

When telephoning, please ask for: Democratic Services
Direct dial 0115 914 8320
Email democraticservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: Wednesday, 24 June 2026

To all Members of the Council

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday, 2 July 2026 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

This meeting will be accessible and open to the public via the live stream on YouTube and viewed via the link: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RushcliffeBC>
Please be aware that until the meeting starts the live stream video will not be showing on the home page. For this reason, please keep refreshing the home page until you see the video appear.

Yours sincerely



Charlotte Caven-Atack
Interim Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

Opening Prayer

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 May 2026 (Pages 1 - 10)

To receive as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 21 May 2026.

4. Mayor's Announcements
5. Leader's Announcements
6. Chief Executive's Announcements

Email:
customerservices
@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Telephone:
0115 981 9911

www.rushcliffe.gov.uk

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

7. Citizens' Questions

[To answer questions submitted by Citizens on the Council or its services.](#)

8. Petitions

9. Appointment to the Monitoring Officer Role (Interim)

The report of the Chief Executive is to follow.

10. Approval of the Scrutiny Annual Reports 2025/26 (Pages 11 - 50)

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

11. Notices of Motion

[To receive Notices of Motion](#)

Councillor Birch

This Council notes:

- That Councillors are entrusted with public money and must therefore be held to the highest standards of transparency and accountability.
- That recent information obtained through a Freedom of Information request has revealed a significant imbalance in the claiming of Councillor expenses at Rushcliffe Borough Council.
- That despite holding 23 of the Council's 44 seats, Conservative Councillors account for approximately 97% of all expenses claimed.
- That claims have included attendance at Remembrance services, charity events, and other civic functions which, while permissible under current rules, may reasonably raise questions amongst residents regarding appropriateness and value for money.
- That public confidence in Local Government depends not only upon legality, but also upon openness, restraint, and sound judgement in the use of taxpayer funds.

This Council believes:

- Residents are entitled to full transparency regarding how elected members spend public money.
- Existing arrangements for oversight and scrutiny of member expenses appear insufficient.
- Greater transparency would strengthen public trust and protect the reputation of the Council.
- Councillors should always consider not merely whether an expense can be claimed, but whether it should be claimed.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Publish quarterly reports detailing all Councillor expense claims, including:
 - claimant name;
 - event or purpose;
 - amount claimed; and
 - and category of expenditure;
2. Require all expense claims to include sufficient explanatory detail to allow meaningful public scrutiny.
3. Request the Governance Scrutiny Group or appropriate committee to undertake a review of the Council's Expenses Scheme.
4. Report back to Full Council within six months with recommendations to improve transparency, accountability, and public confidence.

12. Questions from Councillors

[To answer questions submitted by Councillors](#)

Membership

Chair: Councillor R Butler

Vice-Chair: Councillor H Parekh

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

Meeting Room Guidance

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

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

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

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

Recording at Meetings

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

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



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 21 MAY 2026

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
C Caven-Atack	Assistant Director of Corporate Services
A Hill	Chief Executive
P Linfield	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
E Richardson	Democratic Services Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillors S Calvert, G Fletcher and C Thomas

1 Declarations of Interest

The Assistant Director – Corporate Services declared an interest in Item 13 Appointment to the Role of Monitoring Officer and advised that she would leave the room during the debate on this item.

2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 March 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 5 March 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

3 Address of retiring Mayor

Councillor Cottee, Mayor of Rushcliffe for 2025/26, thanked Council for entrusting him with the position of Mayor and stated that he had had a wonderful year, which he had thoroughly enjoyed. He referred to the numerous

events he had attended throughout the Borough, including the recent installation of the new Dean at Southwell Minster, the Scouts' Big Weekend and the Nottinghamshire County Show. He referred to his charity, the Richard Whitehead Foundation, and confirmed that his last event would be a charity race night in June, to raise further funds.

The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor, Councillors and officers for their support throughout the year and his Chaplain, Father Tom Meyrick, and presented him with a gift. The Mayor thanked his wife Loraine for her help and stated that he could not have taken on the role without her support and presented her with flowers. The Mayor and Mayoress also thanked the Mayor's Secretary, Emma Richardson, and presented her with flowers.

4 Vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor

The Leader, Councillor Clarke, MBE proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor Cottee, stating that he had been an excellent ambassador for the Borough, undertaking various duties across the community. The Leader referred to the many events undertaken by the Mayor, as detailed in his photograph album, including sailing on narrow boats, flag raising for Armed Forces, Merchant Navy and Commonwealth Day, attending Proms in the Park, the Hickling Scarecrow Festival and Christmas events, attending charity events for Richard Whitehead, whilst being ably supported by his wife, Loraine. The Leader concluded by thanking Councillor Cottee for his service during this year and presented him with his photograph album, Mayor's portrait and past Mayor's badge.

On behalf of the Labour Group, Councillor Jen Walker thanked the Mayor for his service over the past year, which he had undertaken with dignity and commitment. She stated that whilst sharing different political views, the Labour Group acknowledged the Mayor's dedication to public service and to the people of Rushcliffe. Councillor Walker welcomed Councillor Butler, as the new Mayor, and hoped that he would be a strong, fair voice for everyone. She confirmed that whilst the Labour Group would continue to speak up for the communities they represented, this evening was about respecting service and democratic traditions and she reiterated thanks to the Mayor.

Councillor Edyvean congratulated the Mayor on his successful year and the service he had given.

Councillor Sue Mallender reiterated those thanks and stated that she was very impressed with the work he had undertaken for his charity, which she and Councillor Richard Mallender supported when they could.

Councillor Birch thanked the Mayor for his service and wished him well for the future.

On behalf of the Leake Independent Group, Councillor Billin extended heartfelt thanks to the Mayor and referred to the tremendous year for his charity, which he also had a close affinity with. He thanked the Mayor for hosting afternoon tea for the East Leake Community Care Association, to celebrate them winning the King's Award.

5 Election of Mayor 2026/27

It was proposed by Councillor Barney that Councillor Butler be elected as Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the civic year 2026/27.

Councillor Barney congratulated Councillor Cottee on his successful year, thanked him for his hard work and Loraine for supporting him so ably. Councillor Barney stated that it was a great privilege and pleasure to nominate Councillor Butler to serve as the next Mayor, as he had long demonstrated the qualities that this office demanded, integrity, compassion and commitment, with a genuine dedication to public service. Throughout his decades as a Councillor, he had shown unwavering commitment to residents, and it was not just his experience but the manner in which he served that distinguished him. He believed that Councillor Butler had earned the respect of colleagues across the Council Chamber and the trust of the communities he represented, as he understood the importance of bringing people together.

Councillor Barney stated that Councillor Butler moved to the Borough aged four, moving to Cotgrave in 1990. His working career had been varied, including retail, advertising and marketing, working for the Nottingham Evening Post and promoting work based learning and training for younger and older people. Councillor Butler was first elected to Cotgrave Town Council in 1999, Nottinghamshire County Council in 2001, followed by Rushcliffe Borough Council in 2003, and he remained a member on all three councils. Since then, he had sat on the majority of committees holding most roles, and in 2024-25 he was elected as Chairman at Nottinghamshire County Council, performing that role very successfully. Councillor Barney referred to Councillor Butler's love of the countryside, music, literature and to his passion for the DAF Variomatic car. He went on to advise that Councillor Butler was following in highly commendable footsteps, as his father, Councillor Roy Butler served as Mayor in 2000/01, and that he would be immensely proud of him tonight. Councillor Barney felt that Councillor Butler would also be an outstanding ambassador for Rushcliffe and would carry out his role with distinction, warmth and dedication.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Mason reiterated Councillor Butler's dedication to local residents over many years, as well as the support he had given to Councillors from all political parties. She referred to his sense of humour and that he always saw the good in people and believed he would have an excellent year and wished him well.

There being no further nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Butler be elected as Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the civic year 2026/27.

Councillor Butler then read and signed the declaration of acceptance of office and after thanking his proposer, seconder and fellow Councillors, took the Chair and was invested with the Chain of Office.

The Mayor thanked Councillors for entrusting him with the office, and Councillors Barney and Mason for their kind words. The Mayor stated that it was an honour to be chosen, it meant a great deal to him, and in particular he was thinking about his father this evening. He was looking forward to attending

events around the Borough, as Rushcliffe truly was a great place to live. He thanked Councillor Cottee for his service over the year and that it had been a pleasure to be his deputy and he thanked the Reverend Paul Massey for agreeing to be his Chaplain. He referred to his charity, Guide Dogs, and stated that most people took their senses for granted, and it was important to think how different and challenging life would be without your sight. Thousands of people were visually impaired and guide dogs provided a lifeline for them. Training a guide dog was very specialised and expensive and he hoped to raise money and awareness to help this organisation continue its incredible work, and he welcomed representatives from the charity, including two guide dogs they had brought to the meeting. He thanked Councillor Brown, who was planning a 24 hour bus tour on 1 August, and hoped that everyone would support him, with the donations going to the Mayor's charity. The Mayor stated that he hoped that this would be the first of several events throughout the year. He hoped that going forward at Council meetings, everyone would work together and remember that Councillors were here for the residents of Rushcliffe. He concluded by thanking Councillors and his guests for attending and to those watching remotely.

6 Election of Deputy Mayor 2026/27

It was proposed by Councillor Brown that Councillor Parekh be elected as Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the civic year 2026/27.

Councillor Brown congratulated the Mayor on his appointment and stated that he was pleased to nominate Councillor Parekh, whose journey into public life was deeply rooted in service to people and community. Born in Mumbai, Councillor Parekh came to the UK in 2006 to complete her master's degree in social work, a profession she chose to make a difference. Councillor Parekh had planned to return to India; however, she met her future husband, married and made the UK her home, where she quickly became active in the local community, volunteering and organising events, whilst continuing her career as a Social Worker. Councillor Brown stated that she had been encouraged to become involved in politics, and had agreed to do so, as long as she could remain focused on serving and advocating for residents, which she had, and he believed that she would make an excellent Deputy Mayor.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor G Wheeler congratulated the Mayor, thanked Councillor Cottee and added his support to the nomination of Councillor Parekh as Deputy Mayor. He referred to the Covid pandemic, and Councillor Parekh's hard work in supporting frontline workers and the vulnerable, which she had continued to do, in various voluntary roles, working closely with charities, schools, faith groups and local organisations, to tackle food poverty in particular. She also took an active role in the Christmas Shoebox Appeal, with over 1,000 distributed to those in need. Councillor Wheeler wished Councillor Parekh well in her forthcoming year as Deputy Mayor.

There being no further nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Parekh be elected as Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Rushcliffe for the civic year 2026/27.

Councillor Parekh then read and signed the declaration of acceptance of office and after thanking her proposer, seconder, and fellow Councillors, was invested with his Chain of Office by the Mayor.

Councillor Parekh thanked Councillors Brown and Wheeler for their kind words, congratulated the Mayor on his appointment, and stated that she looked forward to learning from and working with him during the year. She also thanked Councillors for supporting her and stated that she took this responsibility very seriously and would work to serve the Borough with commitment and respect. Councillor Parekh felt pride in becoming the first person of Indian descent, one of the youngest and few women to hold this role, and she hoped that this moment reflected a Council that was open and inclusive. She thanked her husband for his constant support, her 10 year old twins, for keeping her grounded and reminding her every day of the importance of community and her parents, whose sacrifice and unwavering support had made this journey possible. Councillor Parekh stated that her passion had always been on community service, bringing people together and ensuring that every voice mattered. As Deputy Mayor, she would continue to support communities, champion local causes and serve with openness, kindness and determination.

7 Leader's Announcements

The Leader, Councillor Clarke MBE congratulated the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointments and wished them both well for the forthcoming year.

The Leader referred to the East Midlands Tri-Sector Challenge event, which had recently been held and congratulated the team from Rushcliffe, Mike Alder, Claudia Bowring, Rhiannon Berry, Ian Hartley, Sofia Melvin and Seb Soar for winning the Best Team award, and Seb Soar for winning the Team Leader award. The Leader stated that in all of the categories, the team was either runner up or the winner, which was a fantastic achievement in such a competitive event.

He went onto mention the Great Central Railway (GCR) Transport Heritage Museum at Ruddington and advised that he was proud to have facilitated a visit by the East Midlands Combined Council Authority (EMCCA) Mayor last week, which coinciding with the Flying Scotsman and Tornado operating from there. It was hoped that the visit would encourage the Mayor to support additional investment and promotion of this excellent tourism venue. The Leader also wished Notts County well in its play-off final at Wembley next week.

The Leader noted the recent tragic events in Golders Green, which had contributed to the Government raising the national terrorism threat level from substantial to severe. Whilst expressing thoughts for the victims, he urged everyone to remain vigilant and stated it was vital that all communities in Rushcliffe should feel safe.

The Leader stated that he had attended the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiIF) yesterday and was on a panel with the EMCCA

Mayor promoting tourism in the East Midlands, with his particular focus on Rushcliffe. Given the prominence of this international event, it was important for Rushcliffe to be involved and he was pleased to confirm that it had been a very successful day.

The Leader concluded by informing Council that two members of staff were leaving the Council, the Monitoring Officer, Sara Pregon, who would be moving to Nottinghamshire County Council as its new Deputy Monitoring Officer, and whilst he was pleased for her, she would be greatly missed at Rushcliffe. The Leader thanked her for the support she had given to everyone and wished her well. The Leader advised that the Director – Development and Economic Growth, Leanne Ashmore would be leaving to take up a post at Nottingham Trent University, and again whilst he was pleased for her, she would be greatly missed. The Leader referred to the many key projects and plans that she had led, that she had been a great asset to the Council, and he wished her well.

8 **Chief Executive's Announcements**

In echoing the thanks given by the Leader, the Chief Executive stated that he felt extremely fortunate to have had both Sara and Leanne as part of his team, and whilst he was sad to see them leave, he was always pleased, and it was part of his role to encourage and ensure that people could progress and that Rushcliffe's reputation moved forward. He stated that also having Leanne's support as a Deputy Chief Executive had been key, he referred to the number of legacy projects that she had been involved in and felt that she should be proud of that going forward. He passed on his personal thanks to both of them.

9 **Appointments of Committees and Member Groups 2026/27**

The Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Clarke MBE presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services, outlining the nominations for the appointment of committees and member groups for 2026/27.

It was proposed by Councillor Clarke MBE and seconded by Councillor Brennan and **RESOLVED** that the nominations to committees and member groups for 2026/27 be approved as follows:

A. Scrutiny Committees

Corporate Overview Group

Councillors Williams (Chair), Billin, Brown, Combella, Gaunt, Plant and Simms

Governance Scrutiny Group

Councillors Simms (Chair), Gaunt (Vice-Chair), Edyvean, Gowland, Om, Regan, Thomas, Wells and G Wheeler

Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Councillors Combella (Chair), Billin (Vice-Chair), Bird, Brown, Calvert, Chaplain, Ellis, Mason and R Walker

Communities Scrutiny Group

Councillor Brown (Chair), Plant (Vice-Chair), Barney, Billin, Grocock, Mason, Matthews, Parekh and Phillips

B. Regulatory Committees

Licensing Committee

Councillors Regan (Chair), Chaplain, Chewings, Cottee, Fletcher, R Mallender, Mason, Matthews, Om, Phillips, Polenta, Simms, Way, G Wheeler and Williams

Planning Committee

Councillors R Walker (Chair), Georgiou (Vice-Chair), Barney, Birch, Calvert, Chaplain, Ellis, S Mallender, Mason, Thomas and Wells

Employment Appeals Committee

Councillors Clarke MBE (Chair), Brown, Grocock, Phillips and J Wheeler

Interviewing Committee

Councillors Clarke MBE (Chair), Brennan, R Mallender, J Walker and J Wheeler

Standards Committee

Councillors Om (Chair), Chewings, Dellar, Matthews, Parekh, Plant, Simms, A Wood (Parish Member) and K White (Independent Member)

C. Member Groups

Local Development Framework Group

Councillors Upton (Chair), R Walker (Vice-Chair), Barney, Bird, Brown, Calvert, Chewings, Ellis, Georgiou, Gowland, S Mallender, Mason, Plant, Thomas and Wells

Member Development Group

Councillors Matthews (Chair), Butler, Combellack, Cottee, Edyvean, Gaunt, Plant, Soloman and Williams

Rushcliffe Strategic Growth Board

Councillors Clarke MBE (Chair), Brennan, Edyvean, Grocock, Upton, Viridi, Way, J Walker and J Wheeler

Civic Hospitality Panel

Councillor Butler (Chair), Birch, Brennan, Clarke MBE, Fletcher, Parekh and Polenta

West Bridgford Special Expenses and Community Infrastructure Levy Advisory Group

Councillor Viridi (Chair), Calvert, Chaplain, Dellar, R Mallender, Matthews, Om, Parekh and J Wheeler

Local Government Reorganisation Task and Finish Group

Councillor Clarke MBE (Chair), Brown, Calvert, Chaplain, Chewings, Edyvean, Georgiou, Grocock, Inglis, R Mallender, Mason, Om, Soloman, Thomas, Viridi,

10 **Approval of Timetable of Meetings 2026/27**

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Clarke MBE presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services, setting out the timetable of meetings for the municipal year 2026/27.

It was proposed by Councillor Clarke MBE and seconded by Councillor Brennan and **RESOLVED** that the timetable of meetings for the municipal year 2026/27, as attached at the Appendix to the officer's report, be approved

11 **Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies 2026/27**

The Mayor reported an update to the report in relation to number 10, Rural Community Action for Nottinghamshire (RCAN). RCAN had informed the Council that it no longer had local authority representatives sitting on its Board of Directors, so there would therefore be no appointment to this group.

The Mayor advised that there were two contested positions for number 5, the East Midlands Airport Independent Consultative Committee and number 11, the Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park, which each had one seat, but two nominations for both.

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Clarke MBE presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services setting out the appointments to Outside Bodies for the municipal year 2026/27 and confirmed the updates given by the Mayor and that recommendation c) related to RCAN would not be voted on.

The Leader moved that Council accept the nominations of the uncontested positions as one vote before moving on to consider the two contested positions.

The recommendation was seconded by Councillor Brennan.

Following the voting for the two contested positions, it was **RESOLVED** that the appointments to Outside Bodies for the municipal year 2026/27 be as follows:

City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee
Leader/Deputy Leader (Substitute)

East Midlands Councils (including other representative roles within this appointment) Leader/Deputy Leader (Substitute)

Greater Nottingham Joint Planning Advisory Board
Appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder

Local Government Association – General Assembly (including other representative roles within this appointment)
Leader/Deputy Leader (Substitute)

East Midlands Airport Independent Consultative Committee
Councillor Edyvean

Health and Well Being Board
Appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder

Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel
Appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder

Nottinghamshire Waste Management Board
Appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder

Freeport Board
Leader and Deputy Leader (Alternate Board Member)

Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park
Councillor Wells

Local Area Forum – West Bridgford
Councillors Calvert (Abbey ward), Om (Compton Acres ward), Parekh (Edwalton ward), J Wheeler (Gamston ward), R Mallender (Lady Bay ward), Matthews (Lutterell ward), Polenta (Musters ward) and Plant (Trent Bridge ward)

Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board
Councillors Billin, Combellack, Fletcher and Wells

12 **Approval of Monitoring Officer Designation**

Having declared an interest, the Assistant Director – Corporate Service left the room.

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough-wide Leadership, Councillor Clarke MBE presented the report of the Chief Executive, detailing the appointment to the Monitoring Officer role.

The Leader advised that this related to the potential appointment of an officer to act in the Monitoring Officer role from 15 June 2026, until the substantive role was recruited to. He referred to paragraph 4.2 of the report, which highlighted the competitive and rigorous recruitment process that had taken place to replace the current Monitoring Officer, Sara Pregon, who was leaving the authority. As the Council had been unable to appoint to the role, the recruitment process would need to be repeated; however, a designated officer had to be in place and the report recommended that the current Assistant Director – Corporate Services, Charlotte Caven-Atack should be appointed to the role in the interim. The Leader referred to her considerable experience of the democratic process and the Constitution and felt that she was the appropriate choice.

Councillor Brennan seconded the recommendation.

It was **RESOLVED** that Charlotte Caven-Atack be appointed and designated as the Council's Monitoring Officer from 15 June 2026, until the substantive role is recruited to.

The Assistant Director – Corporate Service returned to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

CHAIR



Council

Thursday, 2 July 2026

Approval of the Scrutiny Annual Reports 2025/26

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

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

1. Purpose of report

The Scrutiny Annual Report, attached as an Appendix, provides a review of the work undertaken by the Council's four Scrutiny Groups during 2025/26.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Council endorses the work undertaken by the four Scrutiny Groups during 2025/26.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To enable Council oversight of the work and operation of its statutory Overview and Scrutiny function, the function's effectiveness and contribution to the work of the Council.

4. Supporting Information

During the year, the following subjects have been scrutinised and monitored:

Corporate Overview Group

- Consideration of Scrutiny Work Programmes
- Finance and Performance Management
- Diversity Annual Report and update on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme Update
- Annual Update on Strategic Tasks
- Health and Safety Annual Report
- Annual Customer Feedback Report 2024/25
- Local Government Reorganisation, Decision Making and Governance
- Mid-point Review of the Corporate Strategy.

Governance Scrutiny Group

- Internal Audit, including quarterly Progress Reports, Annual Report and Strategy
- Risk Management, including half yearly Progress Reports
- Going Concern Assessment
- Capital and Investment Strategy
- Approval of Statement of Accounts
- Capital and Investment Strategy Outturn 2024/25
- Capital and Investment Quarterly Updates
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)
- Auditors Annual Report and Value for Money Conclusion
- Annual Audit Completion Report
- External Audit Annual Plan 2024/25
- Annual Governance Statement 2024/25
- Annual Fraud Report.

Communities Scrutiny Group

- Metropolitan Thamas Valley Housing
- Flood Risk Update
- Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation, including HMOs
- Carbon Management Plan Review
- West Bridgford Contact Point.

Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

- East Midlands Freeport
- Asset Management Strategy
- Shared Ownership and other Affordable Housing.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

There are no recommended alternative options.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

None.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

7.2. Legal Implications

The Council is required by the Local Government Act 2000 to have scrutiny arrangements in place. This report demonstrates the Council's compliance with these requirements.

7.3. Equalities Implications

The role of the relevant Scrutiny Groups includes monitoring the Equality and Diversity impact of the Council's policies and strategies.

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

There are no Section 17 implications.

7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain

There are no Biodiversity Net Gain implications.

7.6. Local Government Reorganisation Implications

There are Local Government Reorganisation implications.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	Effective scrutiny is an essential element of the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and Corporate Priorities.
Quality of Life	
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Council endorses the work undertaken by the four Scrutiny Groups during 2025/26.

For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Director – Finance and Corporate Services 0115 9148439 plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	
	Appendix – Annual Scrutiny Reports 2025/26

This page is intentionally left blank

Annual Scrutiny Report 2025/26



This page is intentionally left blank

Corporate Overview Group

Chair's Foreword

This annual report summarises the main work undertaken by the Corporate Overview Group during 2025/26 focusing on the impact of scrutiny. The Corporate Overview Group oversees the Council's other scrutiny group work programmes based on concerns highlighted by quarterly financial and performance monitoring reports, as well as items on the Cabinet Forward Plan and priorities within the Corporate Strategy.

The Corporate Overview Group have ensured that the executive be held to account by approving topics to be discussed at scrutiny groups. Additionally, the Group have scrutinised financial and performance management reports on a quarterly basis to ensure the smooth running of the Council.

Councillor Gareth Williams
Chair



What we are responsible for?

The Corporate Overview Group responsibilities include:

- Implementing identified improvements to scrutiny including training of scrutiny members, construction of new work programmes and reporting methods.
- Creating and receiving feedback on work programmes for the Growth and Development, Communities and Governance Scrutiny Groups based on the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy and Economic Growth Strategy.
- Scrutinising financial and performance management reports on a quarterly basis to ensure the smooth running of the Council and delegate any necessary investigations into concerning elements of these reports to the most appropriate scrutiny group via their work programme.
- Reviewing reports in respect of health and safety, diversity and customer feedback to ensure the Council is meeting its statutory duties.

Our work this year

During this year, the Group considered many service areas and issues within its scrutiny role, particularly:

- Consideration of Scrutiny Work Programmes at each meeting.
- Finance and Performance Management at each meeting.
- Diversity Annual Report and update on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme update.
- Annual Update on Strategic Tasks.
- Health and Safety Annual Report.
- Annual Customer Feedback Report 2024/25.
- Local Government Reorganisation, Decision Making and Governance.
- Mid-Point Review of the Corporate Strategy.

Consideration of Scrutiny Work Programmes

In line with the Terms of Reference, at every meeting the Group's members considered topics for scrutiny that had been put forward by Councillors and Officers. Following discussion, the following items were added to the work programmes of scrutiny groups for the year 2025/26:

- East Midlands Freeport.
- Rushcliffe Flood Risk Update.
- Asset Management Strategy and Acquisitions and Disposal Policy.
- Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMO's.
- Shared Ownership and Other Affordable Housing.
- Carbon Management Plan.
- West Bridgford Contact Point.

Due to no scrutiny requests being submitted for Growth and Development Scrutiny Group, the meeting of this Group in October 2025 was cancelled.

In relation to Shared Ownership and Other Affordable Housing Councillor scrutiny request, an amended version was submitted by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Neighbourhoods, suggesting a briefing note be provided to expedite Councillors understanding of the topic and to resolve some of the identified issues in advance of its scrutiny being timetabled. Following debate of both versions of the request, it was agreed that the Councillors version would go forward for scrutiny and that a briefing note would also be provided in advance of its scrutiny.

In relation to Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation scrutiny there was agreement within the Group that this topic was in need of scrutiny however, concerns were raised about its scope and key lines of enquiry. A revised request amended by Officers and reviewed by the Councillor submitting the original request was accepted for scrutiny.

A tabletop review of scrutiny was undertaken and the findings reported back to the Corporate Overview Group in September 2025. A range of scrutiny-based training materials and guides on the Councillors' Portal were readvertised, specific training for Chairs and Vice Chairs was held in March 2026 and a refresher session on the Council's scrutiny request process held on 5 May 2026.

Quarterly Finance and Performance Management

A report focusing on the Council's finances and performance was delivered at each meeting by officers. Officers provided a summary of the key points in the meeting and the Group was able to discuss any concerns.

Over the course of this year, the following issues have been discussed:

- Impacts from changes in interest rates on costs, investment balances and underspend.
- The Council's revenue outturn position.
- Employers National Insurance contributions.
- West Bridgford Special Expenses Budget.
- Disabled Facilities Grants.
- Security improvements at Bridgford Park.
- The scope and timeline of the redevelopment of the Ratcliffe on Soar power station site.
- Capital contingency budget for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
- Asylum Dispersal Grant.
- Warm Home grants cost and benefits to residents.
- Salary savings at Streetwise following the insource of the business back in the Council's control.
- Councillor Training Programme and e-learning.
- Waste recycling and communication campaigns around the new recycling measures for glass collection and food waste.
- Household waste recycling percentages and increases contamination.
- Performance of the Council's Community facilities and improvements to Sir Julien Cahn facility.

- Positive performance of Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium.
- Leisure centre usage and temporary closures at Cotgrave and Keyworth due to their refurbishment.
- The handover of East Leake Leisure Centre when the current provider contract comes to an end.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme Update and Diversity Annual Report 2024-2025

At the Corporate Overview meeting in June 2025 the Assistant Director of Economic Growth and Property presented the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Scheme update and Diversity Annual Report 2024/2025, which included diversity information in relation to Officers, Councillors and job applicants.

In relation to applications for vacancies this was higher than they had historically and that some posts had received a high number of applications, and it was expected that Local Government Reorganisation is likely to impact on staffing in the future.

In relation to EDI the Group were informed the Council had introduced a new Equality Impact Assessment process, that the website had been Shaw Trust Accredited, that it had achieved Carer Friendly Accreditation and that it co-ordinated the joint membership for partners within the primary care network to the Sunflower Hidden Disabilities Campaign.

The Group were provided an overview of projects completed, including adopting a Rushcliffe Borough Council Play Strategy, with a focus on disability and inclusion and space for girls, making inclusive play improvements at a number of parks within the Borough and providing UKSPF funding to support parish council's to provide inclusive play equipment in their parks and to make public realm improvements in West Bridgford and to provide grant funding for particular groups of the local community for events and to provide support for residents to improve their employment skills. Looking forward the Council will carry out a refresh of its EDI scheme and work with Nottinghamshire County Council to establish Community Cohesion Networks to deliver women and girls golf and cricket programmes.

The Group asked questions relating to:

- Identifying Officer time spent on EDI work and any costs incurred by the Council.
- Grants for businesses and accessibility to funding.
- Information on UKSPF funding for ethnic minority events.
- Comments around how successful the Lunar festival had been within the Hong Kong community and other ethnic groups.
- Positive comments on the opportunities for women and girl's sport.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Consider and endorse the information provided for the diversity annual report	The Group scrutinised and asked questions and provided feedback on the information within the report

Review the action taken so far as a part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme action plan and make suggestions for future action or areas of focus	No suggestions for further areas of investigation were suggested
---	--

Review of Strategic Tasks

At the meeting in June 2025 the Assistant Director of Corporate Services presented the Review of Strategic Tasks and reminded the Group the Council had adopted its current Corporate Strategy in December 2023, and as part of the adoption process a review of progress against previous targets be presented to the Corporate Overview Group annually.

The Group asked questions relating to:

- The availability of grant funding for residents living in older properties to make improvements to their properties.
- Potential areas where the Council had not made progress as expected, where tasks were harder to deliver at pace.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Review the progress reported against each strategic task in the 2024-2027 Corporate Strategy	The Group scrutinised and asked questions and provided feedback on the information within the report
Consider any potential areas for scrutiny during the coming year	None identified as a result of this report

Health and Safety Annual Report

At the Corporate Overview Group meeting in September 2025 the Strategic HR Manager presented the Health and Safety Annual report for the period of April 2024 to March 2025 which provided an overview of the health and safety risk profile and health and safety provision for the Council and about key activities that had taken place over the last twelve months, including the annual review of Health and Safety policies.

A summarised targeted visit of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in relation to an employee diagnosed with vibration white finger which took place on the 30 January 2025. The HSE Inspector returned to the Streetwise Depot in February 2025 to complete a full inspection on site was completed in relation to RIDDOR which concluded there had been no material breaches.

The Strategic HR Manager also confirmed the appointment of a new Health and Safety Advisor increasing the hours previously set from 18.5 to 26 hours per week.

The Group asked specific questions relating to:

- Employee occupational health pre-checks which may have prevented the HSE visit.
- Role of the Health and Safety Advisor and what had prompted the increase in officer hours.
- Work days lost to accidents and injury and asked if these were due to the nature of the work they do.
- The role of the Workplace Health Champions.
- Staff concessions at the Council's Leisure Centres.
- Health and Safety arrangements in the event of a red-light incident and whether a professional body should be considered to audit the Council's Health and Safety arrangements.
- Self-regulation and evidence of detailed risk assessments and training.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Consider the detailed information contained within the Annual Health and Safety Report	The Group scrutinised and asked questions and provided feedback on the information within the report
Note that a new permanent Health and Safety Advisor has been appointed	The Group noted the permanent recruitment into the Health and Safety Advisor post and the increase in hours from 18.5 to 26 per week
Note the significant progress made against the health and safety goals and objectives previously agreed by Corporate Overview Group for the financial year 2024/25	The Group noted the significant progress made on the goals set for 2025/26 and endorsed the objectives proposed for 2025/26. An update Health and Safety Annual Report is scheduled to be presented to the Group at its September meeting
Endorse the proposed health and safety objectives for 2025/26 as set out in the report	

Customer Feedback Annual Report

The Assistant Director for Corporate Services presented the Annual Customer Feedback Report for 2024/25 which provided information about complaints and compliments received by the Council about the services that it delivered and also provided comparisons to previous year's performances and those of other local authorities in the East Midlands. The Assistant Director for Corporate Services summarised that there had been the same number of complaints as for all of 2024/25 in the first 6 months of 2025/26, but that this should be seen as a positive and that residents are finding the customer feedback process more accessible.

The Group asked specific questions relating to:

- The general theme of complaints in relation to Council Tax including the proposal for scrutiny around this issue.
- Process for dealing with vexatious requests.

- Comparison of complaints with other authorities and benchmarking.
- Percentage of complaints escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Scrutinise and comment on the customer feedback for 2023/24	The Group reviewed and asked questions and provided feedback on the information
Consider whether the data in specific areas requires further investigation or scrutiny	No specific areas for further investigation were identified

Local Government Reorganisation, Decision Making and Governance

The Assistant Director for Corporate Services presented the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR): Decision-Making and Governance report which provided the Group with a brief update on the process of developing the submission proposal and the governance arrangements for scrutiny approval prior to submission. This included consulting the Corporate Overview Group on the invocation of the Urgency Provisions in the Council’s Constitution to suspend Call-In in respect of the decision to be taken at Cabinet in November 2025.

The Group noted the Call-in needed to be suspended to enable the Chief Executive to submit the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal for LGR to the Government by 28 November 2025 and that failure to submit the proposal by this deadline risked the Council’s proposal being considered.

The Assistant Director for Corporate Services asked the Group for their support to create a Member Working Group to provide opportunities for Councillor engagement as the Council moves into the transitional phases of LGR.

The Group asked specific questions relating to:

- Governance Scrutiny.
- A larger cross-party working group to ensure all areas of the Borough are represented.
- West Bridgford having a neighbourhood parish.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Accept the update on LGR including the opportunities for Member engagement provided so far	The content of the report was considered and discussed by the Group
Acknowledge the reasons given in the report for the decision of Cabinet to submit the Council’s proposal to central Government as a key decision to which Urgency Provisions exempting it from the Call-in procedure	The Group accepted the need to suspend call-in procedures

Recommend to Cabinet that a new larger member Working Group is constituted to provide oversight of the next phase of the LGR programme	A larger member working group was recommended to Cabinet
--	--

Mid-Point Review of Corporate Strategy

The Assistant Director for Corporate Services presented the Mid-point Review of the Corporate Strategy 2024-2027, which provided updates on the progress of the strategic tasks within the Council's for key priorities. The Group noted the Council was now two-years through the delivery of the four-year Strategy and were asked to consider whether the objectives set by the Council in December 2023 remain relevant, achievable and desirable against the backdrop of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

The Group asked specific questions relating to:

- Amendments to the Strategy in respect of LGR.
- Review of the Council's assets, the asset Management Group and rules and governance around acquisitions and sale of assets.
- Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station and Community Leadership for the site's development.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Consider the information provided outlining the Council's progress towards delivering the 2024-27 Corporate Strategy	The Group reviewed and asked questions and provided feedback on the information
Discuss whether the remaining Strategic Tasks in the 2024-2027 Corporate Strategy continue to be relevant, achievable and desirable to deliver	Following discussion, the Group concluded that the Strategic Tasks remain relevant and achievable
Highlight any additional Strategic Tasks that would be prudent to include in the Corporate Strategy for its remaining two years	No new tasks were added to the Corporate Strategy
Approve extending the life of the Corporate Strategy by an additional year to lead the authority through to Vesting Day under LGR	The Group agreed to extend the life of the Corporate Strategy through until Vesting Day

Member Panels

The Group recommended the establishment of a Member Working Task and Finish Group for Local Government Reorganisation. This became a Council constituted Task and Finish Group.

Call-ins

The Group did not discuss any call-ins this year.

Looking forward to the year ahead

Following a busy year for the Council's scrutiny functions, all members of the Corporate Overview Group are looking forward to developing comprehensive work programmes for the scrutiny groups in 2026/27.

This page is intentionally left blank

Governance Scrutiny Group

Chair's Foreword

This annual report summarises the main work undertaken by the Governance Scrutiny Group for 2025/2026 and focuses on the impact of scrutiny. The Governance Scrutiny Group scrutinises and approves the Council's finances, approach to risk, as well as other corporate issues. I am pleased to report the Governance Scrutiny Group have proceeded as planned and all items programmed for 2025/2026 were considered.

The Group has explored the Council's responsibilities in line with the Council's priorities within the Corporate Strategy, which include:

- Reviewing the outcomes of both internal and external audit investigations to ensure the Council is compliant with legislation and best practice.
- Monitoring the Annual Governance Statement to ensure compliance with the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.
- Scrutinising and approving the Statement of Accounts.
- Reports on the Council as a 'Going Concern'.
- Considering the Council's Risk Management Framework annually to ensure current risks are being monitored, and effective controls and mitigating actions are in place.
- Considering regular reports on Asset and Investment Management to ensure prudent use of Council resources is being made to fulfil the objectives of the Investment Strategy and Annual Capital Programme.
- Monitoring the operation of the Council's constitution to ensure that it is being upheld and to recommend to Council any necessary fundamental changes.

Councillor David Simms
Chair Governance Scrutiny Group



Councillor David Simms
Chair



Councillor Mike Gaunt
Vice-Chair

What we are responsible for?

The Governance Scrutiny Group's responsibilities include:

- **Statement of Accounts:** To examine the outturn and statement of accounts resulting in its approval.
- **Annual Governance Statement:** To consider the annual report on applying the Council's system of internal control. This statement ultimately comprises a key element of the Council's Statement of Accounts.
- **Going Concern:** To consider the report of the Council's S151 officer on the status that the authority, its functions and services will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.
- **Capital and Investment Management:** To consider the annual and interim reports on capital and investment management activity. Ensuring that practice has complied with the approved Capital and Investment Strategy, making recommendations to Cabinet or Full Council as appropriate. Including changes to the Capital and Treasury Management Codes of Practice, which includes reporting on the position concerning both treasury and non-treasury (commercial) investments.
- **Protecting against fraud:** To consider the annual report on fraud and irregularities in order to make an informed judgement on the corporate governance and internal control statements, making recommendations to Cabinet on improvements. To consider any matters arising as a result of irregularity referred to it by Cabinet.
- **Internal Audit:** To consider the three-year internal audit plan and periodic reports on the progress of audits undertaken throughout the year in order to make an informed judgement on corporate governance and internal control statements, making recommendations to Cabinet on improvements.
- **External Audit:** To consider the annual report of the external audit and consider significant findings and the Value for Money opinion and to agree the annual audit plan for the forthcoming audit.
- **Risk Management:** To consider periodic reports on controls over key risk areas as identified in the risk register in support of making an informed judgement on the corporate governance and internal control statements, making recommendations to Cabinet on improvements.
- **Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA):** To consider the regulatory powers that govern the use of covert surveillance and investigations by public bodies.

Our work this year

During the year, the Group welcomed a new Independent Person to the Governance Scrutiny Group and considered a wide range of service areas and issues as part of its scrutiny role, particularly:

- Internal Audit, including quarterly Progress Reports, Annual Report and Strategy.
- Risk Management, including half yearly Progress Reports.
- Going Concern Assessment.
- Capital and Investment Strategy.
- Approval of the Statement of Accounts.
- Capital and Investment Strategy Outturn 2024/25.
- Capital and Investment Quarterly Updates.
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA).
- Auditors Annual Report and Value for Money conclusion.
- Annual Audit Completion Report.
- External Audit Annual Plan 2024/25.
- Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.
- Annual Fraud Report.

Internal Audit, including quarterly Progress Reports, Annual Report, and Strategy

The Governance Scrutiny Group reviewed the Council's internal audit work undertaken by BDO, the Council's Internal Auditors. Representatives from BDO attended each meeting to present the quarterly Progress Reports and, at the February 2026 meeting, presented the Internal Audit Strategy for 2026-29.

Across the four meetings, the Group reviewed and challenged the following areas:

19 June 2025

- Equality and Diversity Inclusion (EDI)
- Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

25 September 2025

- Council Tax and NNDR
- Streetwise Management

4 December 2025

- Main Financial Systems
- Business Continuity and Emergency Planning

5 February 2026

- Asset Management and Investment
- Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium Operational Management

At the September 2025 meeting, Mr Armstrong proposed that licensing risks be considered for inclusion in future audit planning, and the Group discussed and supported this suggestion.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Review and considered the quarterly Internal Audit Progress reports	Management has taken the audit findings and recommendations on board as opportunities to improve the Council’s systems and processes. Follow-up on agreed management actions has taken place throughout the year
Review and considered the Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25	
Review and considered the Internal Audit Strategy 2026/29 and the Internal Audit Charter	

Approval of the Statement of Accounts

At the September 2025 meeting, the Assistant Director of Finance presented the Council’s statutory Statement of Accounts for the financial year 2024/25 and summarised the key points. The Group reviewed the significant service developments, which included a capital programme for leisure upgrades and carbon reduction, administering UKSPF and REPF grants to the community organisations and businesses, refurbishing play areas and transitioning to environmental refuse vehicles.

Statement of Account Training was provided to the Group on 25 September 2025, before the Governance Scrutiny Group meeting that evening.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Approve the Statement of Accounts for 2024/25, including the Annual Governance Statement	The Statement of Accounts was approved
Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services to make any changes necessary resulting from the matters outstanding on the accounts and advise both the Chair of Governance Scrutiny Group and Finance Portfolio Holder accordingly, such changes to be reported to the Governance Scrutiny Group	The Group agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

External Audit Annual Plan, Progress Report and Indicative Audit Plan 2025/26

Ms Norman from Forvis Mazars, the Council’s External Auditors, presented the External Audit Annual Plan for 2024/25 to the Group at the June 2025 meeting and summarised the audit activity in relation to the final accounts process and their approach to value for money work. The Group considered the implementation of IFRS 16, including a risk assessment around lease transactions, with the Council being required to reclassify its lease arrangements for its 2024/25 accounts.

At the February 2026 meeting, Mr SurrIDGE from Forvis Mazars, the Council’s External Auditors, presented the External Audit Progress Report and Indicative Audit Plan 2025/26 and confirmed that the audit for 2024/25 had been fully completed during the 2025 calendar year and that work had commenced on the 2025/26 process.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Accept the 2024/25 External Audit Annual Plan	The Group reviewed and accepted the External Audit Annual Plan
Review the Progress Report and Indicative Audit Plan for 2025/26	The Group reviewed the Progress Report and Indicative Audit Plan. The External Audit Annual Plan 2025/26 is scheduled to be presented to the June 2026 meeting

Annual Audit Completion Report 2024/25 and Draft Management Representation Letter

At the September 2025 meeting, Ms Norman from Forvis Mazars, the Council’s External Auditors presented the External Audit Completion Report 2024/25, which summarised the audit of the Statement of Accounts. The Group received assurance that work had been substantially completed and that there was a new deadline specifically for value for money work and that work was being carried out under the new National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Approve the findings of Forvis Mazars Audit Completion Report and Approve the Draft Management Representation Letter	The Group reviewed and approved the Audit Completion Report and draft Management Representation Letter

Annual Audit Report

At the September 2025 meeting, Ms Norman from Forvis Mazars, the Council’s External Auditors, presented the Annual Audit Report which provided information on the value for money work and the key conclusions. The Group was advised that no significant weaknesses were identified in arrangements, and no formal recommendations were made. The Group explored the increased costs for external audit work and were informed that these were set by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) and that PSAA carried out annual consultation to confirm the fees.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Note the receipt of the Draft Annual Audit Report at Appendix A	The Group scrutinised and noted the Draft Annual Audit Report

Risk Management and Risk Management Strategy

The Council’s Risk Register was considered at the September 2025 and February 2026 meetings. The Assistant Director of Finance updated the Group on the Council’s risk management activity and changes to the Risk Register, and Members asked a range of questions, including on Local Government Reorganisation, CCTV, New Homes Bonus, capital resourcing and the crematorium.

The Communications and Customer Services Manager presented the Risk Management Strategy 2026-29 to the Group at the February 2026 meeting. The Group reviewed the light-touch update to the Strategy and provided challenge on emerging

risks, including Local Government Reorganisation, capital funding pressures, and operational issues such as the crematorium and CCTV provision.

Risk Management Training was provided to the Group on 5 February 2026, before the Governance Scrutiny Group meeting that evening.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Scrutinise the changes made to the Council's Risk Registers during this period	The Group reviewed and commented on the Risk Registers and feedback from the Group has been relayed to the Council's Risk Management Group
Consider and make recommendations on risks that have red alert status	
Consider the draft Risk Management Strategy for 2026-2029	The Group reviewed and commented on the Risk Management Strategy and approved the Strategy
Approve the Risk Management Strategy for 2026-2029	

Going Concern Assessment

The Director for Finance and Corporate Services presented the Going Concern Assessment at the September 2025 meeting. The Group considered the assessment and recognised the Council's strong financial position, while acknowledging ongoing financial risks, including funding pressures and future uncertainties. The Group also reviewed the Council's position in relation to delivering a balanced budget and its capital programme for the year, noting the increase in overall net worth and the Council's continued investment in its assets, healthy reserves and strong projected financial position.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Note the positive outcome of the assessment made of Rushcliffe Borough Council's status as a Going Concern for the purposes of the Statement of Accounts 2024/25	The Council continues to monitor its position throughout the year with the 2025/26 assessment due to be seen by the Group in September 2026

Capital and Investment Strategy Quarterly Updates

The Finance Business Partner presented quarterly Capital and Investment Strategy updates to the Group at each meeting throughout the year. These provided a summary of the Council's capital and investment activity in line with the Council's Capital and Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29. The Group was asked to consider the Council's capital investment plans and whether they remained affordable, prudent and sustainable in accordance with Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA's) Code of Practice for Treasury Management.

The Group received updates on key capital and investment matters, including the economic forecast, investment income, capital expenditure and financing, treasury management, prudential indicators and commercial investments. It reviewed whether investment activity remained affordable, prudent and sustainable in line with CIPFA requirements.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Consider and scrutinise the Capital and Investment Strategy quarterly updates and 2024/25 outturn position	The Group reviewed and noted the quarterly updates
Agree the change to the counterparty limit for banks (unsecured investments) from £3m to £5m	The Group agreed the increase in counterparty limit for banks

Capital and Investment Strategy 2026/27

The Finance Business Partner presented the Capital and Investment Strategy 2026/27 to the Group at the February 2026 meeting and outlined the Council's approach to treasury management and capital and commercial investment. The Group sought assurance that the Strategy complied with the Prudential Code and that the Council continued to apply the overriding principles of security, liquidity and yield in its investment activity. It also reviewed the Strategy with particular reference to CIL and section 106 monies and investment reserves.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Scrutinise and recommend for approval by Full Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Capital Strategy and Capital Prudential Indicators and limits for 2026/27 to 2030/31 • The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement contained within Appendix A • The Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31 and the Treasury Indicators contained within Appendix A • The Commercial Investments Indicators and Limits for 2026/27 to 2030/31 contained within Appendix A • The Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2026/27 	The Group reviewed the Capital and Investment Strategy 2026/27 and recommended it for approval by Full Council. The Strategy was adopted by Full Council at its meeting on 5 March 2026

Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

At the June 2025 meeting, the Director for Finance and Corporate Services presented the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 which outlined the Council's governance arrangements and confirmed that the Statement followed a standard format of principles and reflected the requirements of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework. The Group reviewed the report and identified that, while there were no significant concerns, the forthcoming Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) could create a shift in governance risks.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Review and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 which incorporated actions for the forthcoming year	The Group approved the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

Annual Fraud Report

At the June 2025 meeting, Mr Dulay from BDO, the Council’s Internal Auditors, presented the Annual Fraud Report 2024/25, which summarised fraud-related activity and prevention measures at Rushcliffe Borough Council. The audit confirmed that no incidents of fraud directly associated with the Council had been identified. The Group was also advised that the Council had taken proactive steps to prepare a comprehensive fraud risk assessment and had introduced a bottom-up approach to identifying potential fraud risks across all services. The Group reviewed the Council’s Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing policies and acknowledged its participation in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Consider the Annual Fraud Report for 2024/25	The Group reviewed and noted the Annual Fraud Report

RIPA Review

At the December 2025 meeting, the Deputy Monitoring Officer presented the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) Review report and advised that the Investigatory Powers Commissioner’s Office required that councillors were updated annually on the Council’s use of powers to ensure compliance with legislation. The Group received assurance that no surveillance powers had been used and that appropriate governance, training and oversight arrangements remain in place. The Group also reviewed the IPCO inspection cycle, noting that inspections of the Council’s records are carried out every three years, with the last inspection undertaken in 2023 and the next due in 2026.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Considered and noted the information contained within this report regarding the Council’s use of RIPA powers	The Group reviewed the report and annual review
Acknowledged the Senior Responsible Officer’s annual review of the Council’s RIPA Policy	The Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Council hasn’t used RIPA powers for many years and not since the Government introduced the need to get a magistrate to sign off the authorisation

Member Panels

The Group did not establish any Member Panels during the year.

Call-ins

The Group did not consider any call-ins during the year.

Looking forward to the year ahead

The Governance Scrutiny Group is looking forward to developing a comprehensive work programme for the year ahead.

This page is intentionally left blank

Communities Scrutiny Group

Chair's Foreword

This annual report summarises the main work undertaken by the Communities Scrutiny Group 2025/26 focusing on the impact of scrutiny. This Group specifically focuses upon the Council's community partnerships, areas of community concern and the Council's responsibility to be environmentally sustainable.

The Group has explored the Council's Communities responsibilities in line with the Council's priorities within the Corporate Strategy, which include:

- Reviewing the Council's partnerships to ensure that community needs are being met and the partnership is providing good value for money.
- Identifying areas of community concern, exploring how this can be met and making recommendations to that effect.
- Considering concerns specific to the local area in terms of health and wellbeing and making recommendations to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents.
- Considering projects and initiatives to further the Council's efforts to protect the environment of the Borough and promote environmental sustainability to our residents.



Councillor Hetvi Parekh
Chair



Councillor Liz Plant
Vice-Chair

What are we responsible for?

The Communities Scrutiny Group's remit is to consider relevant topics, in line with the Council's priorities, taking into account the Corporate Strategy and those of officers and Councillors for inclusion in a work programme agreed by the Corporate Overview Group.

Both Councillors and officers are required to complete a scrutiny request to outline a topic they would like to be considered for scrutiny. The request summarises the issue of concern as well as the key lines of enquiry for review.

Our work this year:

During this year, the Group considered many service areas and issues within its scrutiny role, particularly:

- Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing.
- Flood Risk Update.
- Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMOs.
- Carbon Management Plan Review.
- West Bridgford Contact Point.

Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing

The Strategic Housing Manager introduced representatives from Metropolitan Trent Valley Housing (MTVH) who delivered a presentation to Members with information about the services provided by MTVH within the Borough. MTVH representatives informed the Group about recent feedback from the Regulator of Social Housing inspection and presented information in relation to complaints, community safety and anti-social behaviour. It was explained that MTVH had adopted a joint-agency approach with the Police and Social and Mental Health Care with the aim of providing early intervention, support and mediation.

The Group were informed about property repairs and development and investment made in Rushcliffe homes over the past decade, including decarbonisation, investment in community-based programmes and noted MTVH's future investment programme which summarised their key areas for improvement and service delivery, including:

- Communication and Transparency.
- Responsive Service Delivery.
- Collaboration.
- Accountability and Ownership.

The Group asked questions in relation to:

- Affordable Housing.
- Housing Stock.
- Adaptions to properties.
- Responses to queries and contact information.

- Anti-social behaviour.
- Legacy assets and garage sites.
- Property repairs.
- Advisory and support services for tenants.
- Damp and mould.
- Complaints process.

The Scrutiny Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2025:
Consider the information provided in the report and the presentation by MTVH and provided feedback to support future working relationships	The Group considered, scrutinised and questioned the information provided
The Chair to raise a further scrutiny request at the next meeting of the Corporate Overview Group for MTVH to provide the Group with a further update on performance in 12 months' time	A future report on MTVH is scheduled to come to Communities Scrutiny Group in October 2026

Flood Risk Update

The Director of Neighbourhoods presented the Flood Risk Update report and introduced Mr Wells, the Principal Officer Flood Risk Management from Nottinghamshire County Council. 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 and 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.

The Group were informed 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. Mr Wells explained 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. He 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.

Mr Wells explained 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. He discussed flood risk in Rushcliffe and presented information about the flood impacts from recent storms and informed the Group about flood mitigation works undertaken by NCC across the Borough. He informed the Group about the Property Flood Resilience Programme (PFR) which delivered flood resilience measures to at risk properties.

The Group asked questions in relation to:

- Costs and charges to Homeowners.
- Flood mitigation.
- Reinstatement of river meanders.
- Funding for preventative measures.
- Property development on flood plains.
- Performance measures.
- Community resilience.
- Engagement with agencies.
- Communication.
- Flood risk modelling and strategy.
- Contingency planning and resilience.

The Scrutiny Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Scrutinise the contents of the report and presentation	The Group reviewed and questioned the information presented asked for a letter to be sent to Severn Trent Water regarding the difficulty and frustration experienced by Councillors in contacting them and the Director of Neighbourhoods has written to them
Provide feedback to the Lead Local Flood Authority on the latest flood risk profile for the Borough	The Group asked for contact information for the key flood agencies to be shared and the information was circulated to the Councillor Group

Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMOs

The Assistant Director for Public Protection introduced the Asylum Dispersal and Contingency Accommodation including HMOs report and introduced the Home Office and Serco representatives, who provided an overview of the role of their roles in housing asylum seekers.

The Home Office representative informed the Group that the Home Office had a legal obligation to accommodate asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute whilst their asylum application was being considered as part of the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999. In relation to accommodation, the Home Office representative said that this was procured by the Home Office’s accommodation providers with consultation taking place for every property procured in every local authority. The Group was informed that AAPs were regularly reviewed and refreshed and monitored.

The Serco Representative confirmed to the Group that Serco was the accommodation provider for the Home Office for Northwest Midlands and East of England and said that it was working on moving away from using asylum contingency hotels towards delivering the asylum full dispersal model alongside the Home Office. In response to feedback, Serco now undertook an individual property consultation process with the local authority before progressing with any property

In relation to identification of properties, the Serco Representative informed the Group that Serco was looking for a range of different accommodation types, with currently most within Rushcliffe being HMOs. The Group learned that Serco did not buy properties but rather rented them and offered normal rental rates, with property standards that were compliant with contractual requirements and local authority standards, and properties subject to monthly inspections and local authority and home office inspections, with asylum seekers able to report defects themselves through the agreed mechanisms.

The Group asked questions in relation to:

- Complaints and concerns raised about HMO properties.
- Consultation with the local authority and whether the Council's enforcement or complaint history for a property or nearby properties was taken into consideration.
- Funding for local services.
- Access to services and outreach support.
- Tenancy and rental agreements.
- The notification process for potential dispersal properties in the Borough.
- Selective licensing.

The Scrutiny Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Scrutinise the content of this report	The Group reviewed, scrutinised and provided feedback on the information presented
Provide feedback to the representatives of the Home Office and Serco on the application of government asylum dispersal policy within Rushcliffe	The Group questioned and provided feedback to the Home Office and Serco representatives

Carbon Management Action Plan Review

The Communities Manager introduced the Carbon Management Plan Update report which was the fifth year of presenting an update to Scrutiny and the Team Manager for Environment gave a detailed presentation to the Group. He said that significant progress had been made towards the Council's 2030 net-zero target and the Government's 2050 UK target. A number of key projects that the Council had achieved were highlighted, being:

- Rushcliffe Arena Solar Project.
- Cotgrave Leisure Centre, Sir Julien Cahn and Gamston Community Hall decarbonation Projects.
- 90% reduction in fleet emissions.
- Acquisition of land at Wolds Wood and Rushcliffe Woods for offsetting.
- £860k of Grants from Trees for Carbon fund granted for planting and managing trees cover at Wolds Wood and Rushcliffe Woods.
- Warm Homes: Local Grant and Energy Company Obligation 4 across East Leake and Borough wide.

- EV Charge Points at Nursery and Bridgford Road Carparks.
- Home Energy Advice Team 2.
- Facilitating Ethical Solar Loans at Railway Heritage Centre Ruddington.

The Team Manager for Environment informed the Group about the Council's key projects for 2026-27, being:

- Gresham Sports Pavillion - install solar PV and improved water management system.
- Edwalton Golf Course Refurbishment – including energy measures and adding solar PV to roof.
- Streetwise Solar – solar electric scheme on the roof to supplement EV charge bays installed last year.
- Hound Lodge Energy Efficiency – development of implementation of insulation programme.
- Develop a Scope 3 (supply chain emissions) monitoring and reporting mechanism for all RBC operations to support mapping and maximising efficiencies.
- Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP).

The Group asked questions in relation to:

- long term protection of the woodlands being planted for sequestration.
- Rushcliffe Arena solar panel project and future costs and savings.
- Solar canopies on carparks.
- EV charging points.
- LGR and future commitments to climate targets.
- HVO and Scope 3 emissions.
- Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP).

The Scrutiny Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
<p>Note the progress to date of the adopted carbon management action plan and priority projects for the forthcoming financial year 2026/27</p>	<p>The Group reviewed the information presented and asked a variety of questions about aspects of the Plan and the activities and actions undertaken by the Council and noted the progress made. The Group asked for information about financial savings and economic benefit to the Council and local area and it was agreed that this will be included in the next update to the Group. The Group also suggested that the next update report be scheduled for the July 2027 meeting to allow Officers time to include the latest emissions data</p>

West Bridgford Contact Point

The Communications and Customer Services Manager presented the West Bridgford Customer Contact Point report to the Group and thanked Members who had attended the site visit earlier in the week. The Group learned that the Council had moved to Fountain Court in 2020, a few weeks before the pandemic began, however, due to a change in behaviours and interactions and a drop in visits after the pandemic, the Council had reviewed its customer access provision at all its sites and had identified that moving the West Bridgford centre to the Library would both improve service and provide financial savings. The Communications and Customer Services Manager updated the Group with information about opening times and dates, currently Monday, Thursday and Friday which had been identified as the busiest times of the week and confirmed that being situated in the Library had made the customer centre easier to find and more accessible. For comparison, the Group was provided with information about face-to-face customer service provision across the County.

The Group were presented with information about types of contact and the main types of service enquiries being received, with most contact being via the telephone, followed by emails and then webform contact and then site visits. The Group was informed about provision for holding private conversations at West Bridgford Library.

The Group asked questions in relation to:

- Types of enquiries received by customer services.
- Provision for private conversations.
- Resilience should the number of customer visits increase.
- Movement of staff across customer service contact points.
- LGR.
- Communication of information about customer service contact points.

The Scrutiny Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2025:
Consider the content of the report (and presentation from officers) and identify any follow up actions required	The Group reviewed, scrutinised and asked question about the information presented

Member Panels

The Group did not establish any Member Panels this year.

Call-ins

The Group did not discuss any call-ins this year.

Looking forward to the year ahead

The Communities Scrutiny Group is looking forward to developing a comprehensive work programme for the year ahead.

This page is intentionally left blank

Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Chairman's Foreword

This annual report summarises the main work undertaken by this scrutiny group during 2025/26. This report will focus on the impact of that scrutiny. I am very pleased to note that the business of scrutiny has proceeded as planned and all topics programmed for 2025/26 were considered.

The Group has explored the Council's Growth and Development responsibilities in line with the Council's priorities within the Corporate Strategy, which include:

- Overseeing significant projects contributing towards growth in the Borough to ensure deliverables are met and growth-related outcomes achieved.
- Scrutinising infrastructure development which acts as a catalyst for growth in the Borough to ensure such developments progress in a timely fashion and any obstructive barriers are removed or negotiated.
- Reviewing the growth in demand for Council services ensuring all residents can access the services they need in a timely and cost-efficient manner.
- Considering projects and initiatives to promote economic vibrancy, local democracy and community leadership within local towns and villages contributing towards the overall Council goal of creating Great Place and Great Lifestyle.
- Reviewing the Council's policies and strategies as appropriate prior to adoption.

Councillor Tina Combellack
Chairman Growth and Development Scrutiny



Councillor Tina Combellack
Chairman



Councillor Jason Billin
Vice-Chair
March 2026 - Present

What are we responsible for?

The Growth and Development Scrutiny Group's remit is to consider relevant topics, in line with the Council's priorities, considering the Corporate Strategy and those of Officers and Councillors for inclusion in a work programme agreed by the Corporate Overview Group.

Both Councillors and officers are required to complete a scrutiny request to outline a topic they would like to be considered for scrutiny. The request summarises the issue of concern as well as the key lines of enquiry for review.

Our work this year

During the year, the Group considered many service areas and issues within its scrutiny role, particularly:

- East Midlands Freeport.
- Asset Management Strategy.
- Shared Ownership and Other Affordable Housing.

East Midlands Freeport

At its meeting, the Group received a presentation from Mr Cooper from the East Midlands Freeport (EMF), which provided an overview of the Freeport's purpose, governance, progress and challenges, including:

- **The role and structure of the Freeport**, explaining that EMF is a public-private partnership comprising Rushcliffe, North West Leicestershire and South Derbyshire District Councils, their respective County Councils and six private sector site owners or developers. It was confirmed that the Leader of Rushcliffe Borough Council represented the Council on the EMF Board and that EMF is a not-for-profit organisation.
- **The three Freeport sites**, being Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station, the East Midlands Airport Gateway Industrial Cluster, and the East Midlands Intermodal Park near the Toyota plant, with an ambition to develop low-carbon industrial sites to attract inward investment, support skills development and improve transport and connectivity.
- **Progress and incentives**, noting that EMF was established in March 2023, with financial incentives available until September 2031, that skills, sustainability and innovation strategies were in development, and that sites benefit from tax and customs incentives, although business interest to date had been relatively low.
- **Ratcliffe on Soar site updates**, highlighting its strategic infrastructure assets, Local Development Order granted in 2023, strong interest from the Office for Investment, and challenges relating to decommissioning timescales, grid connections and traffic impacts around Junction 24 of the M1, with transport modelling underway.

- **Investment and engagement**, reporting that around £150m of investment had been secured, approximately 850 jobs created, and that EMF was working with local communities and partners, with biodiversity net gain requirements applying across all sites.
- During discussion, Councillors raised concerns about **transport links, traffic impacts, leadership visibility, infrastructure constraints and the pace of progress**, particularly at Ratcliffe on Soar. The Group requested that its comments be **fed back to Cabinet** and suggested that wider **all-Councillor information sharing** be undertaken.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Members of the Group discussed inviting a representative to return to a future Group meeting and it was agreed that this be reviewed following receipt of the timeline information	A further Freeport update, presented by a Freeport representative, will come to the Group for scrutiny in July 2026. This will focus on greater understanding of the Freeport and its governance structure, impact of the development locally and timescales
Members of the Group considered the update provided by EMF at the Committee meeting and would identify further opportunities to be explored or developed going forward	

Asset Management Strategy Refresh

At its meeting, the Group considered the refreshed Asset Management Strategy and Plan, which had been brought forward due to workload pressures in the Corporate Governance Group. The Chair emphasised that scrutiny should focus on whether the Strategy provided an appropriate framework for effective economic management, with discussion centred on processes and approaches rather than detailed local issues.

The Director of Development and Economic Growth presented the refreshed Strategy and Plan, explaining that it replaces the 2020–2025 version and aligns with the Council's Corporate Strategy. The presentation highlighted that work had been undertaken across the authority to ensure the asset portfolio supports service delivery, economic growth and wider place-based outcomes, including town and village centre masterplanning. Achievements from the previous period were outlined, including disposal of surplus assets, carbon offset land acquisition, the successful delivery and operation of Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium, and regeneration projects at Bingham and Cotgrave.

Key changes in the refreshed Strategy and Plan were highlighted, including:

- **Preparatory work relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**, focused on information sharing and readiness activity in response to guidance from MHCLG, while awaiting further Government decisions.

- **Updated governance arrangements**, including revised terms of reference for the Asset Investment Group to reflect a shift from revenue-only acquisitions to consideration of wider opportunities.
- A refreshed approach to **carbon management**, supporting the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.

During discussion, members of the Group sought clarification on the relationship between the Strategy, Plan and the Action Plan. It was confirmed that Cabinet approval relates to the Strategy and Plan, while the Action Plan is a live document that evolves over time, Councillors' comments were welcomed to feed into this process. Officers also explained that delivery of the £4.8 million affordable housing capital allocation depends on commuted sums and the capacity of registered providers, with some uncertainties existing which affect timescales.

Councillors raised questions on individual assets and projects, including recent acquisitions and disposals, town centre and woodland projects, and the West Bridgford Vision Plan. Officers explained that the Vision Plan is being developed with external consultants, with stakeholder engagement underway and findings expected in spring 2026 to support future growth and funding opportunities. The woodland scheme at Upper Broughton was confirmed as primarily a carbon offsetting project, with additional environmental and biodiversity benefits.

The Group also discussed progress towards the Council's Net Zero target, community and non-commercial benefits arising from the asset portfolio, and the Council's role in supporting local health centre projects through Officer facilitation rather than direct funding. Members of the Group commented on the scale of the asset portfolio, highlighted the success of Rushcliffe Oaks Crematorium, and suggested that the Council could communicate the benefits of its asset activity more widely.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
The Growth and Development Scrutiny Group supported the Asset Management Strategy Refresh and gave its approval to Cabinet	Cabinet approved the refreshed Asset Management Strategy in March 2026

Shared Ownership and Other Affordable Housing

At its meeting, the Group undertook detailed scrutiny of shared ownership and other affordable housing products to assess whether current approaches were delivering the best outcomes for residents and aligning with identified housing need.

- **Members of the Group considered evidence from the 2024 Housing Needs Assessment**, which identified a strong and ongoing requirement for affordable rented housing, and examined how this compared with recent delivery levels across different tenures.

- **The Group explored the Council’s role in securing affordable housing through** planning policy and Section 106 agreements, noting the Council’s limited influence over matters such as pricing, marketing, service charges and resale arrangements for home ownership products.
- **Members of the Group examined the reasons for disparities between identified need and actual delivery**, including the impact of historic planning permissions, site phasing, viability constraints and Registered Provider capacity.
- **The Group scrutinised the increasing use of shared ownership and other intermediate products**, recognising their role in supporting households unable to access market housing, while acknowledging that they serve a different cohort to those in greatest housing need.
- **Discussion considered the Council’s approach to negotiating tenure mix**, with officers confirming that affordable rented homes are prioritised wherever viable, reflecting acute demand and homelessness pressures.
- **Members of the Group reviewed the robustness of viability assessments**, including the use of open-book appraisals and independent validation, and noted that flexibility on tenure mix can be necessary to unlock stalled or marginal sites.
- **The Group considered accessibility standards, long-term affordability safeguards** and the risks of affordability being lost over time, noting that discounted market sale homes are secured in perpetuity and that affordable housing policies seek to maximise accessible provision.
- **Members of the Group discussed the governance and regulation of Registered Providers**, recognising the limits of Council control and the respective roles of the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing.
- **The scrutiny concluded that while some mismatch between need and delivery is unavoidable**, the Council continues to apply policy consistently and seek full compliance unless justified by evidence, with Councillors satisfied that the scrutiny objectives had been met, subject to further follow-up information.

The Group agreed to:	Progress Update – June 2026:
Acknowledge the Council’s limited role in the allocation and management of affordable home ownership products and supported continued monitoring of Section 106 compliance and delivery through policy and partnerships	Following the March meeting, Officers provided further information to members of the group regarding role of Ward Members, a breakdown of figures for accessible and adaptable housing and a summary of the housing needs assessment

Member Panels

The Group did not establish any Member Panels this year.

Call-ins

The Group did not discuss any call-ins this year.

Looking forward to the year ahead

Growth and Development Scrutiny are looking forward to a comprehensive programme of scrutiny topics in 2026/27 that will deliver economic growth and ensure sustainable, prosperous and thriving communities.