on contingency hotels and increase the use of private rented sector properties, including HMOs, for asylum accommodation. The initiative will be subject to ongoing review throughout the 12-month period to assess impact and inform future strategic housing decisions.
- 3.13. The Council also retains its statutory role in terms of investigation of any noise, anti-social behaviour reports from such properties as we would from any other type of owner occupied or tenanted property in the Borough using our powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Disorder Act 2014.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

- 3.14. A House in Multiple Occupation (or HMO) is a property that is shared by three or more tenants who are not living together as a family, and who share basic amenities such as a kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities but have separate bedrooms.
- 3.15. The private rented sector is an important part of the national housing market, with 4.7 million households in England. The sector has undergone rapid growth over the last 10 years. It is the second largest tenure in England, representing 20% of all households in England. Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) form a vital part of this sector, often providing cheaper accommodation for people whose housing options are limited. HMOs are

known to be commonly occupied by students but there are also a growing number of young professionals and migrant workers sharing houses and flats.

- 3.16. Mandatory licensing of HMOs came into force in 2006 (Housing Act 2006) and applies to properties of 3 storeys or more with 5 or more people making up 2 or more separate households living in them. HMOs that do not meet the criteria do not need to be licensed but must still meet the statutory legal requirements for housing fitness standards.
- 3.17. Licensing has largely been successful in helping to drive up standards and make these 60,000 larger HMOs safer places to live in across the Country. Licences can last up to five years and will have conditions attached to them that must be complied with. All licensed HMOs are routinely inspected to ensure they meet all necessary statutory requirements.
- 3.18. Licensing is intended to make sure that landlords of HMOs are:
- fit and proper people, or employ managers who are
 - each HMO is safe and suitable for occupation by the number of people allowed under the licence
 - the standard of management of the HMO is adequate
 - high risk HMOs can be identified and targeted for improvement
 - HMOs are not overcrowded.
- 3.19. There are currently 200 licensed HMOs in Rushcliffe situated in the following wards:

Trent Bridge	80
Compton Acres	16
Abbey	11
Lady Bay	43
Radcliffe on Trent	1
Lutterall	1
Musters	46
Soar Valley	2

- 3.20. The licence will specify the maximum number of people who may live in the HMO. It will also include the following mandatory conditions, which apply to every licence:
- a valid current gas safety certificate, which is renewed annually
 - proof that all electrical appliances and furniture are kept in a safe condition
 - proof that all smoke alarms are correctly positioned, installed and maintained
 - each occupier must have a written statement of the terms on which they occupy the property, for example, a tenancy agreement
 - minimum sleeping room sizes
 - waste disposal arrangements.

Planning Considerations

- 3.21. Large HMO's (those with 7 or more occupants) fall into a separate use class for planning (Sui Generis) with no permitted development rights for material change of use to a large HMO from any other planning use. As such the creation of large HMOs requires planning permission, where the use being changed from is sufficiently different to the large HMO being created as to amount to a 'material change of use'.
- 3.22. Small HMO's, with 3-6 occupants, fall into use class C4 however permitted development rights exist to allow free-flowing change of use between C3 (dwelling house) and C4 (small HMO) without the need to make planning applications. There is no requirement for property owners to notify the Local Planning Authority when undertaking changes of use via this permitted development right.
- 3.23. These would be matters stemming from the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and various interactions between the three pieces of legislation.
- 3.24. Planning enforcement has had no recent involvement in matters relating to HMOs, however the only opportunity for the planning enforcement team to get involved at present would be in a situation where a large (7+ occupant) HMO had been created causing a material change of use without the benefit of planning permission.
- 3.25. It should be noted that at its September 2025 meeting a motion was passed by the Council requiring officers to investigate the potential use of an Article 4 Direction which could potentially see the removal of permitted development rights for smaller HMO's. This work is still in progress and will be reported back in due course.

4. Risks and Uncertainties

Serco acting on behalf of the Home Office may decide to proceed with a new property despite the Council having recommended refusal. In such cases there is a reputational risk to the Council as well as local community cohesion.

5. Implications

5.1. Financial Implications

Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, it should be noted the council has received £24k in asylum dispersal funding from the Home Office so far this financial year (£38k 24/25). This funding is made available to provide support to asylum seekers and increases in-line with the number of asylum seekers housed in the area.

The cost of delivering the Dispersal Accommodation Outreach Worker project (as detailed in paragraph 3.10) is £15,000, which is being fully offset by the Asylum Dispersal Grant. This ensures that the initiative is delivered at no net cost to the Council while supporting strategic objectives around housing and community integration.

5.2. Legal Implications

The Council has statutory responsibility for ensuring all HMOs are compliant with legal requirements.

5.3. Equalities Implications

The governments full asylum dispersal model and associated policy will have been subjected to an appropriate equality impact assessment at a national level.

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

The Council retains its statutory role alongside the Police to investigate reports of noise, crime and anti-social behaviour.

5.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

Not applicable

6. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	None identified
Quality of Life	Ensuring HMOs and the private rented sector are safe and compliant with relevant housing legislation is a key building block for health and local residents' quality of life.
Efficient Services	None identified
Sustainable Growth	None identified

7. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) scrutinise the content of this report, and
- b) provide feedback to the representatives of the Home Office and Serco on the application of government asylum dispersal policy within Rushcliffe.

For more information contact:	Geoff Carpenter Assistant Director for Public Protection Tel: 0115 9148229 gcarpenter@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Copy of the scrutiny request form

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Rushcliffe Borough Council – Scrutiny Request

Councillor Request for Scrutiny		
Councillor ALAN PHILLIPS		
Proposed topic of scrutiny ...	Asylum Dispersal & Contingency Accommodation and to include HMOs	
I would like to explore ... It is helpful to include why you feel this topic requires scrutiny, what concerns you, what concerns are being raised with you, and how scrutiny will lead to better outcomes or services to residents.	We need to scrutinise the Asylum Dispersal & Contingency Accommodation used in Rushcliffe and to include HMOs so that the system is used appropriately and not misused. SERCO should be invited to present to the group how the system works and its appropriateness when housing asylum seekers. We need to understand why the system is geared only around the safety of asylum seekers and not our vulnerable residents. We need to scrutinise our planning system around HMOs to see if and how it can be tightened up to give RBC some control of its own destiny. Without scrutiny this is an issue that is only going to grow arms and legs and become a bigger issue as time goes by. As councillors we need to understand the system fully and be able to scrutinise it properly in an open and transparent forum. Residents are raising concerns about the HMOs in certain areas and the ASB that comes with them. We need to be in a position of knowledge in order to deal with this.	
I think this topic should be scrutinised because ... (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor Performance Identified
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in Legislation or Local Policy
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Resident Concern or Interest
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cabinet Recommendation
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Links to the Corporate Strategy
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state reason)
What outcomes are you seeking from this scrutiny?	To be better equipped to understand and deal with Asylum Dispersal & Contingency Accommodation (including HMOs) in our Wards.	

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Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 22 January 2026

Work Programme

Report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

1. Summary

- 1.1. The work programmes for all Scrutiny Groups are created and managed by the Corporate Overview Group. This Group accepts and considers Scrutiny Matrices from both officers and councillors which propose items for scrutiny. If those items are accepted following discussion at the Corporate Overview Group, they are placed on the work programme for one of the Council's Scrutiny Groups.
- 1.2. The work programme is also a standing item for discussion at each meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Group. In determining the proposed work programme due regard has been given to matters usually reported to the Group and the timing of issues to ensure best fit within the Council's decision-making process.
- 1.3. The work programme is detailed in this report for information only so that the Group is aware of the proposed agenda for the next meeting. The work programme does not take into account any items that need to be considered by the Group as special items. These may occur, for example, through changes required to the Constitution or financial regulations, which have an impact on the internal controls of the Council.
- 1.4. The future work programme was updated and agreed at the meeting of the Corporate Overview Group on 2 September 2025, including any items raised via the scrutiny matrix.

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

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

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Group agrees the work programme as set out below:

2 April 2026

- Carbon Management Plan Update
- West Bridgford Contact Point
- Work Programme

xx October 2026

- Review of debt collection agents by RBC in line with the outcome of the Government's consultation on Council Tax and Enforcement
- Work Programme

3. Reason for Recommendation

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

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