

Public Document Pack

When telephoning, please ask for: **Laura Webb**
Direct dial 0115 914 8481
Email democraticservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: Wednesday 19 August 2020

To all Members of the Communities Scrutiny Group

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Group will be held on Thursday, 27 August 2020 at 7.00 pm via Zoom consider the following items of business.

The meeting will be live streamed via YouTube for the public to listen and view via the link: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RushcliffeBC> Note: 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



Sanjit Sull
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the meeting 23 July 2020 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Rushcliffe Equality Scheme (Pages 7 - 20)
The report of the Executive Manager – Transformation is attached.
5. Fireworks (Pages 21 - 28)
The report of the Executive Manager – Communities is attached.
6. Work Programme (Pages 29 - 30)
The report of the Executive Manager – Communities is attached.

Membership



Rushcliffe Borough
Council Customer
Service Centre

Fountain Court
Gordon Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 5LN

Email:
customerservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Telephone:
0115 981 9911

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Opening hours:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
8.30am - 5pm
Wednesday
9.30am - 5pm
Friday
8.30am - 4.30pm

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



Chairman: Councillor J Wheeler
Vice-Chairman: Councillor B Bansal
Councillors: G Dickman, L Healy, R Jones, R Mallender, D Simms, R Walker 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.

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Recording at Meetings

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 allows 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.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY GROUP THURSDAY, 23 JULY 2020

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

PRESENT:

Councillors J Wheeler (Chairman), B Bansal (Vice-Chairman), G Dickman,
L Healy, R Jones, R Mallender, D Simms, R Walker and G Williams

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

D Banks	Executive	Manager	-
	Neighbourhoods		
D Burch	Service Manager - Neighbourhoods		
G Carpenter	Environmental Health Manager		
L Webb	Democratic Services Officer		

APOLOGIES:

Councillors

11 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

12 Minutes of the Meeting 9 January 2020

Councillor Jones raised additional points which were to be added to the minutes of the meeting. It was suggested that the following comments were added to the minutes.

- Improved timeliness of responsiveness, booking and invoicing were required
- Direct online bookings could be an option if the officers booking had a greater knowledge of key practical considerations
- The responsiveness of caretakers to booking rooms, layouts and other details were notable.

The Democratic Services Officer agreed to re-circulate the minutes with the above amendments and would re-publish the minutes once agreed.

13 Litter, Dog Fouling and Fly Tipping (Part One - Fly Tipping)

The Environmental Health Manager presented the report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods which detailed an update on fly tipping and the

Council's response and delivered a presentation to the Group.

It was noted that fly tipping was the criminal act of dumping of waste on public or private land without the owners permission and that the Council's Neighbourhoods team brought together the services responsible for responding to incidents of fly tipping and the work undertaken to reduce its occurrence through engagement, education and enforcement. It was stated, however, that the resources available to the Council to investigate fly tipping were very limited (0.75 fte across 4 members of staff).

The Environmental Health Manager noted that an increase in fly tipping incidents was a national problem and that in regard to the Borough of Rushcliffe fly tipping had increased by 320% since 2012. The Environmental Health Manager was pleased to note that there had been a decrease in fly tipping in the first couple of months of 2020 however, there had been a 185% increase in fly tipping incidents since June which coincided with the easing of lockdown restrictions. The Group were informed that during the first quarter of 2020/21 79.78 tonnes of fly-tipped waste was collected which was the equivalent of the average tonnage of fly-tipped waste collected during one year at a cost of £20,000.

The enforcement of fly-tipping was provided through evidence gathered from CCTV in fly tipping 'hot-spots' along with other information such as names, addresses and phone numbers found in the waste. The Council also worked with partners such as Nottinghamshire County Council (the disposal authority), the Environment Agency and Cleaner Notts Group. It was noted that such evidence and partnership working had resulted in criminal convictions including high profile vehicle seizures in 2019 and a recent stop and search exercise in Gotham with Nottinghamshire Police.

Following the presentation, the Chairman suggested that an additional recommendation be approved by the Group and following a discussion it was agreed that the following be added as an additional recommendation:

In light of an increase in fly tipping incidents in the Borough, it is recommended that the Chief Executive be asked in conjunction with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to review the resources deployed on enviro crime enforcement ahead of 2021/22 budget setting process with a view to providing suitable additional resource to cope with the increased workload.

Councillor Walker thanked the officers for their localised support in tackling fly tipping in Gotham and noted that residents had praised the Council for their fast response to clear fly tipping incidents.

It was noted that residents had to be vigilant when requesting 'man in a van' type services using social media and Councillors requested that the Council patrol such community groups to ensure that residents were not scammed into hiring somebody to dispose of waste without a license.

The Group noted the good public reaction to the seizure of vehicles in 2019 however, raised concerns that the increase in fly tipping may be due to the closure of one recycling centre in Rushcliffe. However, the Environmental Health Manager stated that individuals were depositing of the waste knowingly

that they were committing a crime. It was agreed that further advice and education was required to help residents make appropriate checks on who they are asking to dispose of their waste .

The officers suggested that Councillors encourage Rushcliffe residents to report fly tipping incidents and provide evidence where possible by taking photographs and making a note of the vehicle registration number.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods be noted
- b) In light of an increase in fly tipping incidents in the Borough, it is recommended that the Chief Executive be asked in conjunction with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to review the resources deployed on enviro crime enforcement ahead of 2021/22 budget setting process with a view to providing suitable additional resource to cope with the increased workload.

14 **Waste Strategy**

The Service Manager – Neighbourhoods delivered a presentation to the Group which outlined Rushcliffe Borough Council's current waste strategy and provided an update to the Group about the government's Environment Bill which could potentially have a significant impact on the Borough's weekly waste collections and the Council's income.

The Service Manager informed the Group that the government's waste and resources strategy was published in 2018, the Environment Bill was published in 2019 and the Environment Bill Public Committee were due to report to the House of Commons on 29 September 2020.

It was explained that the environment bill would seek to create a national consistency for kerbside waste collections, identify a producer responsibility on packaging, implement a national deposit return scheme and a plastic packaging tax.

More specifically the key changes that the Environment Bill would implement included a weekly collection of food waste, exploration of a universal garden waste collection service and glass collection at the kerbside. It was noted that the implementation of the Environment Bill would require changes to the long term PFI contract that the waste disposal authority (Nottinghamshire County Council) has with Veolia who manage household waste disposal across the county. It was also explained that if the government required free garden waste collections for all would it mean that the Council would lose an income of £1.3 million per annum however the government have committed to covering such costs.

The Service Manager also noted that the implementation of a national deposit return scheme would potentially reduce litter and see an increase in recycling waste. Additionally, the plastic packaging tax would charge manufacturers £200 per tonne of plastic produced where less than 30% can be recycled.

Following the presentation, the Group asked many questions about kerb side glass collections for residents. The Service Manager explained that the Council collects 2500 tonnes of glass per annum from the bring sites where glass is split into colours. It was explained that the glass was split into colours as this had a greater value and helped to ensure the glass was recycled into new bottles and jars. It was also noted that Rushcliffe collects more glass from the bring sites than other authorities such as Ashfield and Gedling who have kerbside collections and there was little evidence that residents were putting glass in their household waste bins.

The Group were pleased to note that manufacturers would be taxed if they produced plastic products with less than 30% recycled plastic but stated that this must drive an alternative to the production of plastic. Some members of the Group also encouraged councillors to visit the Veolia to find out more about the materials that can be recycled. It was also noted that the Council still collected batteries and that 10 – 12 tonnes were recycled every year.

It was RESOLVED that the presentation delivered by the Service Manager – Neighbourhoods be noted.

15 **Work Programme**

It was RESOLVED that the work programme below be noted.

27 August 2020

- Fireworks
- Rushcliffe Equality Scheme
- Work Programme

7 October 2020

- Flooding and Drainage
- Rushcliffe Nature Strategy Part 1
- Work Programme

28 January 2020

- Future of Edwalton Golf Course
- Dog Fouling, Littering and Fly tipping – part two
- Work Programme

29 April 2021

- Carbon Management Plan Update
- Work Programme

The meeting closed at 9.07 pm.

CHAIRMAN

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Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 27 August 2020

Rushcliffe Equality Scheme

Report of the Executive Manager - Transformation

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. Rushcliffe Equality Scheme was adopted in 2016 and runs to 2020. It is therefore timely that the scheme is reviewed and a new scheme is developed.
- 1.2. In July 2020 Cabinet resolved to support a comprehensive review of the scheme and recommended Councillor involvement in this review.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) Respond to initial officer proposals in respect of the review of the Council's Equality Scheme
- b) Request that officers undertake further work to develop a refreshed Equality Scheme, to be endorsed by this Group.
- c) The refreshed equality scheme be presented to Cabinet.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council has a long history of working towards greater levels of equality in the Borough. This covers many facets, some of which are detailed below. As a public sector organisation, it is imperative that the Council represents its residents and ensures that its services are accessible to all.
- 3.2. The existing Equality Scheme expires this year and so it is time to review the scheme and update it to reflect current circumstances.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. There are several diversity strands that are protected from discrimination by law. These are:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriages and civil partnerships

- Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race – this includes ethnic or national origins
 - Colour or nationality
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation.
- 4.2. Rushcliffe Borough Council employs around 275 staff. It is also a provider of services both statutory and discretionary, and a purchaser of goods and services.
- 4.3. Many of the statutory services the Council provides are there to support residents in their time of need, eg benefits and housing support. It is extremely important that residents can access services in an equal manner.
- 4.4. Equally, the non-statutory services, such as leisure provision, and parks and open spaces, should be delivered in such a way to welcome all residents.
- 4.5. As a good employer, it is paramount that Rushcliffe ensures that its employees are treated in a respectful way, and that as far as possible, the make up of the staff is representative of the make up of the residents we serve.
- 4.6. As a key element of local democracy, it is right that councillors should not only understand and represent their constituents' issues, but also act as community leaders in the quest to ensure a fair and respectful society in Rushcliffe.

5. Current social landscape

- 5.1. 2020 has been an eventful year to date with huge challenges being presented. The data being gathered by NHS England suggests that people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. As more data becomes available on this matter and, any local trends become apparent, they can be taken into consideration when the new equality scheme is being developed.
- 5.2. As services are reopened, and travel and transport return to a “new normal”, again data can be assimilated as to what this will mean for different residents who previously relied on public transport which may not be available in the same way. Their access to services may be affected.
- 5.3. Following the lockdown across the UK and the closure of schools, data is emerging that many children have not been able to engage with home schooling and online lessons during the lockdown period and social inequalities may be exacerbated in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic – through loss of income, isolation and lack of access to technology or broadband.
- 5.4. Following the death of George Floyd in the US, there have been demonstrations in support of the “Black Lives Matter” movement (founded in 2013) across the US and elsewhere across the world including the UK.

5.5. In short, many issues (the list above is not exhaustive) have been highlighted in 2020 that need to be considered when reviewing the previous scheme and adopting a new scheme.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

The risk is in not updating the Equality Scheme. It is important that the Council reviews the scheme regularly in order to continue to be responsive to residents', staff' and Councillors' needs and to ensure that equality considerations are at the heart of what the Council does.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

7.2 Legal Implications

There are equality strands which are protected by law and the Council must have regard for this policy.

7.3 Equalities Implications

This is covered in the body of the report.

7.4 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Section 17 implications.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	It is paramount that Rushcliffe residents can access services in an equitable manner. Discrimination should be avoided, and may be unlawful, and certainly would impact on residents' and staff' quality of life
Efficient Services	It is shown that staff and Councillors work to their best capability if they feel they are accepted and valued members of the organisation, whatever their characteristics
Sustainable Growth	As housing or industrial developments take place across the Borough, Equality Impact Assessments will be taken into account
The Environment	There may be some issues linked to public transport and the C-19 recovery that start to come to the fore around the equalities agenda.

9. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) Respond to initial officer proposals in respect of the review of the Council's Equality Scheme
- b) Request that officers undertake further work to develop a refreshed Equality Scheme, to be endorsed by this Group,
- c) The refreshed Equality Scheme be presented to Cabinet.

For more information contact:	Leanne Ashmore Executive Manager - Transformation 0115 914 8578 lashmore@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - Equality Scheme 2016-2020

Rushcliffe Respectful Relationships





Joint Statement

By Rushcliffe Borough Council's Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council

As Chief Executive and Leader of the Council we are committed to supporting the Equality Act 2010 and aim to create an environment where we can all live in harmony and have access to what they need in order to play a full and active part in society, free from fear or discrimination.

We will continue to work to achieve a consistent approach to equality and diversity when delivering all services and as an employer. This underpins everything we do. We will strive to ensure our staff and our residents receive a fair and equitable treatment and we will work to build strong communities.

Our scheme will embed equality into our Council's policies, services and spending plans and help us to be an even better employer. The scheme is a living document which will be constantly under review and will be monitored by the Executive Management Team and Performance Management Board to ensure we meet the evolving needs of the community.

We look forward to seeing positive outcomes and benefits from implementing this scheme. We welcome and value continued comment from all groups and individuals within the local community.



Allen Graham
Allen Graham
 Chief Executive
 Rushcliffe Borough Council

Neil Clarke
Cllr Neil Clarke MBE
 Leader of the Council
 Rushcliffe Borough Council

Introduction

We want Rushcliffe to be a great place for everybody to work, live and visit.

To do this, we will ensure that everyone is treated with courtesy and respect, acknowledging that each individual has unique needs and abilities.

We will ensure that there is no discrimination in the delivery of services or in the Council's role as an employer.

This scheme sets out what the Council will do to make a difference.

This document is for Rushcliffe residents and staff – to show what we will do over the next three years to make Rushcliffe an even fairer place for everyone.

Our borough

Rushcliffe is south of the City of Nottingham. The River Trent extends across towards Newark on Trent in the north east and Loughborough in the South West.

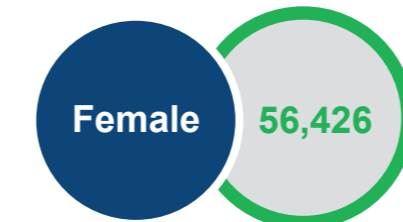
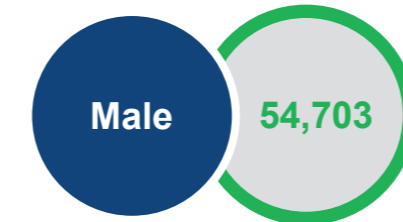
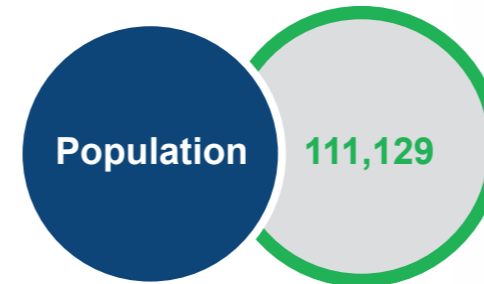
The main centre of population is West Bridgford, a large suburb of Greater Nottingham, where around 41,500 of the Borough's 111,600 population live.

There are six other large settlements – Bingham (population: 9131), Radcliffe-on-Trent (8205), Cotgrave (7203), Keyworth (6733), Ruddington (7216) and East Leake (6337) – and a large number of smaller villages dispersed throughout the remainder of the Borough, which is largely rural in character.

The covers 407 square kilometres.



Rushcliffe's profile



7,625 are non-white

7,540 have a long term health problem or disability which severely limits their day to day activities

Age Profile

Age Range	14 and under	15-19	20-64	65+
Population	19,246	6,610	64,850	20,423

Source: Office of National Statistics 2011 census data

Population

Rushcliffe has proved a popular place to live with the population growing by 14% since the early 1990s.

Much of this is due to in-migration. The Government anticipates that the borough's population will continue to increase in the future. The most recent projections indicate growth to 130,000 people by 2037 (up 23% from 2001), although this calculation is based on past growth rates and does not take into account future house building levels.

Rushcliffe's population is also notable for its more elderly profile. There is a lower percentage of 25-29 year olds in Rushcliffe than is generally the case in the rest of the country and an above average proportion of adults aged over 45 years.

*Source: Office of National Statistics

Socio-economic factors

Rushcliffe is the most affluent local authority area in the county, with full time workers earning on average around £32,498 (in 2014), which is more than 34% higher than the regional level. It ranks only 315th of 326 local authorities on a national deprivation scale: with first being most deprived.

However there are some pockets of relative deprivation, for example, in the Trent Bridge and Cotgrave wards. Historically, unemployment levels in Rushcliffe have been low at around 2.7% in 2011* and this rate is currently one of the lowest in Nottinghamshire

The employment profile of Rushcliffe's resident's shows that the proportion employed in managerial and professional occupations is significantly higher than both regionally and nationally, with a much lower proportion in less skilled occupations.

Page 13



Workforce profile

Correspondingly, educationally, Rushcliffe's residents are relatively well qualified, performing better than other council areas in Nottinghamshire.

The profile of jobs within the Borough shows there is a strong service sector base, with jobs in retail, public administration, education and the health sector in particular accounting for 48% of all jobs in Rushcliffe in 2011. The rest of jobs are made up of a variety of other employment types. Established industries include the British Geological Survey at Keyworth and British Gypsum at East Leake.

Due to the attractiveness of the area, property prices are relatively high, with an average house (mid 2013) costing around £200,000 compared with the Nottinghamshire average of £102,467*. Housing affordability is a significant issue within the Borough, with average house prices around eight times average incomes, despite wages being relatively healthy.

Rushcliffe is one of the safest places in Nottinghamshire with a moderate to low crime rate.

Rural areas can suffer significant deprivation in terms of access to essential services (shops, doctors, hospitals, school and broadband etc.) Rushcliffe is a largely rural borough and it is identified as suffering from this type of deprivation in the Greater Nottingham Accessibility Strategy. People without access to a private car are especially vulnerable to this type of deprivation.

The Council employs 286 staff within 4 service areas. The majority of these employees work at three sites – the Civic Centre, the Council's works depot and the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre. All three sites are based in West Bridgford. The Council also has other smaller sites such as Rushcliffe Country Park in Ruddington and community halls.

The Council's current workforce consists of 57% male and 43% female employees at the above sites, 4% of whom declare that they have a disability.

The Council's workforce age profile shows 4% of 18-24 year olds, just over 2% are over the age of 64 and the greatest age range employed is that between the ages of 45-54.

Our ethnic makeup shows that 3% of the workforce declared that they were from a background other than white British.

As a Council we strive to encourage a wide range of diversity to be employed within the organisation in order to reflect the people we serve in the Borough.

*Source: Office of National Statistics



Our aims

- We want Rushcliffe to be a welcoming place
- We will treat people fairly and aim to meet individual needs
- We want our services to be easy to access for all
- We aim to make Rushcliffe a place where everyone can achieve their potential

We want Rushcliffe to be a welcoming place for everyone

What we have done so far:

1. We aim to remove all hate motivated or offensive graffiti within 24 hours and we investigate all hate motivated complaints of anti-social behaviour working closely with our partners in the South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership.
2. We have reduced council tax bills by a total of £4.8 million, and paid in excess of £17.7 million in housing benefit payments to residents who are out of work or on a low income. We also paid a total of £86,000 to vulnerable tenants by providing discretionary housing payments to those in the greatest need. We have protected working age families with children from changes to council tax benefit regulations with the intention of reducing child poverty.
3. We organise events for different age groups within the community such as Armed Forces Day, Chinese New Year, Proms in the Park and Lark in the Park(a children's play day).
4. It is mandatory for employees to complete the equality and diversity e-learning module, so they know what Rushcliffe expects of the people it employs to make sure there are respectful relationships in Rushcliffe.
5. We ensure that employees are made aware of the standards the Council expects with regards to customer service.
6. Our community facilities are used by a range of groups of varying ages and diversity for events such as civil partnership receptions, weddings for a variety of faiths, play groups and tea dances. In addition, we support the provision of sport and physical activity opportunities with our partners to meet the needs of people with a range of disabilities.
7. We have moved to a new super-centre leisure facility at Rushcliffe Arena in West Bridgford. The new centre has been designed in consultation with various stakeholder groups and will provide access to a wide range of leisure facilities and activities, helping residents to maintain healthy and active lifestyles.



We want our services to be easy to access for all

What we have done so far:

1. We opened the Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre in April 2011. It is located in West Bridgford Police Station in the heart of our main town. The Centre has hearing loops, staff communicate in sign language, leaflets can be made available in large print and type-talk facilities are available. We also have contact points in main villages which makes customer services more accessible.
2. We have a housing advice duty officer and a back-up duty officer for emergency housing issues, at the Community Contact Centre and provide home visits for people who are not able to leave their homes. We also offer translation services for housing advice and homelessness interviews.
3. We have introduced Choice Based Lettings to promote greater housing choice, including prioritising people with physical disabilities to available adapted properties. There is an auto-bid function for vulnerable residents to place bids on vacant properties.
4. We ensure easy access to planning services via our website and the ability to submit applications online and have developed a programme of affordable housing in some of our villages to meet local housing needs.
5. We have undertaken an inclusivity audit at Rushcliffe Country Park and provide a range of targeted facilities including disabled parking and toilets, 8km of wheelchair suitable paths, picnic tables with wheelchair seating and a sensory garden. We also provide a range of 'inclusive' play equipment in our children's play areas.
6. We offer assisted refuse collections – available to people who are unable to move a wheeled bin if there are no able-bodied people living at the address.
7. Our website (www.rushcliffe.gov.uk) meets the 'AA standard' of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 -for example, it works well for people using different technology to view it and pages can be translated into 57 different languages. Our website has also recently been made compatible for users accessing our services via mobile devices.
8. Access to housing and council tax benefit is now easier. Customers can claim benefits online and report changes in circumstances over the phone. Staff carry out home visits to help customers make a benefit claim. We guarantee to process claims in 24 hours if all supporting information is provided.
9. Rushcliffe Reports, our residents magazine, is available in an audio version for blind and partially-sighted residents.



We will treat people fairly and aim to meet individual needs

What we have done so far:

1. We ask for individual requirements prior to Council events and interviews. E.g. access or dietary requirements.
2. We negotiate where possible that all new affordable housing designated for older people is built to Lifetime Homes standards. We consider cultural and/or religious needs of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation where there are shared kitchen/bathroom facilities and work to prevent homelessness.
3. An updated gypsy and traveller accommodation needs assessments is currently being undertaken.
4. We provide work experience for schoolchildren and others who we feel benefit from spending time with us, for example, volunteers. We know that this unpaid work experience gives people a real idea of future career choices.
5. We respect the faith of any deceased individual for whom we have a duty to arrange a burial or cremation.
6. We work with individual employees and relevant organisations to ensure that disabled employees can remain at work.
7. We provide flexible and remote working for staff to enable them to balance work and home life.
8. In partnership with all other Nottinghamshire Councils and a range of voluntary agencies, Rushcliffe BC have signed a 'No to Hate Pledge' which demonstrates our commitment to tackling discrimination, prevent hate and promote diversity.

Page 15



We aim to make Rushcliffe a place where everyone can achieve their potential

What we have done so far:

1. We ensure affordable housing is located in areas which provide access to opportunities such as employment, education and participation in the social and economic life of the community.
2. We employ young students attending local schools to promote the Council and the Borough particularly to other young people via social media.
3. We are promoting work experience and innovation through the YouNG brand and the YouNG Market.
4. We are supporting the Positive Futures scheme , helping other young people to meet their potential through sport and social enterprise.
5. We support apprenticeship schemes to give young people work experience and future employment opportunities.
6. We work with our partners to host an annual jobs fair to provide all residents with the opportunity to find out about jobs and training opportunities available in the area, as well as support in accessing these opportunities where required.
7. We support our partners with the ready for work clubs that operate within Rushcliffe, providing information, advice and guidance for job seekers, particularly those who may struggle to access the provision that is based in the neighbouring city centre.



What we want to continue to improve on by 2020:

The Equality Act 2010 sets out some duties which the Council has to follow by law.

We have to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Make sure people are treated with equality in mind.
- Create and develop good relations in our communities and in our workforce.
- As part of the law we have to set specific objectives which show how we are going to achieve the duties above.

To find out who our customers are, what they want and how they are treated we will:

We have to:

- Monitor the demographic make-up of our residents and our workforce
- Consult customers and staff, where appropriate
- Carry out equality impact assessments as part of our 4 year plan

Page 16 What to do if something goes wrong

Members of the public

If you think your being treated unfairly, contact us on 0115 981 9911 – 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Or visit Rushcliffe Customer Contact Centre, Rectory Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham. NG2 6BN.

Email us at: customerservices@rushcliffe.gov.uk

If you wish to contact a specific member of staff, Council email addresses have the format initialsurname@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Rushcliffe Borough Council employees

If you are concerned about any equality issues, talk to your line manager or to Human Resources. You can also refer to Rushcliffe Borough Council's Confidential Reporting Code see Appendix J page 45 of the Code of Conduct which you will find on the intranet under HR.

Let us know what you think

If you wish to discuss this policy or make any comments or suggestions on the work we are aiming to do to carry out in accordance with this policy, please contact the Performance and Reputation team on:

Tel: 0115 9819911

Email: media@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Appendix One

Rushcliffe Borough Council's equality and diversity policy.

We want Rushcliffe to be a great place for everybody to work, live and visit.

Page 17



Rushcliffe Borough Council

Rushcliffe Borough Council recognises that diversity in our communities is a huge asset as everyone has something unique to contribute to the Borough.

As a local employer and public service provider, we tackle discrimination, harassment, intimidation and disadvantage. We set ourselves high standards as an excellent organisation.

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

1. Set and monitor equality objectives.
2. Make equality an everyday matter.
3. Have a diverse workforce where staff are treated fairly.
4. Take action to eradicate discrimination and inequality.
5. Adopt best practice.
6. Evaluate our equality impact.
7. Change what we do if we find it creates inequality.
8. Work with others to get rid of harassment and intimidation.
9. Influence others we work with to adopt similar high standards.
10. Consult on our policies and procedures where necessary.
11. Use the best communications methods, plain English, translate material where necessary and use suitable communications formats as necessary



Where are we now?

Currently Rushcliffe has reached 'achieving' under the local government equality framework and we want to embed the requirements of Equality Act 2010 in all that we do. Equality impact assessments will continue to be a theme in our four-year-plan to ensure all actions and decisions will be made mindful of our diverse community and our impact on them and our staff. We are aware of our demographics. Rushcliffe is a largely affluent area, with educated, high-earning people living here. People are long-lived and generally prosperous and lead a relatively healthy lifestyle. Rushcliffe is also a safe place to live and on most indices we rate as not deprived in most areas.

We want to remove discrimination on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriages and civil partnerships (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

Putting the policy into action

Responsibility

Elected Members are responsible for determining and scrutinising policies. All reports consider whether the matter being discussed has any diversity implication or otherwise. The equality objective will be monitored on an annual basis by the Performance Management Board.

The Chief Executive and senior management team are responsible for developing and reviewing strategic measures and policies to ensure equality across all employment and service delivery issues within the Council.

All Executive Managers are responsible for making sure policies are implemented, investigating complaints and consulting communities.

All employees are responsible for following the law and Council procedures and encouraging good practice in their team.

How we do it

Rushcliffe Borough Council ensures service areas send Equality Impact Assessments for checking by Service Managers, Executive Managers and the HR team.

Making sure staff know about the policy

Rushcliffe does ensure that all staff are properly trained and understand any relevant service plans and their responsibilities for implementing equality.



Employment practices

Rushcliffe will have regard to equality and diversity in all aspects of employment, from advertising vacancies, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, training and personal development, to reasons for ending employment. We will do this by:

- Asking only for the skills and qualities actually needed to do the job
- Advertising jobs using methods that reach all communities and in particular methods that allow all groups who are currently under-represented in the workforce to be targeted
- Providing job details and accepting job applications in alternative formats such as large print, offering a minicom service for job queries and making arrangements for the use of interpreters if required in the selection process
- Valuing skills gained through non-traditional or informal work, such as voluntary work and caring responsibilities. The competences gained through this kind of experience will be balanced against those gained through more formal methods
- Making sure that all job applicants, whether redeployment candidates, existing employees or people who do not currently work for the Council, demonstrate that they are qualified, motivated and competent to do the job.
- Redeployment candidates will be given advice and support to assist them to reach the minimum standards required for a post
- Recognising and supporting the potential of all colleagues by offering opportunities for training and personal development
- On a yearly basis reviewing our commitments and what has been achieved to plan ways to improve on them
- Keeping records of applicants' and employees' equality data to make sure this policy is working properly
- Making sure the working environment is supportive and non-threatening by not tolerating any acts of discrimination or harassment, and by

introducing standards of behaviour contained within a code of conduct for all employees and also within our bullying and harassment procedures. Monitoring all cases of disciplinary action and carrying out work to ensure that this action does not disproportionately affect any specific group of colleagues

- Monitoring all cases where colleagues bring a grievance against the Council, their manager or a work colleague and take appropriate action to ensure that grievances do not unfairly or adversely affect any specific group of colleagues
- Ensuring that all managers discuss this policy and any relevant action plans with their teams, including how they can contribute to achieving our equality and diversity aims and objectives.
- Managers will deal with any breaches of the policy and failure to carry out relevant action plans.
- Recognising that the Trade Unions and Employees' Liaison Group representing colleagues make a valuable contribution to equality. We will continue to work with these groups on equality issues

We will specifically address disability issues by:

- Interviewing all disabled applicants who, at the shortlisting stage, show that they meet the minimum requirements to do the job
- Ensuring that proper arrangements are made within the recruitment process to support disabled people to participate
- Making every effort if employees become disabled to ensure they retain their employment with the Council
- Taking action to ensure that all employees are trained to be able to implement our commitments to disabled people
- Providing and accessing funding for workplace adaptations and aids to enable disabled people to obtain and retain employment with the Council.

Decision-making and our policies

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

- Consider the potential impact and assess the effect on customers and communities of our policies and practices and take action to improve them
- Consider the potential impact on customers and communities before making important decisions
- Carry out equality impact assessments
- Consult with Rushcliffe's Community Cohesion Network to help shape our future plans, decisions and changes.

Working with others

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

- Work with other public, private, voluntary and community groups in the Borough to ensure that equality and diversity policies and plans similar to our own are adopted and implemented more widely
- Share information, experience and examples of good practice on equality through links with other public, private, voluntary and community organisations
- Promote equality and diversity within partnership working and in our dealings with the media
- Work with Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network, to develop plans and promote equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination and disadvantage
- Involve people from Rushcliffe's diverse communities in influencing our work and progress on equality, and in verifying the work we do
- Learn from the equality and diversity policies and plans of other local authorities and organisations.



Buying services from others

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

- Require any company or business that wishes to be one of our contractors or suppliers to have developed policies on equalities proportionate to their size of operation
- We will monitor the practices of any contractor, or business we employ to provide services on our behalf to contract or purchase from, to ensure they act in accordance with our policies and relevant legislation on equality and diversity
- Follow good practice by having a procurement strategy that gives a clear commitment to equality of opportunity and to tackling discrimination and disadvantage.

Involving communities and consulting with others

Rushcliffe Borough Council will:

Support the Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network for all forms of consultation and the involvement of communities in the planning of services and decision-making.

Rushcliffe Borough Council Employees

As a Council we will continue to consult over equality issues with the recognised Trade Unions and Employees' Liaison Group.

Let us know what you think

If you wish to discuss this policy, or make any comments or suggestions on the work we are aiming to do to carry out this policy, please contact the Human Resources Team on:

Tel: 0115 914 8265





Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 27 August 2020

Fireworks

Report of the Executive Manager – Communities

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to provide the Communities Scrutiny Group with information to be able to consider the future use of fireworks at Council events.
- 1.2. The report follows a Council resolution, made on 5 March 2020, regarding the adverse effects that loud noise from fireworks can have on the welfare of vulnerable people and animals. The Council resolved to launch a public campaign to raise awareness of these impacts in the Borough, encourage advance advertising of planned firework events and promote alternative forms of activity such as quiet fireworks or other light displays. It also resolved to look at how fireworks are used at Council events with a view to move away from loud fireworks.
- 1.3. The Group is asked to consider the options from one of the following proposals:
 - Option a) Discontinue the use of loud fireworks at Council events (partial ban)
 - Option b) Discontinue the use of all fireworks at Council events (full ban)
 - Option c) No change to current events arrangements (no change)

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group:

- a) consider the information provided at the meeting and make recommendations to Cabinet on the future use of fireworks at Council events
- b) Launch a public communications campaign to encourage external event operators to adopt the Council's approach to the use of fireworks

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.2 There is a growing body of evidence regarding the health impacts of firework noise, both upon people and animals. By increasing the Council's controls on

the use of fireworks at RBC events, the Council would be demonstrating community leadership and promoting the delivery of more inclusive and considerate events. The recommendation to restrict to the Council's use of fireworks would replicate a similar policy decision made by a neighbouring district council.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 The Council has been using fireworks as part of its events for over 15 years. There are no records of any formal noise complaints having been made regarding this use, however in the period 2008-2019 the Council received 12 complaints regarding fireworks at other locations and events across the Borough.

4.2 The key line of enquiry as identified and discussed in the scrutiny matrix at Corporate Overview Group in July 2020 follows motion at Council on the 5 March 2020.

Key Lines of Enquiry

4.3 Audit of events run by the Council in past 3 years where fireworks were used

4.3.1 In the last three years the Council has used firework displays on three occasions, all within the delivery of the West Bridgford Christmas Lights Switch On event. This is an annual event promoted in West Bridgford town centre to launch the Christmas retail trading period. The event attracts thousands of visitors each year, including over 1000 people who gather for the lights switch-on countdown and finale firework display which occurs at 5pm.

4.3.2 The below table summarises the fireworks used at Council run events in the past three years

Date	Venue	Duration of display	Cost	Incidents/ Health & Safety reports	Public Feedback Received
23 Nov 2019	Bridgford Park, West Bridgford	4 minutes	£2000	Market stallholder reported a lost dog at the end of the display which was located by the event team after a short search	Positive comments on RBC social media
24 Nov 2018	Bridgford Park, West Bridgford	4 minutes	£1200	None recorded	24 Nov 2018 – complaint received from resident noted that the display was

					“disappointingly short” and “didn’t include enough fireworks”
2 Dec 2017	Bridgford Park, West Bridgford	4 minutes	£1200	None recorded	None recorded

4.3.3 The display provider contracted by RBC uses a variety of Category 2 and Category 3 fireworks in their productions, typically items such Chrysanthemums, Crackles, Falling Leaves, Coconuts, Snow Flakes and Comets.

4.3.4 Decibel levels of the displays presented in 2017, 2018 and 2019 were not recorded, however, in the UK, all shows using Category 2 and Category 3 pyrotechnic materials are limited by law to a maximum volume of 120dB at a noise monitoring distance of 150m. This is a condition of the display contract with RBC. 120dB is similar to the level of sound from the siren on an emergency service vehicle or a dog barking in a person’s ear. In the case of fireworks, the sound of each individual firework is relatively short in duration but the impact felt can be intense depending upon the distance from the firing site and personal sensitivity to noise.

4.4 Review research and campaigns on the impact of fireworks on the health and wellbeing of children and adults with a range of conditions

4.4.1 For many people fireworks are considered a fun and enjoyable way of marking significant occasions. However, it is recognised that the sounds of fireworks can be a concern for some people with certain health conditions, in particular:

- i. Children and adults with sensory processing disorders or who are on the autistic spectrum can have hyper sensitivities to sound, light, touch, taste, smell and pain which stimulate anxiety and feelings of being overwhelmed or confused. These feelings are also common for people with conditions that affect the brain or nervous system such as Dementia.
- ii. People with hearing conditions such as Hyperacusis which can cause a difficulty in tolerance and volume of sounds that would not be considered loud by individuals with normal hearing.
- iii. People with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) may have difficulties with loud sounds such as an exaggerated startle response, fear of sound (Phonophobia) or aversion to specific sounds (Misophonia), which may trigger flashbacks or panic attacks.
- iv. People with respiratory conditions such as Asthma, COPD and Lung Disease may also experience adverse impacts of the air pollutants and particulate matter expelled by fireworks, though air quality degradation is short-term.

4.5 **Review of research and campaigns on impact of fireworks on pets, farm animals, horses and wildlife**

4.5.1 In 2019, the RCPA launched the “Bang out of Order” campaign to highlight the impact of fireworks upon animal welfare outlining how aversive stimuli, such as loud noises that are unpredictable and out of an animal’s control, are extremely stressful. Being intermittent and relatively infrequent makes it unlikely that animals will acclimatise to fireworks noise. The RSPCA campaign calls for the following actions:

- I. Greater restrictions on the public sale and use of fireworks
- II. Reduction of the maximum noise level of fireworks (down from 120db to 90db) and greater clarity of labelling to allow consumers to make informed decisions
- III. Compulsory licensing of all public fireworks displays by LA licensing services, including a process for residents to appeal against the granting of a licence.
- IV. Activities to raise awareness of firework phobias amongst pet owners included treatment and prevention options, plus education about the impact of fireworks on animals to encourage firework users to be more considerate of animal welfare
- V. Further research into the impact of fireworks noise on animals, including the contribution of factors such as loudness and audio spectrum frequencies produced

4.5.2 Petitions are regularly submitted to Parliament requesting great regulation and restriction of firework use on animal welfare grounds. A petition currently active on Change.org led by the FAB Firework Campaign UK currently has over 600,000 signatures. Its campaign priorities mirror those of the RSPCA:

- I. Restricting private use (not just purchase) of fireworks to traditional dates such as 5 November, New Year’s Eve, Chinese New Year and Diwali
- II. Reducing the maximum permitted decibels for private use fireworks from 120, to 97
- III. Requiring all public fireworks displays to be licensed
- IV. Requiring fireworks packaging to be labelled indicating the noise level, to allow consumer choice

4.5.2 The NFU have released a statement on the issue that reads: "Farmers care deeply about the welfare of their animals and are rightly concerned about anything that could jeopardise their wellbeing. Fireworks, especially when used at unpredictable times of year, have the possibility to frighten livestock, which can lead to lower production and even stock loss. Poultry especially are at risk of a “smother,” where birds huddle together which can result in some birds dying. In addition, fireworks can pose a fire risk if hot embers land on

barns or in fields of standing crops. This is particularly an issue during the summer when crops are more likely to be dry.”

4.5.3 While the NFU does not have a position on when it is appropriate for fireworks to be let off, they have called upon fireworks users to consider the safety and wellbeing of their neighbours and neighbours’ animals as well as mitigate the impact with advance warning so that precautions can be taken protect animals.

4.6 Research the availability of quieter/silent fireworks

4.6.1 Low/ reduced noise fireworks are now commonly available on the UK domestic sales market with Asda, Tesco, Morrisons and Aldi all stocking low noise varieties. In 2019, Sainsbury’s took the decision to ban firework sales entirely.

4.6.2 Most commercial display companies offer low / reduced noise fireworks as a customisable option on professional displays. There is no significant price premium for reduced noise options. Low noise fireworks, i.e. those under 90dB are not completely silent but are restricted to a comfortable level that are below the level of any accompanying sound track.

4.7 Research alternatives such as laser shows and light shows, and how these options could work at Rushcliffe venues

4.7.1 Due to their reliance upon expensive technical equipment, laser shows are typically more expensive to procure than a firework show, however there are potential cost savings to be made by substituting fireworks, in terms of reduced need for enhanced fire protection measures and safety stewarding requirements.

4.7.2 In order to be visible, lasers need a surface off which to project i.e. a body of water or a building. They can also be projected on to mist, such as from a jet or fountain. In West Bridgford there is a shortage of surfaces on which to project but a good standard of show could be made possible with a combination of approaches and installation of additional SPX lighting equipment such as search lights and cold pyros. It will only be possible to test the visual effect of design in a live event scenario.

4.7.3 A quotation of £3500 has been obtained for a laser/ lights show substitute for fireworks the next West Bridgford Christmas Lights Switch On, comparable to a quotation of £2000 for a firework display with either traditional or low/ reduced noise pyrotechnics.

4.8 Conduct a survey or otherwise gauge public opinion on moving away from louder fireworks to other options

4.8.1 Due to COVID-19 pressures on local residents and communities, it was considered that public consultation regarding fireworks would not be particularly gainful at this time and may indeed have a negative reputational impact.

4.8.2 Noise controls on firework displays in the Borough of Broxtowe in July 2020 were received positively by residents and there is no reason to assume a similar policy would be different in Rushcliffe.

4.8.3 In the period 2008-2019, RBC's Environmental Health service received 12 noise complaints related to fireworks. Of these complaints, 8 were logged outside of the normal fireworks season i.e. November to January.

4.9 Work up some options for future events, to consider positive and negative impacts, risk analysis and costs and recommend one of the options

4.9.1 The below table summarises options for future events

Options	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Cost
Stop using fireworks at RBC events	Removes potential for noise impact and responds to public concerns	May be considered as excessive action by some residents and cause criticism/ reputational damage without full consultation May be misinterpreted as a council cost-cutting exercise, confusing the message of the action	In theory a cost saving, but replacement activity cost needs to be considered
Restrict use of fireworks to low/ reduced noise only at RBC events	Removes potential for noise impact and responds to public concerns Council retains a popular element of its event programme which receives positive media attention/ photographic interest	Option only controls RBC events, issues remain for wider area and need to be communicated clearly	No change
Substitute fireworks for alternative activity e.g. laser/ light show	Removes noise impact Reduces event staffing need as activity does not require enhanced fire protection support or stewarding Successful track record of delivering laser show at	Small number of contractors operating in laser market and high value of equipment provided mean costs of shows are higher than fireworks.	Likely increased cost to RBC though some cost savings could be made through reduced safety staffing. Activity would need to be

	2005 Christmas Lights Switch On	New show format is unproven and audiences have high expectations for West Bridgford events.	covered by existing budgets meaning other parts of event would need to be re-costed.
Continue to use fireworks at RBC events	Council retains a popular element of its event programme which receives positive media attention/ photographic interest	Council accused of failing to respond to public concerns re welfare impact of noise	No change

5. Risks and Uncertainties

- 5.1. There is limited evidence as to any potential environmental benefits from either a full or partial restriction of the use of fireworks at Council events, particularly in relation to Carbon Management.
- 5.2. The recommendation to introduce a restriction on the use of loud fireworks at Council events would not be an outright ban on the use of fireworks on Rushcliffe Borough Council land and open spaces without further discussion and agreement (noting though, that the use of fireworks is already a restricted activity within the Facilities Booking Conditions and would require authorisation of the Facilities Manager).

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

In 2019, Council expenditure on fireworks was £2000. In 2018 and 2017, Council expenditure was £1200. There is no additional cost implication of the recommendation at this stage, as expenditure would be contained within existing event budgets.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

6.3. Equalities Implications

The partial ban or full ban of fireworks at Rushcliffe Borough Council events would support the Council to deliver more inclusive events by addressing inequalities experienced by vulnerable people as identified in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

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

There are no crime and disorder implications.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The control of loud fireworks at Borough Council organised events supports the Council to deliver more inclusive events by addressing inequalities experienced by vulnerable people.
Efficient Services	The continuous review of the Borough Council operated events and adoption new technologies support the delivery of efficient services to our residents.
Sustainable Growth	
The Environment	

8. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that the Communities Scrutiny Group recommend to cabinet to:

- a) consider the information provided at the meeting and recommend to Cabinet either a full or partial ban
- b) Launch a public communications campaign to encourage external event operators to adopt the Council's approach to the use of fireworks

For more information contact:	Dave Mitchell Executive Manager - Communities 0115 9148267 dmitchell@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Full Council resolution made on 5 March 2020
List of appendices:	

 <p>Rushcliffe Borough Council</p>	<p>Communities Scrutiny Group</p> <p>Thursday 23 July 2020</p> <p>Work Programme</p>
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Report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services

1. Summary

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

2. Recommendation

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

3. Reasons for Recommendation

	Items / Reports
7 October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rushcliffe Nature Strategy • Flooding and Drainage
28 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future of Edwalton Golf Course • Dog Fouling, Littering and Fly Tipping – Part Two
29 April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Management Plan Update

For more information contact:	Peter 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.

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