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Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: 7 July 2020

To all Members of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Dear Councillor

A Virtual Meeting of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group will be held on Wednesday, 15 July 2020 at 7.00 pm via Zoom to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Sull'.

Sanjit Sull
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2020 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Actions from the meeting held on 7 January 2020 (Pages 7 - 8)
5. Open Spaces (Pages 9 - 14)
The report of the Executive Manager – Communities.
6. The Council's Wider Approach to Assisting Economic Recovery in Rushcliffe (Pages 15 - 22)
Report of the Executive Manager – Transformation.
7. Work Programme (Pages 23 - 24)
Report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services.

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Membership

Chairman: Councillor N Clarke

Vice-Chairman: Councillor A Brennan

Councillors: N Begum, J Cottee, L Howitt, A Phillips, J Stockwood, D Viridi and L Way

Meeting Guidance

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



**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY GROUP
TUESDAY, 7 JANUARY 2020**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber Area B, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road,
West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors N Clarke (Chairman), A Brennan (Vice-Chairman), N Begum,
J Cottee, L Howitt, A Phillips, J Stockwood, D Viridi and L Way

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore
T Coop
C Evans
D Mitchell
C Saxton

Executive Manager - Transformation
Democratic Services Officer
Economic Growth Manager
Executive Manager - Communities
Economic Growth Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors

6 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies to report.

7 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations to report.

8 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2019 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

9 Business Support Offer

Catherine Evans – Service Manager for Transformation and Caroline Saxton – Economic Growth Officer delivered a presentation that updated the Group on the work completed by the Economic Growth Team which focused on Business Support within Rushcliffe.

The Service Manger highlighted the Council's priorities in respect of Growth and Development including driving growth and regeneration, infrastructure, business support, employment and skills and proactively managing growth to ensure the Council creates great places to live and work. The Service Manager – Transformation informed the Group that five Growth Boards have been

established to work with key partners to support our main towns and to capitalise on the opportunities presented by growth.

The Economic Growth Officer provided the Group with information on the successful regeneration completed in Cotgrave, the delivery and completion of housing at Hollygate Park and improvements to the town centre to support the housing growth. The regeneration in the town centre provided new shops and offices, a multi-service centre and public realm improvements including additional car parking. The Economic Growth Officer explained that the Council had worked with the developers to deliver employment and skills in the area during the construction phase of the development. An employment partnership has been established which includes, working with local schools and colleges, businesses etc. to support the delivery of this work.

The Service Manager presented a summary of the Economic data and commercial property within the Borough, which highlighted information contained in the appendices attached to the report. The Service Manager informed the Group that the majority of businesses within the Borough, (76.4%), are small and we have 15 businesses with 250+ employees. The 5 year survival rate for businesses is 45.75% compared to 44.8% for Nottinghamshire as a whole and the top 3 business sectors in Nottinghamshire are Health, Manufacturing and Retail. In addition, the Service Manager provided information on privately owned commercial property and commercial property owned by the Council. Council owned property is currently made up of:

- 49 industrial units ranging in size from 750 to 5000 sq ft.
- 11 retail units located in Cotgrave and Radcliffe on Trent
- 20 Offices in Cotgrave and West Bridgford

The Service Manager advised that there are also plans to build additional retail units at Cotgrave to complete the regeneration of the shopping centre. In addition, as part of the proposals for a new leisure centre in Bingham, a new 10,000 sq ft office building is included, which will potentially provide 6 individual offices (ground floor) and a serviced office (first floor) subject to planning permission. There are also plans to purchase 11 industrial units in Bingham which will range in size from 1000 to 1500 sq ft.

The Economic Growth Officer provided the Group with information on the range of business support that the Council and its partners provide. This includes:

- The D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), which is a partnership between local government and businesses to drive economic growth in the area. It covers Derby, Derbyshire (D2) and Nottingham, Nottinghamshire (N2).
- The Growth Hub, established by the D2N2 LEP using European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) matched with local funding is aimed to be a 'one stop shop' for business support. The Hub provides a range of support including funding, events and workshops.
- The Rushcliffe Business Partnership is a not for profit partnership funded by

the Council through an annual service level agreement and also provides officer support in organising and promoting networking events and activities. The Partnership hosts monthly networking events in West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth and quarterly events, which have included training on upskilling workforce and physical and mental wellbeing, which Rushcliffe has hosted at the Arena.

In addition, the Economic Growth Officer advised that other events organised by the Economic Growth team include a Developer Forum and 'Big Business' events. A Recruiting Future Talent event is being planned for April 2020 and another 'Big Business' event is being planned for spring 2020 with the theme of clean growth and sustainability.

The Group asked specific questions in respect of businesses 'churn' and whether the Council has the commercial property available within the Borough to retain successful businesses wishing to expand. In addition the Group asked if the larger developments of employment land in Rushcliffe were Council owned or under private ownership. The Executive Manager – Communities advised that the larger developments are generally privately owned. In addition, the Service Manager advised the Group that there are no comparisons with other areas in respect of the 'churn' rate of businesses and explained that support is provided for businesses wishing to expand or reduce the size of premises. The Council does look to retain businesses within the Borough, although this may mean looking at alternative provision in the private sector.

The Group asked whether the Council could adopt a strategic approach to the supply and demand for business units and is there any market intelligence on the profile of tenancy of businesses to ensure that what the Council build/purchase in future is fully occupied. In addition, Councillors questioned the lack of creative or third sector businesses in the Borough, advising that this is a growing market. The Executive Manager – Transformation explained that local research is commissioned or completed by officers to understand the market in the area before any investment decisions are made. This requirement for a commercial return is balanced against the priority of supporting business.

The Group finally asked if further information and data could be provided from the business support partnerships and how their outcomes and achievements are measured. The Group suggested that D2N2 Growth Hub are invited to a future meeting of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group to explain their approach for business support.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The report provided by the Economic Growth and Property teams be noted, and the outcome welcomed in delivering a successful business support offer for businesses and employment in Rushcliffe.
- b) The Group provide future items for scrutiny as recorded in the Scrutiny Work Programme

10 Supporting and Promoting Economic Vibrancy in Towns and Villages

Catherine Evans, Service Manager for Transformation and Caroline Saxton, Economic Growth Officer delivered a presentation to accompany the appendices provided with the report. The report and presentation sets out data relating to the health of our high streets in Rushcliffe and the support the Council is providing to ensure they continue to thrive.

The Service Manager provided the Group with some background information on what the Council was doing to support local towns and villages, explaining the function of the growth boards in West Bridgford, Bingham and Radcliffe on Trent and more recently East Leake and Fairham. In addition, the Service Manager informed the Group of the success of the Council's Shop Front Improvement Grant scheme, a match funding facility available to all high street businesses across Rushcliffe.

The Economic Growth Officer explained some of the work completed by the Economic Growth team within the towns and villages, and how the team support the growth boards as well as non-growth board areas, providing examples: Melton Road Christmas lights and the West Bridgford Way. Further support is being developed, including a communication plan, digital growth and further work with the growth boards to support town and village events to increase their local footfall.

The Economic Growth Officer provided the key findings from a 2016 Kerching retail review and explained that town and village centres in Rushcliffe are performing well despite the challenging environment. The Kerching report highlighted the following:

- Low vacancy rates
- Provision of services e.g. Hairdressers, estate agents is higher than the national average
- Comparison shopping (non-essential items) is lower than the national average
- Leakage rates for Rushcliffe is high, the main causes of this being the lack of comparison shopping, as well as proximity to Nottingham and larger towns.

The Economic Growth Officer added that for the first time ever in any of Kerching's reports, there was not a single business in any of the villages reviewed which were rated as red according to their traffic light system. The only shops rated red were vacant shops. Kerching described the lack of red coded businesses as unprecedented.

The Service Manager presented the key features of a town centre using a model for future high streets and how Rushcliffe compares, more detailed information was provided in the Grimsey review as an appendix to the report.

The key features include:

- Accessibility including wifi, parking, cycle storage and public transport links
- A mixed offer of shops, services, cafes and public work space

- Regular activities and events to attract people to the area
- The provision of community services e.g. library, doctors, Council contact point

In addition, the Service Manager reported that Rushcliffe town centres all have a high street retailer e.g. Co-op, Boots, all have parking provision, all areas are delivering some events, mainly seasonal e.g. summer fairs or Christmas light switch on and all areas have social media presence. However, only two of the seven towns and villages have a bank or building society.

The Group asked specific questions in relation to leakage and what the Council is doing to ensure the vibrancy of our towns and villages continues and whether there are triggers that could alert any detrimental changes in the future. The Group provided examples of bank closures and lack of ATM machines as having a negative effect, particularly on the older population or retailers that rely on cash transactions. The Executive Manager – Communities explained that leakage is difficult to influence as spending habits are changing in response to technology, retail spending is moving more online or to larger towns and cities, this also applies to banking facilities too, the success of smaller towns is to keep residents in the area.

The Group suggested whether the Council's planning policy could have an influence on landlords, so that A1 retail remains sustainable. The Executive Manager – Communities explained that mechanisms are in place within the planning policy and Neighbourhood Plans to defend things that towns don't want.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The Group note the report provided by the Economic Growth and Planning Policy teams, and welcome the successful vibrancy of Rushcliffe communities, defying the downward trend in many other communities, highlighting the need to monitor trends and ensure continued success.
- The Group provide items for future scrutiny as outlined in the Work Programme.

11 **Work Programme**

The Group considered its work Programme and provided suggestions for potential items for the Groups Work Programme, these included:

- Engagement with the D2N2 LEP to outline their support within Rushcliffe.
- How are the six strategic employment sites being developed, and how is the Council engaged with the stakeholders.
- Supporting Town Centres – to bring this item back at a later date with an update and progress report.
- The availability of banks and cashpoints declining significantly across the Borough.

The Executive Manager – Communities suggested that Councillors complete a Scrutiny Matrix for items they wish to consider at future meetings, explaining that items they wish to consider would need to be approved by the Corporate Overview Group of which the Chairman and Vice Chairman attend.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Work Programme, as detailed below be approved.

17 March 2020

- Abbey Road Development – Meet the Developer
- Customer Service and Digital Transformation
- Work Programme

Action Sheet – 7 January 2020

Minute No	Action	Officer Responsible
9	The Group requested that more information be provided on retention of businesses and how many businesses move and to where	Service Manager - Transformation
9	The Group requested further information on the creative/third business sector	Service Manager - Transformation
10	The Group requested that a copy or web link of the Grimsey report be provided for Group members.	Service Manager - Transformation
10	The Group requested that a copy of the retail reports be circulated to members of the Group on request and suggested the reports are updated to illustrate change in the 3 to 4 year period from when they were last commissioned	Service Manager - Transformation

The meeting closed at 8.51 pm.

CHAIRMAN

ACTIONS from meeting held on 7 January 2020

Minute No	Action	Officer Responsible	Response
9	The Group requested that more information be provided on retention of businesses and how many businesses move and to where	Service Manager - Transformation	This was circulated as a Member Briefing Note with the Agenda on 7 July 2020.
9	The Group requested further information on the creative/third business sector	Service Manager - Transformation	<p>Creative and Digital Industries is a vast sector covering a wide range of areas. These include video and film production, photography, music, book publishing, radio/TV broadcasting, computer games development, social media, software that supports these industries and the telecommunications sector. It is also important to the growth and development of other sectors through the provision of things such as supplying software services and digital technologies</p> <p>Creative and Digital Industries account for over 26,000 employees in the D2N2 area with approximately 40% (10,400) employed solely in Nottingham and Derby city.</p> <p>There are also a large number of sole traders and micro businesses within the entire D2N2 area.</p>
10	The Group requested that a copy or web link of the Grimsey report be provided for Group members.	Service Manager - Transformation	This was circulated with the notes.
10	The Group requested that a copy of the retail reports be circulated to members of the Group on request and suggested the reports are updated to illustrate change in the 3 to 4 year period from when they were last commissioned	Service Manager - Transformation	<p>I have had one request from EL and the reports were shared. No further requests were made.</p> <p>This work has not been commissioned due to the current crisis.</p>

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Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 15 July 2020

Open Spaces

Report of the Executive Manager – Communities

1. Purpose of report

1.1. This item has been raised for consideration by the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group following concerns regarding the lack of consistency for Management Companies fees from development to development (even within the same village). More specifically the concerns raised include:

- The lack of an overall cap on fees,
- “Hidden” fees for residents who come to sell their property or re-mortgage,
- The lack of ability for residents to redress any dissatisfactions or shortcomings with Management Companies,
- The fact that residents don’t understand the full extent of the costs they are agreeing to pay when they purchase the properties and
- The resident’s misconception that the areas they are paying for are for their sole use creating friction with other local residents lawfully using the areas.

1.2 Open spaces can be required on small, medium and large scale residential developments within the Borough. Under the Local Plan, the Council has identified six strategic sites within the Core Strategy and twenty five additional residential sites under Local Plan Part 2. These developments range from 45 to 4,000 dwellings in size.

1.3 A background investigation has been undertaken to explore the challenges associated with the delivery of open space managed by Management Companies on housing developments, looking at who could be responsible for the management and maintenance of outdoor community spaces on them in the future.

1.4 This initial report and presentation will give Councillors an update on the current arrangements to enable Councillors to scrutinise this information and make recommendations on the options for their future investigation and operation.

1.5 This issue has not currently been considered by any other committee.

1.6 A presentation will be given to the Group to expand on the issues contained within this report.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group considers the contents of the report and presentation, and identifies any areas for further investigation.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. Prior to 2000, the Council adopted any open space on housing developments with no cost to developer or residents of that development.
- 3.2. Between the years of 2000 and 2011, the Council continued to adopt all open space on new housing developments but sought a commuted sum from the developer that covered the first 15 years of the costs associated with the maintenance and management of the open space. After 15 years the responsibility became a financial implication for the Council. Issues were, however, experienced whereby some developers failed to pay the commuted sum and, therefore, residents experienced issues of open spaces not being maintained.
- 3.3. In 2011, the Council changed its position regarding taking ownership of Open Space land, including the risk of on-going maintenance liability deciding it was no longer in a position to accept ownership of any open space land. Developers are now required to submit an Open Space Scheme which, amongst other things requires the method for securing the management and maintenance of the open space by an 'appropriate organisation' and that management and maintenance of the open space should be through a 'management company or by transfer to some other appropriate organisation', with suitable provision for funding the future management and maintenance. This process is now common practice amongst Local Authorities.
- 3.4. Since 2011, all new open space, constructed as part of new housing developments, has been the sole financial and physical responsibility of the developer to provide, and then inspect and maintain post development. However, most developers seek to pass that maintenance responsibility onto a Management Company with the financial burden for paying the Management Company passed on to the residents of the new developments with monies collected via a monthly charge on each dwelling secured at the time each dwelling is sold/re-sold.
- 3.5. In the case of the strategic housing allocations (500+ dwellings), the facilities are likely to prove attractive and, therefore, be used by significant number of people from within the settlement within which they are located, and some facilities even serve as an attractor to visitors from outside the settlement. However, the costs of funding the maintenance of the facilities are only paid for by the residents of the development within which the facility is situated. In other words, the facilities may be used by significantly more people than are contributing towards the maintenance and up keep them.

- 3.6. The Ward Councillor who raised the initial key line of enquiry that has resulted in this item states that their constituents have raised issues: that different Management Companies within the same village are charging differing amounts; that there is no cap on the fees that residents are charged; and that the residents have little or no control over the quality and frequency of the work that they are paying for.
- 3.7. This is an issue not only for the Larger Strategic developments, but also on the smaller developments such as those allocated within Local Plan Part 2. Furthermore, with community facilities, such as country parks on strategic allocations, the costs could be significant as they are likely to serve as an attractor to high levels of footfall from further afield which could accelerate the maintenance requirements for the facility, and therefore, increase in the initial costs placed upon those limited number of residents to pay for.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. There are three scales of development that attract the requirement to provide some form of open space; smaller developments (less than 50 dwellings), such as the 5 dwellings on the redevelopment of Chestnut Farm, Willoughby On The Wolds, medium sized (10 plus to circa 150 dwellings), such as the 74 dwellings approved at Abbey Lane, Aslockton, and large developments, (Strategic Allocations of between 550 and 4,000 dwellings).
- 4.2. The requirements for the smaller developments are less likely to require any significant community open space with the maintenance requirements (mowing, pruning trees etc.) more likely to be undertaken by the residents.
- 4.3. Medium sized developments are likely to hit the threshold whereby the developer is required to provide some form of communal open play provision, ideally on site, but possibly as a contribution to improve an existing facility off-site in close proximity to the development. This could be a mixture of formalised (equipped) play areas and informal (unequipped) areas of open space that have a requirement to be maintained and inspected. However, development of this scale is less likely to result in the provision of a community facility whereby the new open space would be a major attraction to draw in people from a significantly wider area to use the space. Nevertheless, the provision of open space on developments of this scale would (currently) result in the requirement for an open space scheme and an appropriate funding mechanism through a S106 agreement.
- 4.4. Due to their scale, the larger scale strategic developments in the Local Plan (strategic allocations being between 550 and 4,000 dwellings, but also some of the larger Local Plan Part 2 sites between 100 and 400 dwellings), will result in the level of provision that could attract users from further afield than just the occupants of the new development to use facilities such as playing fields, large equipped play areas, country parks etc. Again these would require the provision of open space and the requirement for an open space scheme and an appropriate funding mechanism through a S106 agreement.

- 4.5. The recently approved Strategic Housing Allocation at Bingham (Policy 21 of the Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy) includes, amongst other things, 1,050 new dwellings, a new primary school, retail opportunities and community hall, 15.5ha of employment land, two equipped play areas, incidental (unequipped) play areas, a trim trail and a community park on the edge of the development (and, indeed, on the edge of Bingham) centred around a reservoir with a country park feel. Similarly approved strategic allocations at Edwalton, Cotgrave and Clifton also have large community parks within or alongside them and Clifton will also provide a range of sports pitches within the development. Furthermore, the, as yet unapproved, development at Gamston would also include a range of communal open spaces, play areas (equipped and unequipped) and potentially a country park area. There is also the consideration of the 25 allocated residential developments within Local Plan Part 2, most of which will require an element of on-site open space and the requirement for an open space scheme and an appropriate funding mechanism through a S106 agreement.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. As this report does not propose any detailed options for consideration there is little risk other than that under the current situation the Council could be required to take action in the case where a management company fails in its duties to maintain open space areas, but this would be dependent on the circumstances of any such failures.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

There are currently no financial implications associated with this report. If the Council chose to change its policy and adopt areas of open space this could have a significant impact on Council budgets.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no equality implications associated with this report.

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

There are no Section 17 Crime and Disorder implications associated with this report

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Open space areas on new developments provide a real benefit to the quality of life for residents
Efficient Services	The management of Open Spaces by management companies ensures that no financial implications fall on the Borough Council
Sustainable Growth	The provision of open space on new housing developments ensures high quality growth
The Environment	Open spaces with new housing developments provide a positive impact on the Environment

8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group considers the contents of the report and presentation, and identifies any areas for further investigation

For more information contact:	Dave Mitchell Executive Manager - Communities Tel: 0115 9148267 dmitchell@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	None

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Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

Wednesday, 15 July 2020

The Council's Wider Approach to Assisting Economic Recovery in Rushcliffe

Report of the Executive Manager – Transformation

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report provides the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group with an update on the impact, so far, of Covid19 on the local economy, and the Council's and partners' plans to mitigate this impact.
- 1.2. The challenge and true impact of Covid19 remains to be seen. Other factors may also influence the speed of any recovery including the possibility of a second peak. This report is, therefore, intended to be a snapshot in time and plans will remain flexible to ensure we are responding to emerging issues.
- 1.3. Updates have been provided to the Local Growth Boards as well as the Town and Parish Conference held on 18 June and the feedback received from some of those discussions is included in this report and the accompanying presentation.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Note the content of the report and work completed so far
- b) Consider additional ideas and guidance on the planned work to support the economic recovery of Rushcliffe.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. This report is intended to be an update on the current position as it stands, however, this is likely to change over the coming months depending on how the Government's phasing plan progresses.
- 3.2. It creates the opportunity for officers to ensure Councillors are comfortable with the approach being taken and highlight additional opportunities that the team can explore.

3.3. The work highlighted in this report is work being completed alongside colleagues across the Council as well as external partners within existing capacity.

4. Supporting Information

Impact

4.1. D2N2 Growth Hub launched a survey in April 2020 for businesses to complete to capture the impact that Covid19 is having on their business. There have been over 650 responses received to date, the survey is still open and so this number is increasing all the time. It is important to note this is not a representative sample but gives some insight into the impact of Covid19 on businesses in the D2N2 area.

4.2. Of those businesses who have responded, 98% said that Covid19 has impacted their business of which approximately 96% said this was in a negative way. Those that reported the largest impact were:

- In accommodation and food services, arts and entertainment or wholesale and retail trade sectors
- Those that operate more business to customer rather than business to business
- Younger/newer businesses – less than three years old
- Smaller businesses – less than 10 employees
- Those who operate more at a local and regional level rather than national or international.

4.3. The table below provide more information from the survey responses:

Top 3 impacts	Top three concerns	What would be most help
Cash flow Decreased Sales/bookings Staff in isolation	Decreasing consumer confidence/spending Financial impact on operations and/or liquidity/capital Global or UK recession	Financial support Business planning

4.4. 72% of respondents said that they had furloughed staff, with the majority furloughing 50% or more staff. Data from HMRC states that approximately 11,600 Rushcliffe employees have been furloughed which is lower than other areas of the County (93,300 across County). The sectors with the highest level of furloughing are:

- Wholesale and retail
 - Accommodation and food services
 - Manufacturing
- 4.5. In addition, 5% have made redundancies, the majority of which are 10% or lower of the total workforce. The evidence suggests that the greatest impact is likely to be on low skilled jobs. It is, therefore, anticipated to have less of an impact in Rushcliffe than other part of D2N2 (62% of residents have qualification level of NVQ 4+, Nottinghamshire average is 32.6%, EM is 33.2% and England is 39%).
- 4.6. An area of particular concern is youth unemployment, those that are currently or will soon be entering the labour market will face high levels of competition from people with more experience who have been made redundant. In addition, there will only be a limited number of jobs available. For those that are currently in work, research conducted by University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University shows that young people are over represented in the shut down sectors.

Business support

- 4.7. In the early stages of the Covid19 pandemic, a dedicated business support webpage was developed which is accessible from the homepage of the Council website. This has all the latest updates, information and guidance on it from Government and other sources. It also now includes signage that high street businesses can download and display in their stores. This includes the 5 steps for businesses to follow to be Covid-secure to provide customers with assurance.
- 4.8. We have worked closely with Rushcliffe Business Partnership (RBP) to change the support provided to make this virtual. This has worked very well with the introduction of fortnightly virtual networking via Zoom, this is facilitated by a steering group member from Rushcliffe Business Partnership. Each call has attracted between 25 and 35 businesses and to date eight sessions have been held.
- 4.9. In addition, we have worked with members of RBP to offer ask the expert webinar sessions which use the expertise of our local businesses to support other businesses in the area. These have covered a number different topics including; managing your cashflow, holding events online, content marketing and PR tips. These sessions have attracted around 65 businesses and continue to be delivered on a fortnightly basis.
- 4.10. D2N2 Growth Hub have also adapted their programme of workshops to move these to be delivered online via webinars rather than face to face. Between the beginning of April and the 10 June they had delivered 65 webinars which had attracted 86 Rushcliffe businesses. The table below shows the breakdown of business attendees across the County. The Council supports delivery with the promotion of the webinars on the website and social media to encourage Rushcliffe businesses to attend.

Local Authority	Number of delegates
Rushcliffe	86
Ashfield	24
Bassetlaw	30
Broxtowe	54
Gedling	54
Newark & Sherwood	47
Nottingham City	315
Mansfield	43
Total for N2	653

4.11. On the Council's website, access has been provided to businesses to the grant finding portal. It is an online portal that allows small and medium sized businesses across the Borough to quickly and easily search for the funding and grants which apply to their individual circumstances. This is being provided free of charge until October 2020.

Town centre support

4.12. Officers from the Council, including Economic Growth, Environmental Health and Communications, have worked closely with the Market Managers in West Bridgford and Bingham to support the safe reopening of the markets. Both were temporarily suspended at the end of March. Bingham Market restarted on the 30 April for essential retail only and was then able to welcome back all traders from 4 June. West Bridgford Farmers Market restarted on 30 May with six stall holders and further six (12 in total) have been present on the market for the last two market days.

4.13. Both Market Managers have completed detailed risk assessments, supported traders to implement new procedures and have got social distancing signage and measures in place, including queue marking systems. The Council have produced a markets guidance document and this has been shared with the two Market Managers as well as other areas who have a market, or are setting one up, including East Leake and Ruddington.

4.14. To support the reopening of non-essential retail, the Economic Growth Team and Communications worked together to send out emails and a press release to find out businesses plans for reopening and the support that they may need. This received a very limited response, so was followed up by visits to the businesses. During the week commencing 15 June, officers from the Economic Growth and Environmental Health teams carried out visits to all high street businesses that had reopened to check they had all the required measures in place and to find out if they required any further support.

4.15. The Borough Council's website has signage for businesses to print off to display to reassure customers that they have taken the necessary steps to be Covid-secure. Officers regularly join virtual meetings of established traders groups including East Leake Traders Association and Ruddington Village

Partnership to provide updates. Work is ongoing to establish similar groups in Bingham and West Bridgford and could also be explored for other areas.

4.16. Visits to Bingham and West Bridgford have been carried out with colleagues from Nottinghamshire County Highways to consider temporary traffic restrictions and changes to the public realm that could be implemented to support the safe reopening of town centres. This has resulted in the following changes being implemented:

- West Bridgford Town Centre – the existing Monday to Saturday traffic restrictions on Central Avenue to be extended to cover Sunday also
- Bingham Marketplace - the roads to the north and east of Bingham marketplace are to be made one-way and the introduction of an advisory 20mph speed limit in the town centre.

A visit to Ruddington and Radcliffe on Trent has taken place and the proposals for those areas are expected imminently. Visits can also be arranged for other areas as required.

Proposals for the future

4.17. Rushcliffe Borough Council has been allocated £106,208 from the Reopening High Streets Safely Funding. This fund is aimed at supporting councils to implement measures to support their town centre to reopen safely and successfully. The criteria for the funding is quite restrictive and focuses on four key areas of activity:

- Support to develop an action plan for how begin to safely reopen local economies
- Communications and public information activity
- Business-facing awareness raising activities
- Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

4.18. Activity which cannot be supported includes:

- Activity that provides no additionality e.g. work that would have been happening anyway
- Capital expenditure – some temporary changes are permitted but would only be allowed to be in place until the end of March 2021
- Grants to businesses.

4.19. Some initial proposals for the funding include:

- NCC public realm/highways work as outlined above to be paid for from this funding.
- Additional social distancing signage in town centres where required
- Appointing a consultant with expertise to provide advice and support for retailers on how they can successfully and safely reopen their shops

- Digital support and advice for businesses to help them with an online presence and setting up/supporting new shopping habits of their customers
 - Support through new or establishing new retail forums in each area so retailers can share best practice
 - Setting up Information Officers to support businesses to reopen safely and address any issues they have
 - Regular and consistent communications for residents and businesses to provide assurance and advice.
- 4.20. In addition, we are arranging ‘ask the expert’ webinars aimed at high street businesses. This includes a session hosted by KH Hair and supported by Council Environmental Health officers for Hair and Beauty Salons. Also, a session with a restaurant chain for them to share their ideas and expertise with smaller independents.
- 4.21. As well as the work to support our high streets, the wider business support outlined above, including the webinars with RBP and the Growth Hub, will continue. In addition, we are looking at ways that we can try and capture some of the positives from this, particularly the opportunity for a green economic recovery. Work is being done, alongside the other districts and Nottinghamshire County Council, to explore this.
- 4.22. As part of the Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum structure, an economy cell has been set up which consists of representatives from Nottinghamshire County Council, all district councils, DWP and D2N2 LEP. The County Council chair the group with Catherine Evans, Transformation Service Manager at Rushcliffe, as vice chair. The initial priorities for the group are:
- To use available data to understand and interpret the current and future challenges our businesses and residents might face and how government policy is, or is not, currently responding to that, e.g. the impact of reduction in/closure of the furlough scheme and those (especially young people) pushed into unemployment in the coming year.
 - To understand the current available business support offered across the area, to identify issues with local productivity (capacity, people, infrastructure), and to shape support programmes to enhance this and enable businesses to rebound.
 - To support our town centres to reopen safely and successfully (linking in with the LRF Public Realms Cell).
 - To support our visitor economy to restart and provide support and confidence, where required, for both businesses and the public.
 - To deliver a green economic recovery, ensuring that businesses do not lose sight of the opportunities that this crisis has presented us with.
 - To ensure consistent and clear communications for our businesses.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. There is a high level of uncertainty over what the full impact of Covid19 will be and, therefore, recovery plans will remain flexible to enable them to respond as required.
- 5.2. The local recovery group at a Rushcliffe level will work closely with groups at both at a Nottinghamshire County level and also D2N2 LEP level to ensure we are sharing best practice and working collectively where relevant.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

- Rushcliffe has been allocated £106,208 from the reopening high streets funding which help facilitate some of the work (as outlined above). This funding has to be drawn down based on evidence of eligible expenditure. Any money not spent by March 2021 will no longer be available. Other work will be picked up through existing officer resource.

6.2. Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

- Any changes in town centres will need to take into account equalities implications and will be considered at the time of any proposed changes.

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

- There are no crime and disorder implications from this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The recovery plans being developed are focused on maintaining the quality of life of local residents by supporting local town and village centres to maintain their offer for all. In addition there is a focus on supporting people back into work, this is being developed by the Local Resilience Forum Economy Cell and activity will be delivered in Rushcliffe in line with this.
Efficient Services	Not applicable
Sustainable Growth	The actions outlined in the report will support the economic recovery of the Borough in light of Covid19. This will help businesses to adapt and grow in the future.
The Environment	Opportunities that have presented themselves from the pandemic will be captured to support a green economic

recovery.

8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group:

- a) Note the content of the report and work completed so far
- b) Consider additional ideas and guidance on the planned work to support the economic recovery of Rushcliffe.

For more information contact:	Leanne Ashmore – Executive Manager Transformation 0115 9148 578 lashmore@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	None



Growth and Development Scrutiny

Wednesday, 15 July 2020

Work Programme

Report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services

1. Summary

In response to a question raised by Councillor Way regarding the limited access to cash machines in some village centres the Executive Manager – Communities advised that this was addressed at a recent Town and Parish Forum. However, In light of the current Covid-19 pandemic and the increased use of card payments to help prevent the spread of the virus, future discussions on a cashless society will be deferred to the meeting on 21 January 2021

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

- Delivering economic growth to ensure a sustainable, prosperous and thriving local economy
- Maintaining and enhancing our residents' quality of life
- Transforming the Council to enable the delivery of efficient high quality services.

2. Recommendation

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

3. Reasons for Recommendation

25 August 2020

- Abbey Road Developer Presentation
- Planning Enforcement Policy – Part One
- Work Programme

14 October 2020

- Customer Services and Digital Transformation
- Work Programme

20 January 2021

- Cashless Society
- Work Programme

21 April 2021

- Work Programme

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