

MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY GROUP
WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2020
Held at 7.00 pm via Zoom

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:

G Dyne – Chairman of the Nature Conservation Strategy Implementation Group

M Everett – Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board

S Jaques – Team Manager – Flood Risk Management – Nottinghamshire County Council

N Kemble – Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board

J Miller – Chairman of Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

D Banks	Executive	Manager	-
	Neighbourhoods		
Emery	Emergency Planning Officer		
D Hayden	Community Development Manager		
P Phillips	Environmental Sustainability Officer		

APOLOGIES:

Councillors

22 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

24 Minutes of the Meeting 27 August 2020

Councillor Jones noted that the following suggestion be added to the Rushcliffe Equality Scheme Item

- People with disabilities and access

The minutes of the meeting 27 August 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

25 Flooding and Drainage

The Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods presented his report which provided the Group with an update on the current picture of flooding events in the Borough. The report also outlined the organisations involved in flood assessment and drainage work, their roles and responsibilities and how they respond to flooding incidents and work with communities. A presentation was delivered by three of the key organisations involved: Nottinghamshire County Council, the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board and Rushcliffe Borough Council.

The Team Manager of Flood Risk Management at Nottinghamshire County Council explained that Nottinghamshire County Council was the lead local flood authority and that they were responsible for reducing flood risk across Nottinghamshire. A presentation was delivered to the Group which covered:

- water courses
- sewer flooding
- responses to events
- role in planning process
- section 19 reports
- mitigation and prevention
- examples of responses across the Borough
- making a difference in communities

Following questions from the Group, the Team Manager of Flood Risk Management explained that water courses were examined depending on if there had been a recent flooding event. The Group were also pleased to note that Nottinghamshire County Council had received a £200,000 grant to investigate flood risk potential in West Bridgford.

It was also explained that Nottinghamshire County Council examined flood risk assessments in which developers provided evidence of where water would go if it overflowed. However, it was noted that there was difficulty in knowing whether the planning applications would be as the same delivered. The Group were asked to encourage residents to take photographs and video footage and to contact the Flood Risk Management Team if they had any concerns about flooding on new housing developments.

It was noted that once a flood occurred that the team would examine the immediate cause and inspect the surrounding area regularly. Councillors raised concerns that a lot of agencies were involved with the response to flooding and that residents would benefit from a roles and responsibilities document with contact details. It was explained that Nottinghamshire County Council's main responsibility was to co-ordinate a response to flooding and to produce section 19 reports which detail follow up and future actions in order for flooding to be prevented in the future.

The Chairman thanked the Team Manager of Flood Risk Management for delivering the presentation to the Group and for answering their questions.

The Group next received a presentation from the Chairman of the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board (TVIDB.) It was noted that the TVIDB operate within a defined area, which is known as a drainage district and that they were responsible for managing water levels in low-lying areas. Their responsibilities included districts and their functions include supervising land drainage and flood defence works on ordinary watercourses.

The Chairman of the TVIDB delivered a presentation to the Group which covered:

- The Internal Drainage Board
- Income and Expenditure
- Maintenance
- Water, Capital & Environmental Works
- Water Level Management
- Flooding
- Dealing with an Emergency
- Public Sector Corporation Agreements
- Examples of Work Undertaken in Rushcliffe

Following the presentation the Group asked questions about the TVIDB's role in being consulted on planning applications. It was explained that the TVIDB was not a statutory consultee and that they could review and comment on applications but they had not had chance to provide advice on big developments in detail. However, the Chairman on TVIDB was pleased to note that a new member of staff had been appointed to ensure that all planning applications would be commented on in further detail. The Group were encouraged to speak to their representatives on the TVIDB in order to gain a further understanding of their role and to see the work that had been completed.

Additionally, the Group received an update from the Emergency Planning Officer at Rushcliffe Borough Council. It was explained that the Council's role was to carry out flood risk management works on minor watercourses in their ownership and ensure that risks are managed effectively. Their role also included taking decisions on development in Rushcliffe and working with Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver emergency responses to those at risk of flooding.

The Emergency Planning Officer delivered a presentation to the Group which covered:

- Role
- Recent Flooding
- Pre-Flooding work

- Rushcliffe's Role in Response
- Partnership Working in Recovery
- Role of Elected Members

Following the presentation, the Group were informed that the West Bridgford Local Area Forum could apply for funding for a community resilience flood store in line with Parish/Town Council's who can apply on behalf of their residents. The Group were pleased to note that Nottinghamshire County Council will ensure that rest centres are covid secure in the event of evacuation. The Group were also informed that Nottinghamshire County Council were investigating developments which had caused flooding downhill but that ultimately, it was a civil matter between the developer and the residents to resolve. Councillors suggested that in order to prevent flooding more trees should be planted in order to create more flooded areas which could hold water. The Group also suggested that the Council should make comments about smaller developments within the villages of Rushcliffe.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods be noted
- b) The responsibilities of those organisations involved in flood assessment and drainage work, and their roles in preparing and recovering from flood incidents be noted.
- c) The Group receive a role and responsibilities document with contact details for residents.

26 **Rushcliffe Nature Strategy**

The Communities Manager presented the report of the Executive Manager – Communities which detailed the draft Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy aims and objectives, developed by the Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy Implementation Group (RNCSIG) in which the Council were represented. It was explained that the aims and objectives of the strategy detailed ways to enhance and protect Rushcliffe's wildlife. The objective of this Strategy is to protect and enhance Rushcliffe's wildlife interest, whilst helping achieve the Nottinghamshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan objectives.

It was noted that the RNCSIG was now consulting on developing the strategy and asked the Group to provide comments on the draft aims and objectives of the strategy. It was explained that a wider public consultation would follow and then a final draft version of the Strategy would be returned to Communities Scrutiny Group in 2021 for endorsement and to seek commitment in the delivery of the Strategy.

The Environmental Sustainability Officer delivered a presentation to the Group which covered:

- Pledge for Nature
- Rushcliffe Today

- Achievements of 2015 – 2020
- Proposed Strategic Aims 2021 – 2025
- Proposed Objectives 2021 – 2025
- Woodland and Trees
- Species-rich Grassland on Roadsides
- Grantham Canal
- Biodiversity net gain
- Next Stages

Following the presentation, the Group asked numerous questions regarding planning applications and biodiversity net gain. The Environmental Sustainability Officer explained that developments would now have to prove that bio-diversity would increase. The Environmental Sustainability Officer was pleased to note that the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust promoted developments of high bio diversity value. Councillors also raised concerns about the fences installed in new developments which did not allow wildlife to move around freely. The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing suggested that councillors should raise their views regarding the planning for the future consultation which closed on 29 October.

The Group also proposed that the Grantham Canal had to be maintained. It was noted that the canal had become dry from leaks which consequently, saw a reduction in wildlife. Councillor Combellack stated that she had formed the Grantham Canal Water Restoration Group with the Chairman of Kinoulton Parish Council. It was explained that the aim of the Group was to apply pressure to the Canal and Rivers Trust and the Grantham Canal Society and to seek funding opportunities to resolve the water loss problem at the basins in Hickling and Kinoulton. It was suggested that the Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy needed to provide robust support to the Grantham Canal in order for the rural asset to be preserved. It was agreed that the Council would write to the Canal and Rivers Trust and the Grantham Canal Society to explain their concerns. The Environment Sustainability Officer also agreed to circulate a position statement from the Canal and Rivers Trust which would inform the Group of their future actions.

The Group were informed that Nottinghamshire County Council were actively planting native seeds and altering mowing schedules to selected road verges to increase wild flowering across the County. The Group were pleased to note that the number of volunteers had increased every year at nature reserves such as Skylarks at Holme Pierrepont. The Chairman suggested that it be recommended to Cabinet that the funding allocated for the free tree scheme be extended in the hope that the number of trees allocated would increase now that some restrictions due to Covid 19 had eased.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The report of the Executive Manager – Communities be noted.
- b) The draft Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy aims and objectives be considered.
- c) The RNCSIG commitment to developing guidance on Bio-Diversity net gain related to planning development in response to the Environment Bill currently making its way through Parliament be endorsed.

- d) The Council write to the Canal and Rivers Trust and the Grantham Canal Society to explain their concerns.
- e) A position statement from the Canal and Rivers Trust to inform the Group of their future actions be circulated.
- f) It be recommended to Cabinet that the funding for the free tree scheme be extended and that this includes the introduction of wildflowers seeds distribution to be incorporated into the scheme for future years as per the motion considered.
- g) The scheme would run coterminous with the Nature Conservation Strategy.

27 Work Programme

The Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services which detailed the Communities Scrutiny Group work programme for 2020/21.

It was agreed that a briefing would be organised for the Group to cover dog fouling and littering in January before the meeting scheduled on the 28 January 2021. The Group suggested that they would receive a presentation on the topic and have a short discussion and set actions in principle before the meeting on 28 January 2021.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The work programme for the communities scrutiny group below be noted.
- b) The Communities Scrutiny Group receive a briefing regarding dog fouling and littering in advance of the scheduled meeting on 28 January 2021.

28 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future of Edwalton Golf Course • Dog Fouling, Littering and Fly Tipping – part two • Rushcliffe Equality Scheme – part two
29 April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Management Plan Update

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN