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Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: Monday, 3 May 2021

To all Members of the Cabinet

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Cabinet will be held on Tuesday, 11 May 2021 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

This meeting will be accessible and open to the public via the live stream on YouTube and viewed via the link: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RushcliffeBC>

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Yours sincerely



Sanjit Sull
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 March 2021 (Pages 1 - 10)

4. Citizens' Questions

To answer questions submitted by citizens on the Council or its services.

5. Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

To answer questions submitted by Opposition Group Leaders on items on the agenda.

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**Monday, Tuesday and
Thursday**
8.30am - 5pm
Wednesday
9.30am - 5pm
Friday
8.30am - 4.30pm

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NON-KEY DECISIONS

6. Rushcliffe Equalities Scheme 2021-2025 (Pages 11 - 30)

The report of the Director Development and Economic Growth is attached.

7. Covid 19: Update Report (Pages 31 - 40)

The report of the Chief Executive is attached.

8. East Midland Freeport Update and Next Steps (Pages 41 - 48)

The report of the Chief Executive is attached.

9. Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Phase 2 Funding (Pages 49 - 56)

The report of the Director Neighbourhoods is attached.

Membership

Chairman: Councillor S J Robinson

Vice-Chairman: Councillor A Edyvean

Councillors: A Brennan, R Inglis, G Moore and R Upton

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET TUESDAY, 9 MARCH 2021

Held at virtually at 7.00 pm and livestreamed on the
Rushcliffe Borough Council YouTube channel

PRESENT:

Councillors S J Robinson (Chairman), A Brennan, R Inglis, G Moore and
R Upton

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors B Gray and L Way

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore
D Banks

P Linfield

K Marriott
S Sull
H Tambini

Executive Manager - Transformation
Executive Manager -
Neighbourhoods
Executive Manager - Finance and
Corporate Services
Chief Executive
Monitoring Officer
Democratic Services Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillor A Edyvean

50 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

51 Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 February 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 9 February 2021, were declared
a true record and signed by the Chairman.

52 Citizens' Questions

There were no questions.

53 Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

Question from Councillor Gray to Councillor Robinson.

“Given that some outside this meeting may not be inclined to read cabinet
papers, but may read other papers with headlines such as "Nuclear Option for
Nottingham" how will the council communicate and explain the risks and
benefits of Rushcliffe potentially becoming home to an experimental nuclear
fusion reactor?”

Councillor Robinson responded by thanking Councillor Gray for his question and advised that should the expression of interest be submitted by the landowner for the Ratcliffe-on-Soar site, then there would be a comprehensive programme of community engagement with residents, stakeholders and parish and town councils in that area. The landowner, Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council would work together to engage and consult, and the UK Atomic Energy Authority would be very much involved. The complexity and sensitivity of the issue was noted, this was cutting edge technology that was still to be developed, and appropriate consultation and communication would be undertaken if the scheme went forward.

Councillor Gray asked a supplementary question to Councillor Robinson.

“What external sources would we communicate with, given that some people who had been mentioned might have other interests for this going ahead. Would we speak to universities and other groups?”

Councillor Robinson responded by confirming that the UK Atomic Energy Authority would be primarily involved, and it would be important to involve the local universities. The Leader advised that the County Council would be coordinating the expression of interest and the Borough Council would be working with them and look to involve other external agencies that had the appropriate knowledge and expertise to assist with this complex topic.

Question from Councillor Way, on behalf of the Independent Group to Councillor Upton.

“We are pleased to see that there is a recommendation for the inclusion of guidance within a Supplementary Planning Document to provide consistency to future Open Space schemes. This will prove useful in future for residents of new developments to have a greater degree of certainty about what they will need to pay and what will be provided for that fee. Hopefully this will also give them some help and support if the companies do not comply with the agreements, as seems often to be the case. It would be helpful if transparency is encouraged in terms of who has access to the open spaces. This is causing problems between residents and non-residents as to what constitutes public and private land and tends to result in divided communities.

We also welcome the recommendation to write to Secretary of State regarding this matter. One of the issues of concern is that the management companies are expanding these charges to cover so much more than open spaces and using this as an opportunity to increase their income stream. For example, one local resident moved to a house where there is an open space management company. This company charged his seller £250 for a seller's pack and the buyer £450 to change the owner's name on their records. It would appear that this is not unusual although charges vary. We have also seen examples of lists of charges where the residents, despite being freeholders, have to ask permission from the management companies to sell their homes. Inevitably there is a fee for this. Another resident was asked to pay a fee to change his mortgage, within the same mortgage company, when his Help to Buy agreement came to an end.

These imposed management agreements allow for additional charges to be made to residents for items such as dealing with fly-tipping and most do not have a cap on how much they can increase. Paragraph 3.1 of the officer report states that there should be parity across estates within the Borough. Hopefully there will be parity within the estates themselves. In estates with mixed tenure housing it is possible that some residents will carry a larger burden than others. This will only become clear with detailed examination. For residents living in affordable housing, be it social rent, affordable rent or shared ownership, these additional charges can impose an unsustainable financial burden on householders. In order to try to halt the continuation of unnecessary additional charges on households under the guise of open space management the letter to the Secretary of State should include all the above issues.

Will the Supplementary Planning Document and the draft letter to the Secretary for State come back to the Scrutiny group for comment?"

Councillor Upton responded by thanking Councillor Way for her very comprehensive question and advised that the points that had been raised would be considered for inclusion in his letter to be submitted to the Secretary of State (SoS) and in the proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Councillor Upton advised that the matter would not be referred back to the Scrutiny Group for consideration, the SPD would be considered by the Local Development Forum (LDF) before being referred to Cabinet for adoption and a copy of the letter to the SoS would be circulated to the LDF.

Councillor Way asked a supplementary question to Councillor Upton.

"Would you be willing to discuss with me the information that I have found during my research into this topic before finalising the letter to the SoS?"

Councillor Upton responded by confirming that he would be happy to discuss the matter further with Councillor Way.

54 **Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2020/21 - Financial and Covid Update Quarter 3**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Moore presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the budget position for revenue and capital at 31 December 2020.

Councillor Moore advised that due to the impact of Covid, previous quarterly reports had highlighted the difficult situation that the Council was facing. In the last report, Cabinet had noted a deficit of £244k, which had been caused primarily by a reduction in income and to additional support costs. However, at the same time, significant cost savings had been made, details of which were highlighted in the report. Cabinet was advised that the Government had supported the Council with some additional income, and that support had helped to turn the previous deficit into a projected positive position of £721k in Quarter 3. Councillor Moore confirmed that this positive position would help to replenish the Organisation Stabilisation Reserve, to ensure that the Council had the available resources to meet any future risks going forward, and Cabinet was reminded that the Council was fortunate to have sufficient

reserves to deal with any future crises. In respect of the Capital Programme, the report highlighted an underspend of £7.3m, primarily due to small delays to the Bingham Leisure Centre project and to uncommitted funds in the Asset Investment Strategy, with the provision for that Strategy now being removed. Cabinet was advised that Special Expenses had been impacted by Covid, although it was eligible for limited Government support. The deficit amounted to £87k, which would be repaid by a loan, as agreed by the West Bridgford Special Expenses Group. In conclusion, Councillor Moore advised that given the difficult situation the Council had faced, this was a much more positive position, and it was hoped that as the situation continued to improve, this would be continued into the next quarter.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Brennan noted the scope for optimism going forward and that the efficient handling of the Council's finances had allowed it to manage the difficult financial situation. Councillor Brennan advised that the Council had continued to deliver on its priorities and with in-house efficiencies and Government support, the previous deficit position had moved to a projected positive position, and the Council would continue with its prudent financial management and look to replenish its reserves, where possible, to ensure that it was well placed to respond to any future issues.

Councillor Robinson reminded Cabinet that due to the Council's long standing, robust financial management and resilience, it had coped effectively with the difficult financial situation caused by the pandemic, and it was essential that the Council continued to remain vigilant and focused.

It was RESOLVED that the report be approved, and the following be noted:

- a) the expected net revenue efficiency for the year of £0.721m;
- b) the capital budget efficiencies of £7.3m; and
- c) the expected outturn position for Special Expenses of £0.087m deficit.

55 **Management of Open Spaces in New Developments**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, Councillor Upton, presented the report of the Executive Manager – Communities reviewing the management of open spaces in new developments.

Councillor Upton referred to the changing layouts in new housing developments, including the increased provision of public open space and other infrastructure, which required maintenance either by councils or management companies. Cabinet noted that increasingly, the cost to councils had become prohibitive, and most councils, including Rushcliffe, had developed a policy to no longer adopt any further schemes. Councillor Upton referred to the varied reputations of management companies and advised that residents had raised concerns related to various issues, details of which were highlighted in the report. It was noted that of particular concern for residents related to payments for the maintenance of communal areas but the public being allowed access to those areas, and the perceived unfairness of that. Councillor Upton advised that in January 2020, the Growth and Development

Scrutiny Group had asked officers to investigate those issues, and those findings formed the basis of this report. Cabinet was advised that the Council could not get involved in the process of setting up management companies and the report was recommending that the Council adopt a new SPD, which would set out the standards that the Council would expect for the management and maintenance of open spaces on new housing developments, and allow officers to try and negotiate a greater degree of consistency and hopefully a better parity of fees. In conclusion, Councillor Upton stated that currently the Council had no legal power to control which management company was used, or how any scheme was managed and that would require changes to national legislation, hence the recommendation that the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning should write to the Secretary of State regarding this matter.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Brennan thanked the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group for looking into this matter, and to Councillor Way for bringing the issue to the Group's attention. Councillor Brennan referred to the increasing number of residents who would be involved with management companies, and to the concerns raised by some residents, and she considered that it was therefore timely that the Council examined this issue, to see what influence the Council could bring to bear going forward, to ensure consistency and fairness to all those involved.

Councillor Robinson noted the concerns that had been raised across the Borough and the timeliness of this review. It was noted that issues often arose when a property was sold on, which then triggered clauses, which many people were unaware of. In conclusion, the Leader advised Cabinet that this issue was a national one, and it was important that the Council made a point, by writing to the Secretary of State, in the hope that legislation could be put in place to improve the situation.

It is RESOLVED that:

- a) the inclusion of guidance within a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide consistency to future Open Space schemes be supported; and
- b) the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning write a letter to the Secretary of State highlighting the issues raised and recommends they bring forward guidance to address the issues identified.

56 Edwalton Golf Course Strategic Review

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson, presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services providing an update on the strategic review undertaken on Edwalton Golf Course (EGC).

Councillor Robinson reminded Cabinet of the importance of ensuring that all the Council's assets were reviewed regularly, to ensure value for money and that residents' needs were being met. Councillor Robinson provided a brief overview of the timeline of the review and Cabinet noted that concerns had been raised regarding the usage of the course and income generation. To

address those issues, Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) had been commissioned to produce a comprehensive two-stage report to consider if there was still a golfing need, together with options for the site itself, details of which were highlighted in the report. Councillor Robinson advised that the report had been considered by the Communities Scrutiny Group (CSG) in January 2021, and the Group had agreed that the current arrangements could not continue, due to the cost to taxpayers, and that additional work was required to produce a Masterplan. Cabinet noted that the CSG had agreed that some form of golfing provision should be maintained, including the driving range capacity. In conclusion, Councillor Robinson reiterated that EGC was a key asset for the community and the Borough, and it was essential that the Council maximised the value of the site for everyone.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Upton reiterated the importance of the Council reviewing its assets and referred to the significance of EGC to the Borough. Cabinet was advised that for some time, EGC had been operating at a significant annual loss of approximately £44k, which had to be covered by a revenue subsidy. Councillor Upton stated that the current business model for EGC was not viable and it was both pragmatic and timely to review its usage, and the option appraisal work already undertaken had identified a continued demand for golfing provision, together with suggested investment in the asset, to make it more commercially viable. In conclusion, Councillor Upton advised that before any investment could be made, a technical Risk Assessment of the site and a detailed Masterplan should be produced.

Councillor Robinson referred to importance of considering the options for this key, sensitive site going forward and the need to maximise the use of the facility and was pleased to note that the report acknowledged the need to maintain a golfing provision. In conclusion, Councillor Robinson stated that the report had highlighted that the golfing provision might have to be tailored to meet the needs of golfers, which had changed considerably over recent years, in particularly during the pandemic, and the importance of the community facility was also acknowledged.

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) the feedback from the Communities Scrutiny Group, which includes the endorsement of a golfing need at Edwalton Golf Course be acknowledged; and
- b) the utilisation of £0.05m of 2020/21 projected in-year budget efficiencies be allocated to undertake a further detailed technical risk assessment of the site and thereafter a further £0.25m for further master planning work, assuming the risks identified are not prohibitive so that a realistic and deliverable masterplan can be achieved for the site.

57 Use of Fireworks at Borough Council Events

The Portfolio Holder for Community and the Environment, Councillor Brennan presented the report of the Executive Manager – Communities providing an update on the future use of fireworks at Borough Council events.

Councillor Brennan referred to the previous resolution by Council to investigate the future use of fireworks at Council events, with a report subsequently being considered by the Communities Scrutiny Group (CSG) in August 2020, when the Group considered the Council's own use of fireworks, together with how the Council could have a role in promoting responsible use. Cabinet was advised that although many people enjoyed traditional fireworks and the associated loud noise, the increase in the use of fireworks and the distress that it caused to many people and to both domestic and wild animals, had to be recognised, particularly given the unpredictability of events taking place. Councillor Brennan confirmed that the Council only used fireworks at one event at the Christmas lights switch on in West Bridgford, and that event had never received any complaints. Notwithstanding that, the CSG was asked to consider three options, details of which were highlighted in the report, and it was agreed that option to discontinue the use of loud fireworks at Council events would be the best approach. Councillor Brennan advised that in conjunction with that, the Council would support the launch of a public communications campaign to encourage others to take the same approach.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Inglis agreed with previous comments and referred to the stress caused by loud fireworks, particularly given the lack of control that people had, when fireworks were used by others. Councillor Inglis agreed that the use of quieter fireworks would benefit many people and animals, and it was the best approach that the Council could take to ensure that everyone could enjoy the spectacle, and it was hoped that by adopting this approach, others in the Borough would follow.

Councillor Moore referred to the anxiety and upset caused to people by the unexpected use of fireworks by others, and it was hoped that the proposed campaign would encourage people to be more thoughtful to others.

Councillor Robinson referred to the importance of the Council in influencing and educating others to take a more thoughtful and responsible approach to using fireworks.

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) the discontinuation of the use of loud fireworks at Council events be approved; and
- b) the launch of a public communications campaign to encourage external event operators and residents to adopt the Council's approach to use of fireworks.

58 Government call for STEP sites

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson, presented the report of the Chief Executive seeking endorsement for the expression of interest for the Ratcliffe-on-Soar site to be considered as a site for the Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) power station.

Councillor Robinson provided a brief overview of the timeline for the proposal,

details of which were highlighted in the report. Councillor Robinson confirmed that Rushcliffe Borough Council had been asked to support an expression of interest for the Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station, which was due to be decommissioned in 2025. Cabinet noted how the basic principles of fusion power worked, together with the many environmental benefits of fusion power, details of which were highlighted in the report. The controversial nature of the subject had to be acknowledged and it was noted that opinions varied widely on this issue; however, everyone appreciated that new sources of energy had to be found. The issue of safety was of utmost importance, and it was acknowledged that nothing was 100% safe, although the majority of experts were of the opinion that this technology was very safe. The report highlighted some of the requirements for a STEP site, and it was noted that the site at Ratcliffe-on-Soar fulfilled those. Cabinet was advised that the expression of interest would be led by the County Council and the landowner and supported by the Local Enterprise Partnership. In conclusion, Councillor Robinson stated that this process was still at a very early stage, and although the Council had been asked to support the proposal, it was not in the Council's gift to lodge that expression of interest. Finally, Cabinet noted that this would be a non-binding expression of interest, and once submitted, the Government would undertake detailed site assessments to check all the sites, details of those procedures were highlighted in the report.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Inglis reiterated the importance of looking at new ways to produce greener energy and noted that the report was looking at the early stages of the concept and Rushcliffe's possible involvement going forward, which would be very timely, given the proposed date for the decommissioning of the power station. Councillor Inglis confirmed that the site scored highly in all the aspects of the STEP requirements that would be considered by the Secretary of State. Councillor Inglis referred to the considerable potential employment opportunities that this project could bring to the area, together with economic growth and global environmental benefits.

Councillor Brennan stated that this was a difficult and controversial subject, and there was continued debate regarding the changes in behaviour required to face the challenges of climate change, and it was acknowledged that without innovation into new technology, carbon reduction targets would not be met. In noting that this was only the first stage in the process, Councillor Brennan referred to the importance of being involved at an early stage and was happy to support the recommendation.

Councillor Moore referred to previous new technology, which had now become more mainstream and noted that fusion power was still unproven technology; however, with work being undertaken throughout the world to try and make the process work, if that was successful, it would change the future of energy generation. Councillor Moore welcomed the possibility of changing the current site into an environmentally friendly, green technology site, using state of the art technology.

Councillor Robinson reiterated that this was the start of a long process and advised that it was important not to underestimate the other potential benefits that this proposal could bring to the area, including research opportunities, job creation, particularly highly skilled employment and investment to the Borough.

Councillor Robinson referred to the work of the Development Corporation and welcomed the news in the Budget last week that a Freeport has been granted for the area. Cabinet was advised that the STEP project would take up about a third of the current site, and it was noted that this was just one of the many options currently being considered for the site.

Councillor Upton agreed that the world needed to look for alternative sources of power and reinforced the green credentials of the STEP programme and welcomed the opportunity to support the expression of interest.

In conclusion, Councillor Robinson referred to the question raised earlier by Councillor Gray and advised that if the expression of interest did go ahead, given the sensitivity and controversial nature of the proposal, there would be an extensive programme of communication, with the Council's partners to explain the proposal going forward.

It was RESOLVED that the submission of the expression of interest for the Ratcliffe-on-Soar site as one of several sites being put forward in the East Midlands to the STEP programme be endorsed.

The meeting closed at 7.53 pm.

CHAIRMAN

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 May 2021

Rushcliffe Equality Scheme 2021-2025

Report of the Director Development and Economic Growth

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community and the Environment Councillor A Brennan

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The Council has reviewed its existing Equality Scheme, which was adopted in 2016 and ran until 2020, with Councillor involvement following a resolution of Cabinet in July 2020.
- 1.2. The new Scheme was presented to the Communities Scrutiny Group in August 2020 and in January 2021. The Committee supported the refreshed Equality Scheme and supported its submission to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.3. This report includes the new Equality Scheme 2021–2025, as at Appendix 1, as well as the results of the public consultation carried out in March and April 2021.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the Equality Scheme 2021–2025 and supporting Action Plan for 2021/22.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The existing Equality Scheme ran to the end of 2020, and therefore needed to be reviewed and updated to reflect current circumstances and new actions required.
- 3.2. As a public sector organisation, it is imperative that the Council represents its residents and ensures that its services are accessible to all and the Council's employees are treated equally.
- 3.3. The views expressed by the Communities Scrutiny Group have been taken into account to further inform the Equality Scheme. The Action Plan consultation document was developed following the scrutiny meetings and the responses received have informed the Plan, which will continually evolve and develop.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. The refreshed Equality Scheme keeps its focus at a strategic level, setting out the vision and aims of the Council over the next four years (Appendix 1). It has been revised to better reflect inclusion for all and is therefore broader than focusing just on equality and diversity related to the protected characteristics.
- 4.2. This strategic approach is underpinned by the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and Equality Impact Assessments (Appendix 3), which ensure that our policies and decisions have been taken with due regard to their implications for people with protected characteristics.
- 4.3. In support of the Scheme, annual Action Plans will be developed to progress against these strategic aims. The outcomes delivered against the 2021/22 Action Plan will be presented to Scrutiny and future Actions Plans will be discussed with the relevant Portfolio Holder before being adopted.
- 4.4. These actions will be embedded as part of the annual service plans (these set out the Council's objectives and projects each year) to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to the work of the Council and the design and delivery of services.
- 4.5. The Communities Scrutiny Group referred to the importance of monitoring progress against objectives. The focus on action planning will enable this to become more integrated within the Council's existing systems and processes. Equality Impact Assessments and monitoring of diversity information will continue to be reported annually to the Corporate Overview Group (Appendix 4 is the latest report taken to Corporate Overview Group).

Consultation

- 4.6. Following the Communities Scrutiny Group meeting in January 2021, officers carried out public consultation on the draft action plan (Appendix 2) to get views on whether people felt the proposed actions were focussed on the right things and if there was anything missing. The Action Plan was intended to gain views on the key areas of focus rather than covering everything the Borough Council does in detail.
- 4.7. The consultation was shared in Councillors Connections, on the website and social media. In addition, a direct email was sent to around 90 key local stakeholders including Parish/Town Councils, local community groups, and representative organisations. The consultation ran from 26 March to 23 April 2021, and 11 responses were received.
- 4.8. The questions asked whether respondents agreed with the proposed actions under each theme and whether they had any additional comments or actions they felt should be included. Of those that responded, the majority agreed that the themes were the right ones and so were the actions to support them.

4.9. The feedback received covered areas such as:

- The need for more engagement with young people and particularly those that are or are at risk of being not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Involving more young people in democracy.
- Ongoing staff training to support delivery of the actions and ensure the plan is embedded across the Council.
- Access to interpreters when contacting the Council.
- Review website to make sure it is in 'plain English'.
- Making sure that actions are delivered and demonstrating to the community what has been done – ensuring this is the start of a regular and ongoing conversation that is transparent.
- The need for County Council and Borough Council to work together on initiatives.

4.10. The draft Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been updated in response to the consultation.

4.11. There were some comments received in the response to the consultation which are not related to the Borough Council and these will be passed on to other organisations where relevant.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

5.1. The refreshed Equality Scheme takes a different approach to the previous Scheme and allows for the Action Plan to be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis, ensuring it remains relevant and responsive. The Action Plan will also be further developed and enhanced through ongoing consultation and engagement with the Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network.

5.2. The alternative is to have a Scheme like the previous version, which once published remains the same for the period and therefore loses the opportunity to be flexible.

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', employees' 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.

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 indeed 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 COVID-19 recovery that start to come to the fore around the equality's agenda.

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the Equality Scheme 2021-2025 and supporting Action Plan 2021/22.

For more information contact:	Catherine Evans Transformation Service Manager 0115 914 8552 cevens@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Communities Scrutiny Group – August 2020 Communities Scrutiny Group – January 2021
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Draft Equality Scheme and Action Plan Appendix 2 – Consultation document Appendix 3 – Council's Equality Impact Assessment Appendix 4 – Report to Corporate Overview Group December 2020

Equalities Scheme 2021-2025

The Equalities Scheme for 2021-25 builds on the previous Scheme to reflect the changes in society to ensure it is relevant to all and to broaden its focus to take account of inclusion, in addition to objectives relating to equality and diversity.

Inclusion is fundamentally about individual experience and allowing everyone to access services and feel part of the Borough. Inclusion gives diversity impact and drive towards a place where all residents, elected members and all Council employees are empowered to thrive - inclusion is relevant for everyone.

Aims of the Scheme

The aims of the Scheme are:

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

Commitments & Indicators under the Scheme

As part of the Scheme, the Council will be committed to:

1. Understanding our community

Indicators in support of this are:

- Gather and analyse diversity data to understand where action is needed to ensure inclusivity for all
- Effective community engagement
- Participation in public life
- Commissioning and procuring services

2. Reflect the diversity of our community

Take actions to achieve appropriate and inclusive representation in terms of our workforce, task and finish groups and service delivery/take-up.

- Leadership
- Assessing equality impact in policy and decision taking
- Equality objectives and annual reporting
- Inclusive strategies and policies

3. Work in partnership to achieve impact

Develop and share policies and resources across the organisation and with key partners to improve representation and inclusivity of diverse groups to maximise impact.

- Priorities and working in partnership
- Collecting and sharing information

4. Develop, implement and monitor annual action plans

Equality, diversity and inclusion need to be embedded within the fabric of the organisation rather than being a separate add-on. Each year, with input from representative groups, priorities and action plans will be established to be built into service plans.

- Performance monitoring and scrutiny
- Integrating equality objectives into service planning

Identifying Priorities for Action Plans

The Scheme is brought to life through annual action plans. This will be developed based on issues and priorities identified through consultation with our communities to ensure they are relevant. The actions will be implemented as part of service plans so that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to the organisation and not add-ons.

The 2021 Census results will provide key insights into the residents of Rushcliffe and will serve as a significant review point in terms of the development of actions and plans in light of this new information.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2021/22

1. Understanding our community

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to be part of everything we do across the whole Council through inclusion in our annual service plans
- Have up to date equality information about our communities
- Make sure our conversations with our communities are inclusive and ensuring information on our website and in our communications is clear and accessible
- Support Councillors to lead on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion by building their knowledge and awareness through training
- Identify ways to engage more young people in democracy
- Support residents to access all Council services equally
- Support residents and staff to access digital information and products with ease, including compliance of our website with the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) Accessibility Regulations](#).

2. Reflecting the diversity of our community

- Consider the impact of Covid 19 on our communities and how we will support them as a result
- Review how Covid 19 has changed how residents access our services – making sure we are providing the right services in the right places
- Strengthen our policies and training in procurement so we work with suppliers who share our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and support us to tackle inequalities.
- Continue to carry out Equality Impact Assessments during the development of services and policies to identify how impacts can be avoided, reduced or mitigated. To ensure all policies, projects and service decisions consider all equalities implications at the start
- Undertake consultation with community groups, residents and elected members to ensure voices are heard and listened to
- Fulfilling our public sector duty within the legal framework, the Scheme incorporates and builds on our legal requirements as provided within the Equality Act 2010 to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Ensure people are treated with equality in mind
 - Create and develop good relations with our communities and within our workforce

3. Working in partnership to achieve impact

- Re-start the Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network Group to better link up with, support and respond to our local communities' needs.
- Continue working with the Active Rushcliffe Health Partnership, which helps organisations and services work together to deliver projects supporting high priority groups, such as disability, BAME, women and girls (including pregnancy and maternity).
- Enable building of new homes across the Borough, including affordable housing, to meet the needs of our diverse communities.
- Work with our partners to support young people and other groups most impacted by Covid 19, with suitable training, employment and support. For example, we will be providing work experience placements as part of the Government's Kickstart scheme for young unemployed people.
- A mentoring programme to support the development and engagement of those in local schools and under-represented people (such as the BAME community) as well as further developing the Council's own workforce.

- Support local businesses to recover from Covid 19, including training of existing and new staff, business advice and networking opportunities
- Work with other councils and partners to share resources, information and best practice on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

4. Supporting our workforce

- Ensure all employees regularly complete Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training so they better understand and meet the needs of our communities and colleagues to make sure inclusion is at the heart of everything we do.
- Take action so our Employee Liaison Group reflects the make up of our workforce and are empowered to take a leading role on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Keeping the conversation going about working smartly to benefit all staff and improve productivity and wellbeing
- Change our recruitment processes so they are accessible and help to attract the best talent.
- Continue to monitor and report the diversity of our workforce and equality indicators, such as the gender pay gap
- Equality, diversity and inclusion is recognised as an organisational priority and is reflected within our People Strategy, which has a dedicated strategic theme: Being Inclusive & Building Diversity.
 - Continue monitoring and understanding reasons and actions to address under-representation and pay gaps
 - Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion considerations as part of policy development
 - Through development and communication, increase awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues to understand barriers and how these could be addressed
 - Continue to fully engage with national schemes and initiatives to support under-represented groups into work

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan public consultation 2021 - 2022

Published: March 2021

Background

Rushcliffe Borough Council's existing Equality Scheme ends this year and it's time for a refresh. The new Scheme needs to reflect the changes in society and our community and we want to hear from you about how we make sure we do that.

The Council is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion for all residents and our workforce.

We want everyone to be able to access our services, feel part of the Borough and be a place where all residents and our workforce feel included, connected and empowered to thrive:

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

There are many examples of how equality is embedded in the organisation in the actions it takes, you can find some examples by following [this link](#).

What we need from you

We need to hear from you so we can prepare an Action Plan which will show how we will make sure the Council is inclusive for all, taking account of our diverse communities.

The list below shows the proposed actions to achieve this and we need you to tell us if we're focussing on the right things to meet the needs of our communities. This is the first stage in the process and we will continue to speak to you to develop our plan over the coming year to ensure it remains relevant.

Please take 10 minutes to review the below actions and provide us with some feedback to our questions by following the link at the end of this document.

If you would like these documents and the survey in a different format please contact media@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Proposed actions for 2021/22

Theme one - Understanding our community

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to be part of everything we do across the whole Council through inclusion in our annual service plans.
- Have up to date equality information about our communities
- Make sure our conversations with our communities are inclusive.
- Support Councillors to lead on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion by building their knowledge and awareness through training.
- Support residents and staff to access digital information and products with ease, including compliance of our website with the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) Accessibility Regulations](#).

Theme two - Reflecting the diversity of our community

- Consider the impact of Covid 19 on our communities and how we will support them as a result.
- Review how Covid 19 has changed how residents access our services - making sure we are providing the right services in the right places.
- Strengthen our policies and training in procurement so we work with suppliers who share our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and support us to tackle inequalities.
- Continue to carry out Equality Impact Assessments to ensure all policies, projects and service decisions consider all equalities implications at the start.

Theme three - Working in partnership to achieve impact

- Re-start the Rushcliffe Community Cohesion Network Group to better link up with, support and respond to our local communities' needs.
- Continue working with the Active Rushcliffe Health Partnership, which helps organisations and services work together to deliver projects supporting high priority groups, such as disability, BAME, women and girls (including pregnancy and maternity).
- Enable building of new homes across the Borough, including affordable housing, to meet the needs of our diverse communities.
- Work with our partners to support young people and other groups most impacted by Covid 19, with suitable training, employment and support. For example, we will be providing work experience placements as part of the Government's Kickstart scheme for young unemployed people.
- A mentoring programme to support the development and engagement of those in local schools and under-represented people (such as the BAME community) as well as further developing the Council's own workforce.

- Support local businesses to recover from Covid 19, including training of existing and new staff, business advice and networking opportunities.
- Work with other councils and partners to share resources, information and best practice on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Theme four - Supporting our workforce

- Ensure all employees have completed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training so they better understand and meet the needs of our communities and colleagues to make sure inclusion is at the heart of everything we do.
- Take action so our Employee Liaison Group reflects the make up of our workforce and are empowered to take a leading role on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Keeping the conversation going about working smartly to benefit all staff and improve productivity and wellbeing.
- Change our recruitment processes so they are accessible and help to attract the best talent.

Share your thoughts

Now please take 5 minutes to answer our questions to let us know what you think of our plans [via SurveyMonkey](#) by April 23.

If you have any queries about this document or the topics it covers, please contact
hr@rushcliffe.gov.uk



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Name and brief description of proposal/project / policy / service being assessed:
Click once and type. Briefly summarise the service or proposal including key aims and any relevant context' note timescales for any planned changes' use plain language; refer to other document(s) if needed.

Information used to analyse the effects of equality:
Click once and type. Note any relevant consultation and who took part; refer to or attach other document(s) if needed

	Could particular benefit (X)	May adversely impact (X)	How different groups could be affected: Summary of impacts	Details of actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact (or why action not possible)
People from different ethnic groups				
Men, women (including maternity/pregnancy impact), transgender people				
Disabled people or carers				
People from different faith groups				
Lesbian, gay or bisexual				
Older or younger people				
Other (marriage/civil partnership. Looked after children, cohesion/good relations, vulnerable children/adults)				

OUTCOME(S) OF EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT: *(delete as appropriate)*

No major change need Adjust policy/proposal/project Adverse impact but continue Stop/remove project/policy/proposal

Arrangements for future monitoring of equality impact of this policy/proposal/project:

Note when assessment will be reviewed (e.g. review assessment in 6 months or annual review).

Names of officers who conducted EIA and date

page 24

Approved by:
(manager signature)

Date:



Corporate Overview Group

Tuesday, 15 December 2020

Diversity Annual Report 2020

Report of the Executive Manager – Transformation

1. Summary

1.1. This annual report updates the Corporate Overview Group about the Council's performance against the objectives set out in the Single Equality Scheme during 2020. These are 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 four-year plan.

1.2. The information in the report compares the demographic information for the Borough, using the latest census information, with that of our workforce with this information being taken from the HR /Payroll system.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Overview Group consider and endorse the report.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1. The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities to consider and think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. Although there is no explicit legal duty for Public Sector bodies to collect and use equality data, authorities must understand the impact of their policies and practices on people with protected characteristics. Therefore, collecting, analysing and monitoring information is an important way to develop this understanding.

4. Supporting Evidence

4.1 A breakdown of the ethnicity of the Borough in comparison with the East Midlands and nationally is shown at Appendix A.1.

4.2 Our workforce information shown at Appendix B.1 shows that we currently broadly reflect the demographic of the Borough with 93% of RBC employees in the white British or white other ethnic group which is the same as for the residents of the Borough (white 93%). The figure for the Borough is higher than that for the East Midlands (89%) and nationally (85%). The Council is currently reviewing its recruitment policies and will ensure that these continue to operate fairly and encourage applications from under-represented groups.

Age Profile

- 4.3 The age profile of Rushcliffe indicates that the Borough has a larger proportion of residents who are over 60 years of age (25%) than the East Midlands (23.5%) and national average (22%). There are also a larger proportion of residents between the ages of 45 and 59 within Rushcliffe (21%) than nationally (19%) Appendix A.2.
- 4.4 Conversely there are fewer younger residents between 18 and 24 (7.8%) than the East Midlands (9.53%) and nationally (9.37%). In addition there is a disparity in the 25 to 29 age groups between Rushcliffe (4.7%), East Midlands (6.1%) and nationally (6.8%).
- 4.5 The age profile of the organisation shows that there is a peak at 45 - 54 (this is a minor shift from the previous year which reported the peak as aged 35 - 44.). 20.7% of the workforce is aged between 18 and 34 and 58.4% are aged between 35 and 54. The authority continues to support employees who wish to continue working, keeping knowledge within the organisation as well as working towards ensuring effective succession planning by improving the age diversity of the workforce.

Disability

- 4.6 Data from the 2011 Census shows that 7,540 people (6.7% of the population) in Rushcliffe have a long-term health problem or disability which limits their daily activities to a greater extent. A further 9,939 (8.9%) are limited to a lesser extent. These are lower than the percentages for the East Midlands which are 8.6% (greater extent), and 11.9% (a lesser extent). Appendix A3.
- 4.7 Whilst the proportion of people with long term health problems increases with age (and Rushcliffe has a greater proportion of elderly residents), the reduced number of those with long term health problems or disability is a likely reflection of the Borough's greater wealth and the benefits this has for public health directly, through access to healthcare, and indirectly through improved diet and leisure activities Appendix A.3.
- 4.8 The number of employees who declare they have a disability has remained the same as the previous year (6%). As an authority, we continue to support employees who are either disabled when they join the authority or become disabled during their time with us. This is through our policies and occupational and welfare services Appendix B.3.
- 4.9 The Council is a Disability Confident Employer and has reached the required criteria to be reaccredited this year.

Gender

- 4.10 The gender profile for the Borough area shows there are slightly more females (51%) than males (49%) currently residing in the Borough Appendix A.3.

- 4.11 The gender split at Rushcliffe shows fewer female employees than males which is, in some part, due to the Council 's manual workforce containing roles that are traditionally male dominated. The Council has worked to encourage female employees into this environment and will continue to promote fair recruitment practices and positive action to encourage a diverse workforce. We continue to encourage women and men with young families or caring responsibilities by offering flexibility and family friendly policies Appendix B.4.
- 4.12 Gender pay reporting legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees. The figures for the 2019/20 year are shown at Appendix D. This shows a narrowing of the gender pay gap since the last reporting period, reflecting an increase in the proportion of women at higher levels of the organisation.

Consultation

- 4.13 As an authority, we continue to ensure that we consult with our residents and employees on policies and service delivery. This allows us to take into account the views of those who will be utilising the policies and they can give their perspective on how the policies may influence them.
- 4.14 Examples of consultations during the period 2020 are shown at Appendix C.1.

Equality Impact Assessments

- 4.15 The organisation is aware of the need to consider the impact of decisions it makes on the citizens it represents and also the workforce it employs. To this end, Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken on key policies and strategies. A list of Equality Impact Assessments that have been completed /reviewed over the last 12 months is shown at Appendix C.2.

Continuous Improvement through Training and Development

- 4.16 The Council's employees have regular opportunities for training and development in support of equality and diversity via various methods of delivery. The following have been attended or completed via our online training in the last 12 months:

- Mental Health First Aiders training
- Unconscious Bias Training
- Coercive Control Awareness Training
- Equality and Diversity e-learning, including refresher sessions
- Briefings (face-to-face and virtual) and Webinars – e.g. Mental Health in the Workplace (Eversheds Feb 2020); Breaking the Mental Health Stigma (Personnel Today, Apr 2019)
- New Safeguarding Toolbox Training (for manual staff) – launched July 2019 – focus on children and vulnerable adults

4.17 These all help to establish an understanding of issues that affect certain disadvantaged groups that live within the Borough or are part of our workforce, and reinforce the awareness of equality issues.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

Failure to collect and use equality data means the Council runs the risk of not understanding the impact of its policies and practices on people with protected characteristics.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

No financial implications arise directly from this report. Costs associated with the training and development of employees are contained within existing budgets.

6.2. Legal Implications

This report supports the Council's compliance with the Equalities Act 2010.

6.3. Equalities Implications

This report contains information regarding the Council's monitoring of Equality objectives under the Public Sector Duty, as well as complying with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

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

Section 17 requires local authorities to consider the community safety implications of all their activities. The Council's Equality Scheme shows a commitment to monitor the demographic information of the Borough, encouraging knowledge of the people we serve of Councillors and employees and encouraging cohesiveness.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	<p>The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities to consider and think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. This report sets out relevant information about the Borough, Council staff and the work done over the last year.</p> <p>By ensuring we monitor this information and act accordingly we are encouraging an improved knowledge of the people we serve of Councillors and employees and encouraging cohesiveness.</p>
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Corporate Overview Group consider and endorse the report.

For more information contact:	Sam Maher Strategic Human Resources Manager 0115 914 8241 smaher@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers Available for Inspection:	<i>Rushcliffe Borough Councils Equality Scheme 2016-20</i>
List of appendices (if any):	Appendix A Demographic Information Appendix B Rushcliffe Borough Council Workforce Equality Information. Appendix C Consultations and EIA's Appendix D Gender Pay gap information

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 May 2021

Covid 19: Update Report

Report of the Chief Executive

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership Councillor S J Robinson

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. Following the report of the Chief Executive to Cabinet on 9 February 2021, this report is to update the Cabinet on the work completed as part of the Council's continued response to Covid 19.
- 1.2. In addition, the report provides an outline of plans to support the recovery from Covid 19 including the proposed summer events programme and other support for local businesses and the high street.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet notes the work of officers of the Council and partners in responding to and supporting the recovery from Covid 19.

3. Reasons for recommendation

- 3.1. This report provides an update on the current impact of Covid 19 and how this has changed since the report in February 2021. It sets out the response of the Council and partners to the pandemic.
- 3.2. The report is correct at the time of writing but as we have experienced, the situation can change quickly. It is important, therefore, that we remain flexible and responsive to these new challenges and the report reflects the need to do this.

4. Supporting information

- 4.1. Since the report in February 2021, there have been limited changes to the level of lockdown in the country (at the time of writing). At midnight on 4 January 2021, the country was placed into a national lockdown. This included a stay at home message issued by Government.
- 4.2. The Government subsequently issued a roadmap to recovery which included some key dates for the gradual easing of lockdown. This is outlined in the table below. We are currently in the early stages of the restrictions being lifted with

changes taking effect on 5 March, 29 March and 12 April 2021. We are awaiting a further update on any potential further lifting of restrictions currently expected to be 17 May 2021.

4.3. Government needs to be sure it is safe to move from one step of the roadmap to the next. The decision will be based on four tests:

- the vaccine deployment programme continues successfully;
- evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated;
- infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS; and
- the assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

4.4. The table below sets out a timeline of changes and an overview of the restrictions at each stage on both residents and businesses:

Lockdown restrictions since February 2021	
Midnight on 4 January 2021	<p>National Lockdown and so in addition to the above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government issues stay at home message. • All schools close. • Hospitality venues – except for takeaway of food and non-alcoholic drinks only (alcohol can only be provided as part of a delivery).
8 March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools reopened (for some this was a phased reopening). • Able to meet up with one person from another household for recreation and exercise.
29 March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor gatherings (including in private gardens) in groups of six or two households is permitted. • Outdoor sports such as golf, tennis and basketball courts can reopen, and people will be able to take part in formally organised outdoor sport. • Stay at home rule ends but people encouraged to continue to work from home where possible.
12 April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening of non-essential retail; personal care premises such as hairdressers and nail salons; and public buildings, including libraries and community centres. • Indoor leisure facilities such as gyms will also reopen. • most outdoor attractions and settings including zoos, theme parks, and drive-in cinemas. • Hospitality venues will be allowed to serve people outdoors and there will be no need for customers to order a substantial meal with alcoholic drinks and no curfew, although customers must order, eat and drink while seated ('table service'). • Wider social contact rules will apply in all these settings to prevent indoor mixing between different households.

Next stages on roadmap:	
No earlier than 17 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government will look to continue easing limits on seeing friends and family wherever possible, allowing people to decide on the appropriate level of risk for their circumstances. • Gatherings of over 30 people will remain illegal. • Indoors, the Rule of six or two households will apply – it will be kept under review whether it is safe to increase this. • Most businesses in all but the highest risk sectors will be able to reopen. • Indoor adult group sports and exercise classes to reopen. • Indoor hospitality will reopen - customers will have to order, eat and drink while seated. • Other indoor entertainment venues to reopen such as cinemas and children’s play areas; the rest of the accommodation sector, including hotels, hostels and B&Bs. • The Government will also allow some larger performances and sporting events in indoor venues with a capacity of 1,000 people or half-full (whichever is a lower number), and in outdoor venues with a capacity of 4,000 people or half-full (whichever is a lower number). In the largest outdoor seated venues, where crowds can be spread out, up to 10,000 people will be able to attend (or a quarter-full, whichever is lower). • Finally, the Government will complete a review of social distancing and other long-term measures that have been put in place to cut transmission. This will inform decisions on the timing and circumstances under which the rules on 1 metre plus, the wearing of face coverings and other measures may be lifted. This will also inform guidance on working from home – which should continue wherever possible until this review is complete.
21 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government hopes to be in a position to remove all legal limits on social contact. • Reopen remaining premises, including nightclubs, and ease the restrictions on large events and performances including weddings and other life events.

4.5. During the period between the announcement of the National lockdown (4 January 2021) to restrictions beginning to ease (29 March 2021) the focus of the Council on Covid response was:

- Payment of business rates grants.
- Patrols by High Street Ambassadors across the Borough focussed on parks and open spaces – this has remained flexible and arranged on a week by week basis in response to any emerging issues.
- Enforcement action where required by the Environmental Health Team which has included the service of three Prohibition Notices and four Fixed Penalty Notices on business failing to comply with legal requirements.

- The provision of business advice and support.
 - Continued support for businesses including the digital grant (26 applications received and 16 approved), Rushcliffe gift voucher and Rushcliffe Business Partnership networking and webinars.
 - Webinars for market traders to support them to develop their online offer/social media presence.
- 4.6. Ahead of the easing of lockdown on 29 March 2021, plans were put in place particularly focussed on Bridgfield and Bridgford Park for the Easter weekend as this fell between the ability to meet with six people or two households and the pubs reopening. There was therefore a concern that people would congregate in parks as was seen last summer. The plan included:
- Two security operatives on the gates of Bridgfield stopping anyone with an excessive amount of alcohol and also restricting numbers to 250.
 - Two security operatives patrolling Bridgfield and Bridgford Park.
 - Patrols by Wise to issue FPN's for anyone caught littering and to provide support as required.
 - Closing the gates on Bridgfield at 7.30pm (at this time of year that would usually be 9.30pm).
 - Increased and earlier litter picking and cleansing by Streetwise staff.
 - Large banners and posters warning residents not to litter.
 - Additional large yellow events litter bins.
 - Additional security covering other areas of the Borough including Rushcliffe Country Park, East Leake skate park, Bingham marketplace and Radcliffe on Trent Skate Park.
- 4.7. In preparation for outdoor hospitality and non-essential retail reopening on 12 April 2021, the Communications Team produced a short promotional video featuring local businesses to encourage people back out onto the high street to 'Shop Local Shop Safe'.
- 4.8. To support the reopening of outdoor hospitality the Economic Growth Team visited each town centre to identify any venues that they felt could extend their outside space. These premises were contacted directly, and a press release was also issued along with an email to local businesses to encourage them to contact the Council if new or additional outside space was of interest. In addition, a guide for premises to make them aware of all the things they need to think about to support this was produced, this included information about licensing and planning requirements.
- 4.9. Proactive patrols were planned for week commencing 12 April 2021, by the High Street Ambassadors to provide a visible presence in our town and village centres to provide assurance to local residents. This covered both the non-essential retail but also into the evening too to support the reopening of outdoor hospitality. This was complemented by visits from our Economic Growth and Environmental Health Teams. We have issued posters for all hospitality business to display and press releases advising the public of their responsibilities and behaviours in public areas and parks.

- 4.10. The Government has recently announced an extension to the Reopening High Streets Safely (RHSS) Funding, now called the Welcome Back funding. Rushcliffe has been awarded a further £106,208 to be spent by March 2022. Activities supported by the Welcome Back funding could include:
- Boost the look and feel of the high streets by investing in street planting, parks, green spaces and seating areas to make high streets as beautiful and welcoming as possible.
 - Run publicity campaigns and prepare to hold events like street markets and festivals to support local businesses.
 - Install signage and floor markings to encourage social distancing and safety.
 - Improve high streets and town centres by planting flowers or removing graffiti.
- 4.11. Plans are being developed for options for spending the Welcome Back Fund. In addition, passporting funding to Parish and Town Councils is being encouraged by Government. A note has been circulated to Parish Clerks in Cotgrave, East Leake, Bingham, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent and Ruddington to gauge their interest in accessing some of the funding which could be ringfenced for them.
- 4.12. Officers from the Council worked with Parkwood to prepare for reopening on 29 March 2021 (golf) and 12 April 2021 (leisure centres). Many of the plans are already in place from previous reopening but these were revisited and amended as required. Site visits will take place during the first week of opening to ensure Covid secure compliance and user feedback. The first stage of re-opening is limited to gym usage and lane and children's lessons in the pool with group exercise not allowed until at least 17 May 2021.
- 4.13. The National Leisure Recovery Fund seeks to support eligible public sector leisure centres to reopen to the public, giving the sport and physical activity sector the best chance of recovery to a position of sustainable operation over the medium term. The £100 million worth of funding is being managed and administered on behalf of DCMS by Sport England. An application was submitted on 8 January 2021, and the Council was successful in securing funding of £224,000 which will go in some way to help fund the financial support being given to Lex Leisure as our leisure centre service providers.
- 4.14. In addition, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provided funding to Nottinghamshire County Council to assist vulnerable families with children and other vulnerable households, particularly affected by the pandemic. 80% of funding has been allocated to households with children and administered via schools, early years and further education setting.
- 4.15. The remaining 20% (£450k) was intended for households with no children and vulnerable individuals/couples who have been identified as being in urgent need. The Nottinghamshire allocation has been apportioned to each district.

- 4.16. Rushcliffe received £23,800 on 18 December 2020, which was passported out to established community groups and organisations who were able to assist with food parcels and other essentials supplies over the winter months.
- 4.17. In February 2021, the DWP confirmed that the funding could now also include families with children and a demand was identified in Keyworth. This brought the final allocation for the COVID winter grant scheme as follows:

Community Group	Location	Amount
The Friary	West Bridgford	£5000
Meet, Greet & Eat	West Bridgford	£5500
Cotgrave Community Kitchen	Cotgrave	£5500
Bingham Helping Hands	Bingham	£3800
Keyworth Community Project	Keyworth	£2500
Project administration	Rushcliffe Borough Council	£1500
	Total	£23,800

- 4.18. The Council's revenues and finance teams continue to be very busy processing and paying grants for businesses. Since November 2020, over 6,000 payments have been made with £19.1m of government grant received and £12.9m paid out. Current workload is focusing upon the Restart and Discretionary business grants which apply from April 2021, with £5.4m from Government and £2.1m currently paid out. The Council's focus has been to passport grants to businesses as quickly as possible and in terms of the discretionary scheme has been successful in doing this (based on national data along with other Nottinghamshire authorities, amongst the most efficient in the country), at the same time balancing proper due diligence.
- 4.19. The Council continues to maintain a high level of service delivery since the start of the pandemic, shifting resources where required. To date, the direct impact of Covid 19 on the Council in terms of staff sickness or those self-isolating has been, of the approximately 260 employees:
- 21 staff have tested positive for Covid; and
 - 78 staff have self-isolated to date (this includes those that isolated and continued to work and those who did not work as their role did not enable them to work from home).

This is an increase since the report in February 2021, of six staff who have tested positive and four staff who have had to self-isolate.

Proposed events programme

- 4.20. Following the Government's publication of a Covid 19 recovery roadmap on 22 February 2021, there is now greater clarity as to the parameters that the Council's events will be operating under during summer 2021. Events are envisaged to resume free of Covid 19 legal restrictions from Monday 21 June 2021. All the Council's events are scheduled to fall after this date which means

that Covid 19 control measures are not expected to be required. However, the Council still needs to prepare contingency plans to mitigate for possible roadmap delays, variations and any new mitigations that the Government could introduce such as requirements for pre-entry LFT testing or Covid 19 vaccination status checks (guidance for which is expected on mid -April 2021).

4.21. The most vulnerable part of the events programme is the first two events of the summer – Proms in the Park and Taste of Rushcliffe – as they fall within a fortnight of national social contact restrictions being removed. These events can still be delivered under Stage 3 of the roadmap, but they would have to be delivered with additional public safety controls such as reduced capacity (<50%) and social contact rules which may make them financially or operationally unviable to deliver in their normal format.

4.22. The Council's event programme will be as follows:

- Proms in the Park, Saturday 26 June 2021 – reduced capacity, admission with ticket only (free).
- Taste of Rushcliffe, Saturday 3 July 2021 – reduced number of stalls and attractions, no ticketing possible due to open nature of site.
- Lark in the Park, Wednesday 4 August 2021 – cancelled due to large scale nature with 5000+ expected attendance.
- Sunday Cinema, Sunday 22 and 29 August 2021 – reduced capacity, admission with ticket only (charged).

Track and trace and vaccination centres

4.23. Since the last report in February 2021, the mass vaccinations programme has begun across the country. This is predominantly being delivered at doctors' surgeries and hospitals. There are, however, some mass vaccination sites (none located in Rushcliffe) and some smaller community-based sites. One of those is Gamston Community Hall, which is now a local vaccination centre. Whilst the NHS runs the facility, the Council was involved in the initial set up. Over 50,000 vaccinations have now been carried out at Gamston (as at 12 April 2021).

4.24. In addition, as well as the testing sites (one is sited at Rushcliffe Arena) work was carried out with partners to identify possible lateral flow testing sites. A mobile testing site now visits Cotgrave each Wednesday and Saturday.

4.25. The Council continues to help support individuals who are self-isolating (from 8 March 2021, the scheme has been extended to include parents/guardians of children who have been told to self-isolate by their education or care setting), who are on low incomes and cannot work from home, with £500 payments from government funding. The scheme and funding has now been extended until 30 June 2021, and at the time of writing 322 applications have been received, 117 payments have been made, amounting to £58,500 (from funding of £134,500) and there are two applications currently pending further information. All other applications have been rejected.

Performance

- 4.26 The Council is well aware of the impact on service performance from Covid. The Corporate Overview Group continue to monitor performance and a suite of indicators have been produced which show the impact of Covid on Council performance. Importantly the Council has continued to provide essential services in what has been an extremely challenging environment for everyone.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

This is an update report on the work done since February 2021, in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. For the different areas of work, officers and Councillors considered different options as required. The response and recovery will continue to be flexible to be able to respond to changes in regulations.

6. Risks and uncertainties

Covid 19, in itself, creates much risk for the Council both in its ability to deliver its Corporate Priorities and the impact on the Council's budget.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

The financial impact of Covid is being reported through the Council's normal financial and performance reporting processes with a further update due to both Cabinet and Corporate Overview Group and Cabinet in June and July 2021, respectively.

7.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report; decisions have been taken in accordance with the Constitution.

7.3. Equalities Implications

The pandemic has had a disproportionate economic impact on some people including young people. This impact is being considered in the recovery work, with activity being targeted across Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire and the wider D2N2 area as required.

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

While the pandemic has had an impact on crime and disorder, most notably an increase in reports of domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour in some parks/open spaces, there are no crime and disorder implications associated with the contents of this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The response and recovery from Covid 19 is in place to ensure we maintain the quality of life for our residents.
Efficient Services	<p>In response to Covid 19, staff have had to be redeployed to ensure essential services for our residents could be maintained.</p> <p>The pandemic has had a significant impact on Council budgets and, therefore, a review will be required of service delivery across the whole Council to support further efficiencies.</p>
Sustainable Growth	<p>The pandemic has had a significant impact on our businesses and, therefore, a package of support (from national and local government) has been put in place to support those businesses who have been impacted the most.</p> <p>We will continue to work with our partners to support our businesses to survive the pandemic and grow as the economy recovers.</p>
The Environment	The focus of recovery is supporting a green economic recovery. This includes for the Council adapting the way it works, e.g. continued working from home, but also supporting our businesses to change the way they work too.

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet notes the work of officers of the Council and partners in responding to and supporting the recovery from Covid 19.

For more information contact:	Katherine Marriott Chief Executive 0115 914 8291 kmarriott@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Report to Cabinet May 2020 Report to Cabinet November 2020 Report to Cabinet December 2020 Report to Cabinet in February 2021
List of appendices:	

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Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 May 2021

East Midlands Freeport Update and Next Steps

Report of the Chief Executive

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership Councillor S J Robinson

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report is intended to provide Cabinet with an update following the announcement in the budget that the East Midlands Freeport (which includes the Ratcliffe on Soar power station site) has been supported by Government at the expression of interest stage. Work is progressing on the next stage of the bid which includes a more detailed business case and governance arrangements.
- 1.2. The site of Ratcliffe on Soar power station is a strategically significant site of 273 hectares at the gateway to Rushcliffe on the A453. The power station will close in line with Government policy, which is to end coal-fired power generation by 1st October 2025. Alternative uses for the site are being considered by the site owner and the local planning authority.
- 1.3. One of the challenges to the Freeport bid is the timing of the Ratcliffe on Soar power station site (in particular the south side) attaining a supportive planning status. This report also includes a proposal around routes to attaining a supportive planning status.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) gives retrospective approval to the nomination of a Cabinet Member to the Freeport Board;
- b) notes the progress made so far on the Freeport bid and the proposed next steps; and
- c) endorses the approach to working with the site owner and the Freeport and Development Corporation to explore developing a Local Development Order or other suitable Order to deliver greater planning certainty for the site.

3. Reasons for recommendation

- 3.1. Following the announcement by Government about the successful bid for the East Midlands Freeport at the beginning of March 2021, further guidance was issued by Government about the next steps for the bid. This included needing to confirm governance arrangements by 23 April 2021, to release the first round of seed capital funding.
- 3.2. The guidance for the Freeport governance includes a requirement for all local authorities responsible for statutory powers required for the delivery of the Freeport e.g. planning and business rates, to be Board members.
- 3.3. This governance arrangement is for the set-up phase of the Freeport and further details on governance, as it moves to delivery phase, will be included in the management case of the outline and full business cases when these are submitted to Government. There is therefore an acknowledgement that the governance arrangements may change but as far as possible there should be consistency and continuity. This is to help ensure that the Freeport has the full support of those with statutory powers and responsibilities to ensure its successful delivery.
- 3.4. Leicestershire County Council is leading on the development of the business case following the success of the Expression of Interest stage. The other local authorities involved are: Northwest Leicestershire District Council, Derbyshire County Council, South Derbyshire District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council.

4. Supporting information

- 4.1. The Chancellor announced that the East Midlands Freeport bid was successful along with seven others in his budget speech on 3 March 2021. The East Midlands Freeport is the only inland Freeport, the other seven are:
 - Humber
 - Felixstowe and Harwich
 - Liverpool City Region
 - Plymouth
 - Solent
 - Thames
 - Teeside
- 4.2. The Government wants Freeports to be set up by the end of 2021, and there is a lot of work to do in advance of that, including the outline and full business cases. Leicestershire County Council is leading on this work with external consultants Ernst & Young. Upon approval of the governance, Government will provide funding which will go towards the additional resources and expertise required to produce the business case.

Governance

- 4.3. The first task for all the Freeports is to confirm the governance arrangements set out in the bid so that there is a formal partnership in place for Government to have a dialogue with. This requires confirmation of Board membership, roles and responsibilities and how it will work with wider partners across the region.
- 4.4. The expectation is that the Board will be led by an independent private sector Chair and be a partnership of organisations from across the public and private sector, with a private sector majority. Government has stated that the Board should have a maximum of 12 members; however, due to the number of local authority representatives required on the Board (six) it is likely that the East Midlands Freeport Board will be larger than this to maintain the private sector majority.
- 4.5. As set out in the Freeport Prospectus, Government expects membership of the Board to contain:
- A Freeport Board Chair – it is intended this is an independent private sector Chair.
 - The Port(s).
 - A lead Authority acting as the Accountable Body for public funds and accountable for supporting the Board to fulfil its role.
 - Major landowners or investors (e.g. if a tax site will support a major firm).
 - All authorities responsible for statutory powers required for the delivery of the Freeport proposal e.g. planning, business rates etc.
 - A link to the East Midlands Development Corporation (EMDC)
- 4.6. D2N2 LEP have led the bid for a Freeport and remain actively involved in the proposal as it develops. It is a requirement; however, that each Freeport has a lead authority who also acts as the accountable body, a duty which cannot be undertaken by LEPs. It has been agreed therefore that Leicestershire County Council will act as Lead Authority and Accountable Body for the Freeport. The role of the lead authority has been set out by Government and the duties include:
- to act as the Accountable Body for any Government funding provided (Capital/Revenue). This will include monitoring and reporting against the use of these funds and upholding procurement practices;
 - to be responsible for providing effective support to the Freeport Board in delivering its purpose, in achieving formal designation as a Freeport and moving into Delivery;
 - to maintain appropriate project documentation e.g. implementation plans, risk registers;
 - to ensure the Board operates in line with appropriate levels of transparency, propriety and inclusivity, abiding by the Nolan principles; and
 - to act as a single point of contact for Government officials, responsible for coordinating the work of the Freeport Board.

- 4.7. Members of the Freeport Governing Board will be collectively responsible for the management and delivery of key workstreams. Whilst the following list is not exhaustive these are expected to include:
- Working with MHCLG to develop an Outline Business Case (OBC) and the Full Business Case (FBC) for seed capital funding.
 - Confirming and adopting approaches to make the best use of the levers provided to deliver the Freeport proposal.
 - Further developing the wider Freeport economic strategy.
 - Working with operators, landowners, HMRC and HMT to confirm the proposed tax and customs sites and completing any authorisation processes required.
 - Engaging and supporting all partners to deliver Freeport proposals and attracting additional prospective investors to the Freeport.
 - Coordinating agreement on a revenue-sharing agreement for the retained business rates to support delivery of the Freeport proposal.
 - Confirming the governance arrangements for the delivery phase.
 - Confirming how relevant data will be monitored and reported to MHCLG during the delivery phase, and how evaluation will be undertaken.
- 4.8. Government does not expect the Freeport Board to necessarily have formal powers over the individual organisations within its make-up, particularly in this initial phase. For example, planning powers will remain under the purview of the planning authority, port operators will retain control over their operations and retain responsibility for taking steps to secure customs designations, and landowners should be free to conduct commercial negotiations with prospective tenants. However, it is expected that the Board will work collectively and coordinate these powers to ensure delivery of the vision set out in the Freeport proposal.
- 4.9. Government expects the Board to inform, consult and engage with a variety of other organisations required for the successful development and delivery of the Freeport proposal e.g. MPs, local beneficiary communities, innovation stakeholders, LEPs, Pan-Regional Partnerships, tenant businesses, trade and investment organisations and regulatory networks. It will be critical that the Board works with a diverse range of local actors to ensure the strategic and operational alignment of activity drives added value. Government has said that boards may formalise this engagement through a shadow “Engagement Network” with a defined membership if they wish.

Next steps

- 4.10. The proposed governance arrangements were submitted to Government on 23 April 2021. Then by 30 April 2021, the Implementation Plan and Risk Register also had to be provided along with confirmation of the customs software intended to be used and the plans for procuring it.
- 4.11. Once the proposed governance arrangements have been approved, Government will release the first round of seed capital funding. This is to pay for the resources and expertise required to develop the outline and full business

cases as well as programme management support. The business case is a Treasury Green Book five case business case so will include:

- Strategic case
- Management case
- Commercial case
- Economic case
- Financial case

4.12. There is no firm deadline yet for the submission of the business case, but Government have previously indicated this would be by October 2021.

4.13. Approval of an earlier Outline Business Case (OBC) will allow for the formal designation of the Freeport customs and tax sites following successful authorisation processes (which can run in tandem to the business case approval process). The Full Business Case will then make the final, full case for capital seed funding and the use of all levers (e.g. rates, incentives, regulatory etc) to best deliver the objectives. Approval of this will allow for the formal designation of the Freeport, conferring of all associated legal powers, and a Section 31 grant to be issued for the capital funding.

Planning routes to delivery

4.14. It is important that the Council works with the landowner at Ratcliffe on Soar to explore options to support the delivery of the site. As already outlined, planning powers would remain with the local authority if the Freeport were established and also during the Interim Vehicle period of the Development Corporation (approx. two to three years). It is therefore important that we explore options for the redevelopment of the Ratcliffe on Soar site. The site is identified by the Local Plan as a “Centre of Excellence” but it is also in the greenbelt and the south side of the site is relatively undeveloped at present although it has been used for the purpose of disposal of ash over the years.

4.15. There are five potential routes that could be pursued to provide a consent for development of the site. These are:

- Planning application – this could take a variety of forms including outline, hybrid or full planning application and would need to be submitted to the Council so is landowner or occupier led.
- Local Development Order (LDO) – used to grant planning permission for specific types of development within a defined geographical area. This would confer more control on the Local Authority side – i.e. it is not a reactive process like receiving and determining a planning application. The Freeport prospectus encourages the use of LDOs.
- Special Development Order (SDO) – statutory instrument (secondary legislation) written for a specified proposal. These have limited precedent as they have only been used in the context of Brexit planning although are a recognised instrument for Development Corporations. These can be made on a range of grounds including speed where there is an urgent national need for the development.

- Development Consent Order (DCO) – statutory instrument (secondary legislation) written for a specified proposal. The Secretary of State needs to agree to designate the project as a nationally significant infrastructure project enabling a DCO application to be submitted.
 - Allocate the site via the Local Plan process. However, the timeline for the Local Plan suggests that it is unlikely to be adopted before 2023, which is not timely enough for the Freeport process.
- 4.16. A decision on the preferred route does not have to be made at this stage as many of the activities which need to be undertaken will be the same regardless of the route pursued. Therefore, work can commence on some of the main areas such as:
- Concept masterplan
 - Environmental assessment
 - Transport assessment
 - Pre-application consultation and engagement.
- 4.17. Some of the factors which would need to be considered when selecting the consenting route include:
- Agreement over the roles and responsibilities of the different parties and associated funding for the required technical work; and
 - The required Government support for the SDO or DCO route.
- 4.18. Ideally the decision on the preferred option would need to be made at the point where the procedural requirements differ e.g. the procedures to be followed and consultees engaged differ under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and Planning Act (2008). In addition to provide clarity about proposals it would be preferable to have the chosen option selected ahead of any community consultation and engagement activities.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

The Council could choose to take a more reactive approach to the redevelopment/regeneration of the Ratcliffe on Soar site. However, as set out in the introduction, the site is significant in size and location and there are time factors to consider such as the potential impact of the Freeport over the next five years, and the timing of the end of coal-powered electricity production.

6. Risks and uncertainties

- 6.1. There is a risk that the Freeport does not get formal status following the completion of the outline and full business case. The formation and incorporation of the Interim Vehicle for EMDC provides the capability and means for joint work with the landowner to progress planning in conjunction with the Freeport proposals that would help mitigate the risk of the Freeport not getting formal status. Regular dialogue is being maintained with Government and all local partners (including the Interim Vehicle for EMDC) are actively

engaged in the process so far so it is hoped the business case will be successful.

- 6.2. There is a risk that the Ratcliffe on Soar site remains undeveloped following its decommissioning, however the work being done now on exploring different options and working closely with a number of partners, including EMDC can mitigate this risk.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial implications

7.1.1 There are no financial implications of this report currently. Officer time is required to support the various options for the Ratcliffe on Soar site, but this is currently being contained within existing resources. External expertise will be required as work is progressed on these options, but it is anticipated this could be picked up through the Interim Vehicle for EMDC and subsequently EMDC itself.

7.1.2 In addition, a financial commitment may be required to support the development of the Freeport bid, this will depend on the amount of seed capital funding from Government and what this can be spent on.

7.1.3 The Council has allocated £0.5m towards supporting the work of the Development Corporation and it was agreed by Cabinet on 9 February 2021, to contribute £0.17m of this in 2021/22 (Year 1) subject to equal commitment from the other districts, Nottinghamshire County Council and Leicestershire County Council.

7.2. Legal implications

As outlined a governance arrangement is required for the Freeport but it is not yet clear what form this would take e.g. Company or partnership structure.

7.3. Equalities implications

Inclusive growth is a key theme for the East Midlands Freeport and the Government's intentions for its Freeport Policy, ensuring that, as far as possible, the Freeport brings benefits for all; levelling up the national economy and as well as creating jobs the focus is on the quality as well as the accessibility of those jobs.

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

There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The Freeport has the potential to benefit local residents' quality of life through the provision of new jobs, open space and green infrastructure
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	The development of Ratcliffe on Soar power station through the Freeport could attract a significant number of new businesses and a maximum of 20,000 jobs (depending on what sites and development comes forward)
The Environment	The vision for the Ratcliffe site is to move towards becoming a zero-carbon technology and energy hub for the East Midlands. Emerging development plans have the potential to create jobs based around modern industrial and manufacturing uses, with sustainable onsite energy generation providing a local source of low carbon heat and power.

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) gives retrospective approval to the nomination of a Cabinet member to the Freeport Board;
- b) notes the progress made so far on the Freeport bid and the proposed next steps; and
- c) endorses the approach to working with the site owner and the Freeport and Development Corporation to explore developing a Local Development Order or other suitable Order to deliver greater planning certainty for the site.

For more information contact:	Catherine Evans Transformation Service Manager 01159148552 cevans@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	Freeport Cabinet report – December 2020
List of appendices:	



Cabinet

Tuesday, 11 May 2021

Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Phase 2 funding

Report of the Director Neighbourhoods

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Community and the Environment Councillor A Brennan

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report presents the current position to Cabinet regarding the allocation of Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Phase 2 funding. It provides details on where energy efficient measures will be delivered and what options are being considered for delivering the works.
- 1.2. The LAD scheme was announced in July 2020, by the Chancellor with the aim of saving householders money, cutting carbon and creating green jobs. Phases 1a and b of the funding allocation were released in August and October 2020.
- 1.3. Phase 2 was announced in early 2021. Funding was ringfenced for each district, with the allocation based on the number of properties that were energy inefficient (those with an EPC rating of E, F and G). The allocation for Rushcliffe is **£692,150** and was announced in April 2021.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet note and approve:

- a) the funding allocation has been accepted;
- b) the project is time pressured and must be delivered by the 31 December 2021;
- c) the potential target area for the project is initially focussed on East Leake; however, maybe extended across other areas in the Borough if uptake in East Leake is limited; and
- d) the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme are amended (as stated at paragraph 7.1.5) noting the net impact on the budget is zero due to funding via external grant.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

Whilst the timeframe is tight and resources to deliver this project are limited, the allocation of funding provides an opportunity to target Rushcliffe's low-income residents currently residing in energy inefficient housing stock and is a project that the authority should make every effort to deliver for the benefit of our residents.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 In Phase 1 of the LAD scheme, the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) provided £500m of funding for local authorities in England, to improve the energy efficiency of its worst performing homes under the Government's (LAD) element of the Green Homes Grant scheme. Rushcliffe did not submit a bid for funding for either Phase 1A or 1B of the scheme.
- 4.2 Phase 2 (announced late last year) comprised of a further £300m that is being allocated through Local Energy Hubs (Hubs) for regional delivery. A key objective of the scheme is to provide an economic stimulus over summer 2021 as part of the Government's plan to build back better, greener and faster in response to Covid-19. All funding must therefore be invested during 2021 and, where possible, at least half of the delivery should be completed by the end of September to maximise the impact on supporting green jobs this summer.
- 4.3 The Council must commit to retrofitting a minimum of 25 properties (which can be a mixture of tenure) The allocation will; however, cover retrofit works to approximately 64 properties (based on the maximum owner occupation allocation of £10k per property).
- 4.4 The primary purpose of the LAD Phase 2 scheme is to raise the energy efficiency rating of low income and low Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rated homes (those with EPCs of E, F or G; although D is also in scope subject to a cap of 50% of Band D homes upgraded across each region).
- 4.5 LAD Phase 2 funding is available for all tenure types. This includes owner occupied, private landlords, registered social landlords, Housing Associations and local authority owned housing. Where a property is rented to a tenant (social or private), including a local authority owned property, there will be a minimum contribution by the landlord to the cost of upgrades of a third, with the average subsidy cost not to exceed £5,000 per property. Owner/occupied properties meeting the eligibility criteria are not required to make a contribution to the works. The maximum amount per owner/occupier is £10k (averaged over the number of retrofits).
- 4.6 It is the Government's aspiration that the LAD Phase 2 funding will result in the following outcomes:
 - Tackle fuel poverty by reducing energy bills for low-income households by improving the energy efficiency of their home;

- Deliver cost effective carbon savings to carbon budgets and progress towards the UK's target for net zero by 2050;
 - Support economic resilience and a green recovery in response to the economic impacts of Covid-19, creating thousands of jobs;
 - The phasing out of the installation of high-carbon fossil fuel heating and reducing emissions and improving air quality; and
 - Utilise the role of Local Energy Hubs to build local authority capacity and supply chains to deliver energy efficiency at scale.
- 4.7 Given the tight timeline and to attract contractors to Rushcliffe, an area approach to delivering the project has been taken. An estate in East Leake, consisting of non-standard housing of mixed tenure, has been identified as the potential project area (Appendix 1).
- 4.8 The retrofit proposal for these properties is a mixture of External Wall Insulation (EWI) and Solar Photovoltaics' (P.V's).
- 4.9 Other grants, such as 'Warm Homes', could be used to enhance the offering to residents; for example, the provision of loft insulation.
- 4.10 A project delivery proposal is in the process of being finalised and options on how this will be delivered are being considered. The proposal needs to be submitted by the 24 May 2021 to enable release of the allocation.
- 4.11 Funding for LAD Phase 3 has recently been announced which will see allocation of funding during the financial year 2021/22, with delivery continuing into financial year 2022/23.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

Consideration was given to not accepting the allocation due to resource and timeframe constraints. However, given the comprehensive support package available from the Midlands Energy Hub and that any unspent allocation would be sent back, it was agreed to accept the allocation.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

- 6.1 Tight deadlines for project delivery. Half the project must be delivered by the end of September 2021, with the remainder completed by the end of December 2021.
- 6.2 Limited internal resource. Several options are currently being explored to negate this. Part of the funding allocation can be used to provide project delivery support.
- 6.3 Contractor shortage. Many local authorities will be competing for a small pool of skills resource to deliver retrofit works. This may result in the Council not achieving the minimum number of retrofits.

6.4 Planning and/or building regulations will be required on measures such as PV and external wall insulation. This may potentially slow the project delivery down.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

7.1.1 Table A details Rushcliffe’s allocation of the Capital funding whilst Table B outlines the allocation timeline.

Table A	
Capital Grant Amount	£635,000
Capitalisation Allocation	£57,150
Total	£692,150

Table B	
10% of the total Grant Amount within 30 days of signing the letter. 9% of this can be used for capitalisation	£69,215
Mobilisation Payment (Used for stock analysis or modelling)	£2,750
30% released after approval of the proposal (it is not clear if this is 30% of the amount remaining or of the full grant allocation – for this purpose I have assumed full grant allocation)	£207,645
Quarterly payments within 30 days of 1 July, 1 October (reporting requirements must be met)	£207,645 (each payment)

7.1.2 Any unspent grant monies shall be returned to MEH within 25 calendar days of the end of the Grant Period unless otherwise agreed between the parties.

7.1.3 Confirmation has been received that VAT can be claimed back on privately owned properties.

7.1.4 To assist with the delivery of the project additional staffing maybe required in the future. Staff resources are currently contained within existing budgets; however, a portion of the funding can be used to support the delivery of the project if required.

7.1.5 The Capital Programme will need to be amended to include a provision of £635,000 to meet the grant outlay with a corresponding capital contribution to wholly offset these costs. The revenue budget will need to be amended to include a provision of £60,000 to cover associated ancillary administration and set-up costs, some of which may be allowed to cover internal staffing charges. Again, this will be wholly offset by grant income awarded to meet this.

7.2 Legal Implications

Initial advice has been provided on aspects of the project delivery. Whilst acceptance of the allocation is not considered to raise issues, further advice will be provided when project delivery is under way, in particular subsidy control and use of either a Dynamic Purchasing System or the potential direct appointment for contractors undertaking the works.

7.3 Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

7.4 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no implications arising from this report that impact on community safety in respect of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Tackle fuel poverty by reducing energy bills for low-income households by improving the energy efficiency of their home.
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	Support economic resilience and a green recovery in response to the economic impacts of Covid-19, creating thousands of jobs
The Environment	Deliver cost effective carbon savings to carbon budgets and progress towards the UK's target for net zero by 2050. The phasing out of the installation of high-carbon fossil fuel heating and reducing emissions and improving air quality.

9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet note and approve:

- a) the funding allocation has been accepted;
- b) the project is time pressured and must be delivered by the 31 December 2021;
- c) the potential target area for the project is initially focussed on East Leake; however, maybe extended across other areas in the Borough if uptake in East Leake is limited; and
- d) the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme are amended (as stated at paragraph 7.1.5) noting the net impact on the budget is zero due to funding via external grant.

For more information contact:	Emma Georgiou Team Manager – Environment 0115 914 8441 egeorgiou@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	NIL
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Map and Streets of the target area

Appendix 1

Target area streets in East Leake

- Holme Avenue
- St Mary's Crescent
- Sharpley Drive
- Sweet Leys Drive
- Elm Avenue
- Ryeholme Close
- Manor Road

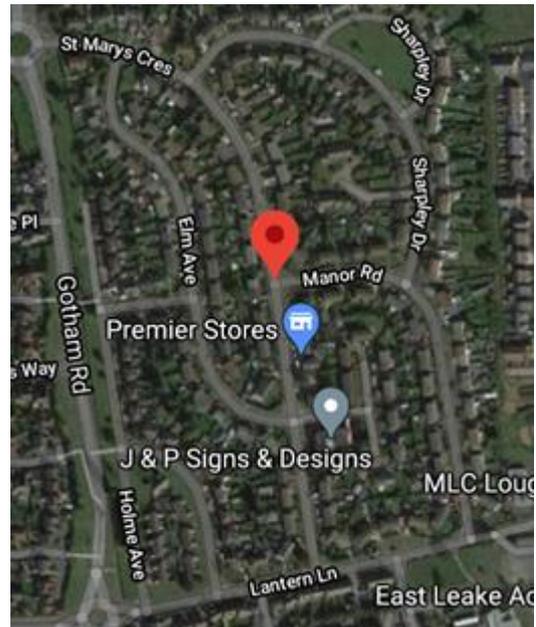


Image 1 - Map of target area in East Leake

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