

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL**

**THURSDAY, 3 MARCH 2022**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena,  
Rugby Road, West Bridgford  
and live streamed on Rushcliffe Borough Council YouTube channel

**PRESENT:**

Councillors S Mallender (Chairman), T Combellack (Vice-Chairman), R Adair, S Bailey, B Bansal, M Barney, N Begum, A Brennan, B Buschman, R Butler, N Clarke, J Cottee, G Dickman, A Edyvean, M Gaunt, P Gowland, L Healy, L Howitt, Mrs C Jeffreys, R Jones, R Mallender, D Mason, G Moore, J Murray, A Phillips, V Price, F Purdue-Horan, S J Robinson, K Shaw, D Simms, J Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, J Walker, R Walker, G Wheeler, J Wheeler and G Williams

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
P Linfield	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
K Marriott	Chief Executive
S Sull	Monitoring Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager
L Webb	Democratic Services Officer

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillors K Beardsall, B Gray, R Inglis and L Way

**49 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Moore declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Item 11 Upper Saxondale Community Governance Review.

Councillor Combellack declared an interest in Item 12 Hickling Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

**50 Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 2 December 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**51 Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor advised that given that the previous Council meeting had been at the beginning of December, she would now like to take the opportunity to thank those Councillors who had been able to join her at her Christmas fundraiser and the Christmas Carol Service at Holme Pierrepont church. The Mayor stated that over the last few weeks, she had become increasingly busy as

Covid restrictions were lifted. Since the last meeting, she had met with the Recycling2go crews, planted an oak sapling, opened the new Lidl in West Bridgford and been to a ceilidh, a rugby match, and the Nottinghamshire Cricket Club Annual General Meeting. The Mayor referred to the wonderful evening with the Brownies she had hosted earlier in the week, at which she and a number of other Councillors had answered many interesting questions. The Mayor concluded her announcements by referring to the recent terrible events in the Ukraine and stated that she was sure that all Councillors would join her in sending the Council's very best wishes for a swift resolution of this situation.

## **52 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader echoed the thoughts of the Mayor in relation to the Ukraine and brought Councillor's attention to the Ukrainian flag flying outside the Borough offices in solidarity. The Leader also informed Council about the Borough's Covid memorial, which would be unveiled on 25 March 2022 and would be a tribute to those that have been affected by the Covid pandemic. The Leader was pleased to announce the sale of the Abbey Road housing development, where 70 new environmentally friendly homes would be built on the site of the old depot and updated Council on the important progress being made in relation to the Freeport. Finally, the Leader paid special tribute to Laura Webb, Democratic Services Officer, who would be leaving the Borough Council to work in the same role at the County Council. Council was reminded that Laura would be taking with her five years of experience, which would be very welcome as the County transitioned into the Cabinet model of governance. The Leader thanked Laura for her hard work and support over the years and stated that she would be missed by Councillors and officers alike.

## **53 Chief Executive's Announcements**

The Chief Executive reminded Council that at their last meeting in December they approved the consultation response to the ward boundary changes proposed by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. This week, the Commission had reopened its consultation to consult further on alternative boundaries for wards in Eastern parts of the Borough. Councillors had been sent the report via email and it was featured in this week's Councillors' Connections. The Chief Executive encouraged Councillors to respond to the consultation either directly before 29 March or to the Service Manager – Corporate Service, who would ensure comments were pulled together and submitted by the deadline.

## **54 Citizens' Questions**

No citizens' questions were received for this meeting.

## **55 2022/23 Budget and Financial Strategy**

The Mayor advised that she had been asked as Chairman of this meeting to consider extending the time period for proposing the 2022/23 Budget and Financial Strategy to 15 minutes. The Mayor stated that she had also been asked to consider reducing the time for all other speeches on reports and

motions from 10 minutes to five minutes for the mover of the report/motion, and three minutes for the responder.

The Mayor confirmed that she was happy to approve and support the request.

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Council's Financial Strategy and Budget for 2022/23.

The Leader stated that he felt both very fortunate and privileged to be commending this budget to Council, after speaking with many other leaders from councils that were facing cuts, closures, redundancies, and debt. The budget before Council tonight was ambitious, fair, balanced, prudent, and predicated on those principles.

In respect of ambition, the Leader advised that there were very few other councils that were delivering over £28m in capital investment, including projects such as the crematorium, the Bingham Hub and leisure centre, together with plans for the new community centre at Sharphill. Council was reminded of the importance of the green agenda, which had seen the Climate Change budget topped up to £1m and a new reserve of £1m for the vehicle replacement budget. The Development Corporation, which was a key vehicle to deliver jobs and investment in tangent with the Freeport would see continued investment. The new office space at Bingham was being developed, to encourage much needed employment. Reference was made to the Asset Investment Strategy, which had delivered over £2m of revenue to the Borough and to the previous redevelopment of Cotgrave town centre, which continued to deliver fantastic community facilities and employment. It was noted that the Asset Investment Strategy had been so successful that it now delivered over a 5% return to the Council and represented 25% of its revenue.

In respect of fairness, the Leader stated that he was proud that the Council continued to focus on the disadvantaged and those on low incomes, with projects including the Reach Project, which had touched so many people's lives. For the first time, over £1m had been set aside for a new traveller's site, which it was hoped would reduce incursions on to land, fulfil the Council's legal obligations and provide a fit for purpose site. Council noted that there would be a freeze on car parking fees and green bin charges. £438k would be put towards combating homelessness, £320k towards housing benefits and over £5.5m for affordable housing provision, and the Leader stated that he was very proud of Rushcliffe's excellent record in respect of building affordable housing. Over £770k green energy grants had been delivered in East Leake, which had made such a wonderful difference to people's lives, as did the £300k for Hound Road Lodge, which provided help to the most vulnerable. Council was reminded that the Council Tax rise of 2.24% recommended tonight equated to seven pence a week and was still the lowest in the county.

The Leader advised that this was a balanced budget, in respect of the Council's revenues and portfolios, with no over reliance on any one area. Reference was made to the Council's previously established Transformation Strategy, which was now successfully delivering real efficiencies and saving to the

Council. The Council was seeing a 2.5% rise in its tax base, as many people wanted to move to Rushcliffe. The Council was financially self-sufficient and received no revenue support grant from central government and that was due to the excellent work of both officers and Councillors and allowed this balanced budget to be presented for approval. Council was reminded that in terms of resilience, there could have been no bigger test than the recent pandemic; however, the Council had continued to invest, and Councillors of all parties should be proud of what has been achieved, and it was reiterated that due to the prudent financial management delivered by this Council over many years, the Council was not in any debt, whereas many other councils were suffering from substantial debt.

The final key principle of the budget was being prudent, and Council was reminded that this budget had been underpinned by careful risk management throughout, with a General Reserve Fund standing at £2.6m and earmarked reserves of £8.5m, excluding the New Homes Bonus. Those reserves were in place to mitigate the risks of increased inflation and rising energy costs and the challenges in revenue projections as the Council came out of the pandemic. The Leader confirmed that leisure centres had been hit very hard during the pandemic, and the recent successful Business Rates appeal by the power station would result in it paying a reduced amount to the Council. It was noted that the review of Business Rates and the Fairer Funding review had still to take place.

In conclusion, the Leader stated that this was an ambitious, fair, prudent, and balanced budget, which delivered the aspirations of all residents, businesses and stakeholders in the Borough, and everyone should be proud that Rushcliffe remained one of the top places to live in the UK. Councillors were reminded that it was mandatory under the Local Government Finance Act 1972, that a budget had to be approved, and Councillors were not here to debate the validity of Council Tax. The Leader stated that every Rushcliffe Borough Councillor had high integrity and would not wish to break the law by not approving the budget, so unless there was an alternative budget put forward, this was the budget that should be considered and approved. This Council was very inclusive in respect of budget setting, with all parties involved in interactive workshops and officers offering support and advice to all Councillors, to ensure that this was a budget for everyone. Councillors were thanked for attending those workshops and giving feedback, which had been considered by officers, who were also thanked for their hard work in bringing this inclusive budget forward

Councillor Moore seconded the recommendation and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor J Walker acknowledged the hard work of officers during the unprecedented difficult times faced by local government due to Covid, the impact of which on Council budgets could not be underestimated. The Labour Group fully understood how those pressures had affected Council's funding and appreciated the work undertaken by officers to produce the budget. Council was advised that the Labour Group would like to see a number of crucial changes to four key areas of the budget to ensure that the majority of residents would see the greatest improvement to their lives.

Firstly, in respect of investments, the Labour Group welcomed the return of Streetwise back in house and considered that the tide was turning in respect of how Council's invested taxpayers' money. Councillor Walker stated that it would be appropriate for the Council to spearhead a move to more ethical, sustainable investments, by looking at the social and environmental credentials of investment portfolios and not just be driven by economic goals.

Secondly, in respect of community wealth building, Councillor Walker stated that it was essential that the Council looked to procure goods and services locally wherever possible and in turn that would have an amazing impact on increasing the wealth and prosperity of the local community.

Thirdly, in respect of the Climate Change Action Reserve, the Labour Group was concerned that funds had been taken from this reserve to initially fund the Freeport project, and considered that it would be more appropriate to use the funding to action present day green initiatives. The Group also requested that the Climate Change Action Plan be linked to the Council's Corporate Priorities.

Finally, in respect of Council Tax, the Labour Group considered that given the current difficult financial situation faced by so many, the proposed increase in Council Tax was ill conceived and poorly timed and would inflict further difficulties on so many who were already struggling to make ends meet.

In conclusion, Councillor Walker advised that the Labour Group would be voting against the budget and the proposed tax increase, as household budgets were being squeezed to unprecedented levels. It could no longer be 'business as usual', innovation was required to improve the lives of residents and the Labour Group considered that this budget was not a budget for households but one that allowed the system of injustice to tick over unchallenged.

Councillor Jones thanked officers for their hard work, recognised the uncertainties that lay ahead, and acknowledged the impact of the rise in energy costs. Whilst acknowledging that Rushcliffe had the lowest Council Tax in Nottinghamshire, he considered that there were three factors which kept it low. Firstly, there had been a significant expansion of housing, with resulting annual increases in income from additional Council Tax payments. The Council also saved expenditure by not tending the common areas on new estates, with those residents obliged to pay a management company. Secondly, Rushcliffe had many more properties at a high rateable value than other areas, which allowed the Council to draw in a larger fund. Thirdly, no other council in Nottinghamshire had as many town and parish councils, with other councils having to provide all or most of their services.

Councillor Jones was pleased that the Council had avoided having to borrow funds for the crematorium and leisure centre developments and it was noted that some help had been received from the European Regional Fund. It was hoped that the £5m allocated for more social housing would be made a priority, given the need and the appalling increases in rent for private housing.

In respect of the funding received for Sharphill, Councillor Jones questioned

what infrastructure provision would come from that funding and stated that the proposed location of the community hall was unsuitable. In respect of the increase to the West Bridgford Special Expenses, Councillor Jones stated that this would be a considerable increase for residents and questioned the decision to add the costs of Rushcliffe-wide events, such as the Taste of Rushcliffe and Lark in the Park to this budget.

Councillor Jones agreed that there was much to commend in the report, although not all. The Liberal Democrat Group understood the arguments for increasing tax and appreciated that the recommendations would be passed; however, they had to be questioned. The Liberal Democrat Group would like to see a fairer system with the poorest paying less, although it was acknowledged that the system was set by central government. Previously the Liberal Democrat Group had supported rises in Council Tax; however, in today's exceptional circumstance, it could not be supported. Councillor Jones considered that other measures could be introduced and noted that the income from the proposed increase in Council Tax was a similar percentage as the annual increase in income from new housing. The possibility of increasing green bin charges should be brought forward, assets could be sold, alternative options for the maintenance of grass verges should be investigated, and rather than setting aside £1m for a much needed travellers' site, the developer should fund and provide that facility. Councillor Jones reiterated that in such exceptional times, it was not right to increase a tax when residents were struggling to manage, especially those on modest incomes and pensions and even those who paid a reduced proportion of Council Tax would be impacted by an increase in charges.

In conclusion, Councillor Jones advised that in such difficult and uncertain economic times this was now not the time to add to the financial strain on residents facing a cost-of-living crisis, and the Liberal Democrat Group would be voting against the budget.

Councillor R Mallender thanked officers and Councillors for their hard work in preparing the budget and referred to the incredibly difficult situation that the country was currently facing, with huge price increases, which would affect all aspects of life. The Council was faced with the task of setting a budget, which would minimise those effects on residents, and it was noted that the Council had a good record of setting a reasonable increase in Council Tax. Councillor Mallender advised that he would listen to the debate with interest before deciding on how to vote.

Councillor Thomas thanked officers for their care and diligence in producing the budget and stated that the Council had weathered the uncertainties caused by Covid well and was in a strong position to deal with any future pressure from Covid, repercussions from new situations, including the war in Ukraine, and ongoing uncertainty in relation to government funding streams. It was noted that like most other local councils, Rushcliffe had used all of the £5 increase on band D property allowed within the referendum limit. Whilst acknowledging that any increase would put pressure on some residents, on balance Councillor Thomas confirmed that the Independent Group supported this level of increase at this time, to ensure that services and transformation projects were funded without external borrowing in the medium term. Councillor Thomas referred to

the 8.58% increase to the West Bridgford Special Expenses and noted that this was in part to fund local services and reminded Council that many residents in Rushcliffe's towns and villages also paid considerably more through their town or parish precept for their local services.

In conclusion, Councillor Thomas referred to a comment in the report, which stated that "The overriding Rushcliffe principle is that the Council aims to stay in the lower quartile for Council Tax" and questioned if this should be the most important principle, when there were so many other important issues to residents and stated that she could not agree. However, all things considered, Councillor Thomas confirmed that the Independent Group believed this to be a sound budget and would be supporting the recommendation.

Councillor Clarke stated that it was disappointing that the Labour Group had again chosen not to put an alternative budget forward and considered that the opposition had missed an opportunity and would be breaking the law by voting against the recommendation.

Councillor Gaunt raised a point of order, referred to the 1972 Act, and stated that the budget would be passed as there were 24 Councillors in the majority group who would vote for the recommendation.

The Leader raised a point of order, questioned Councillor Gaunt's comment, and stated that it was not possible to predict how any Councillor would vote.

Councillor Gaunt continued with his point of order and advised that as there were only seven members of the Labour Group, if they voted against the recommendation, the budget would still be passed, and the law would not be broken. Councillor Gaunt went on to question why a vote was even taken if there was no option to vote against or abstain.

Councillor Clarke reiterated his previous comments and stated that it was unfortunate that the Labour Group opposed this budget, whilst not proposing an alternative one, which could have been challenged, scrutinised, and possibly agreed with.

Councillor Gaunt stated that the Labour Group had presented several reasonable alternative suggestions and despite the offer of support from the S151 Officer, who had done a fantastic job in drafting the budget, the Group did not feel that it would have been a good use of officer time to produce an alternative budget, which would never have been accepted

Councillor Butler confirmed that he would be supporting this budget and referred to the current challenging times and advised that although some issues were out of the Council's control, budget setting was part of the Council's responsibilities. Council was reminded that a number of fantastic projects were now coming to fruition and it was pleasing to note that despite the current financial challenges, the Council was continuing with its ambitious plans, without having to borrow funds and go into debt, which was a fantastic achievement. Councillor Butler referred to the negative comments made some opposition group members and reminded everyone that Rushcliffe was a great place to live.

Councillor Moore thanked Councillor J Walker for her attendance at a recent Cabinet meeting, which had considered the Council's Procurement Strategy, and noted the Labour Group's agreement with the Strategy's ethos that the Council's investments would cover social and economic factors, with an emphasis on local procurement. In relation to the Climate Change Strategy, it was acknowledged that £200k had been temporarily removed, the funds had now been replaced and that money had helped to fund projects including the Bingham Leisure Centre, to enhance the development with more advanced 'green' technology. Councillor Moore acknowledged that we were living in difficult times; however, he considered that by spending more and taxing less, the Council would fall into financial difficulties. In respect of the West Bridgford precept, Councillor Moore confirmed that over a five year period, the precept had increased by 0.6%. Councillor Moore advised that although it was not illegal to vote against the budget, he considered it to be irresponsible and reminded Councillors that they had been elected to represent their residents and given the current difficult economic climate, voting against the budget was inappropriate.

In conclusion, Councillor Moore advised that this was a budget based on realism, commercialism, and sustainability, and was a budget fit for the future that delivered to everyone in the Borough and was designed to ensure that the Council continued to maintain excellent services in challenging times. Councillor Moore thanked the Director – Finance and Corporate Services, the Service Manager Financial Services, and their teams for their hard work, not just producing the budget but undertaking additional work throughout the pandemic, to support local businesses and residents.

The Leader referred to the many fundamental principles involved and to the differences of opinions raised during the meeting. The Leader stated that he was disappointed that the issue of funding the traveller's site had been raised, as the £1m would be for the additional site required by the Local Plan and rather than selling assets, the Council was acquiring assets to enhance local communities. The Leader explained that many of the issues raised were national ones, including cost of living increases; however, Rushcliffe's residents wanted the best from this Council, and this budget will deliver that. Council noted that many councils, which had previously frozen Council Tax, were now in financial difficulty and struggling to provide services.

The Leader stated that this Council was very proud of the services that it delivered, that it was debt free, of the community facilities that it offered, and its commitment to care for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the community and a balance had to be struck across the Borough. The Leader thanked Councillor Thomas for her comments and acknowledged that although they could not agree on all points, as the leading group it was important that all of those comments were taken on board. The Leader hoped and thought that his group was being inclusive; however, as some of the points raised tonight had not been raised in the workshops, potential improvements to the process might be required.

In conclusion, the Leader stated that this was a budget that he could commend to all residents in Rushcliffe and stated that Rushcliffe was the most effective



Council for delivery in the county.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken for this item as follows:

FOR: Councillors R Adair, S Bailey, M Barney, A Brennan, B Buschman, R Butler, N Clarke, J Cottee, G Dickman, A Edyvean, L Healy, C Jeffreys, R Mallender, D Mason, G Moore, A Phillips, F Purdue-Horan, S Robinson, K Shaw, D Simms, J Stockwood, Mrs M Stockwood, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, R Walker, D Wheeler, J Wheeler and G Williams

AGAINST: Councillors B Bansal, N Begum, M Gaunt, P Gowland, L Howitt, R. Jones, J Murray, V Price and J Walker

ABSTENTION: Councillors T Combella and S Mallender

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the report of the Council's Responsible Financial Officer on the robustness of the Council's budget and the adequacy of reserves (as detailed at Annex A) be accepted;
- b) the budget setting report and associated financial strategies 2022/23 to 2026/27 (attached Annex B) including the Transformation Strategy and Efficiency Plan (Appendix 3) to deliver efficiencies over the five-year period be adopted;
- c) the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 4 be adopted;
- d) the Capital and Investment Strategy at Appendix 5 be adopted;
- e) Rushcliffe's 2022/23 Council Tax for a Band D property at £150.93 (increase from 2021/22 of £3.57 or 2.42%) is set;
- f) the Special Expenses for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth, Appendix 1 are set, resulting in the following Band D Council Tax levels for the Special Expense Areas:
  - i) West Bridgford £53.91 (£49.65 in 2021/22);
  - ii) Keyworth £3.30 (£3.41 in 2021/22);
  - iii) Ruddington £3.82 (£4.00 in 2021/22).
- g) with regards to recommendations e) and f), the associated Bands in accordance with the formula in section 36(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 are set; and
- h) the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix 7 is adopted.

## 56 Council Tax Resolution 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Customer Access, Councillor Moore

presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Council's position on Council Tax for the year 2022/23.

Councillor Moore confirmed that there was a statutory duty to approve the Council Tax for 2022/23, and this resolution reflected the consolidation of all the precepts for Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Nottinghamshire Fire Authority, parish and town councils and Rushcliffe Borough Council. Council noted that with the exception of the precept for the Fire Authority, Rushcliffe's Council Tax remained the lowest in Nottinghamshire, with the details highlighted in the various tables in the Appendix to the report.

The Leader seconded the recommendation and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Gowland advised that a week ago the Council Tax rise had been discussed at Nottinghamshire County Council, and since then a great deal had happened internationally, with the dreadful events in the Ukraine, and that would have an impact here, with increased energy and food prices. Councillor Gowland considered that previous plans should be rethought, there were mechanisms in place to try and alleviate hardship, including a £150 rebate, and given the great disparity in the country, it was unfair to add a further burden to those struggling the most. In respect of the rise to the West Bridgford Special Expenses, Councillor Gowland stated that she was particularly upset, and considered that although the rise may have been less in previous years; however, it was now that mattered. Councillor Gowland suggested that local MPs and the Secretary of State should be contacted to look at funding issues, that the Council should delay some of its capital investments, take funds from the reserve, and increase car parking and green bin charges, as those did not help everybody.

Councillor Jones agreed with the comments of the Labour Group and advised that the Liberal Democrat Party would be voting against the recommendation.

Councillor R Mallender advised that he would listen to the debate with interest before deciding on how to vote.

Councillor Thomas advised that the Independent Group would be supporting the recommendation, but not because the Council Tax would be the cheapest in the county.

Councillor Purdue Horan stated that he wished to align himself with some of the comments made by Councillor Moore in respect of the excellent work undertaken by officers and advised that this year in particular, in an attempt to try and mitigate the costs faced by households, the government had introduced a one off £150 discount, which he understood to be extremely difficult for officers to administer. Councillor Purdue-Horan stated that the extra effort being taken by officers to administer this discount was both noted and appreciated.

The Leader stated that Councillor Purdue-Horan was absolutely right regarding the huge amount of work involved in the administration of this rebate, particularly for officers who were already extremely busy; however it was important to remember that this funding had been made available to help people, and officers

were doing their best to administer it. The Leader referred to the previous comment that car parking charges should be raised as they did not help everyone and reminded Councillors that car parking was very important to local businesses, who created employment and needed support at this time. In respect of the issue of green bin charges, the Leader stated that their use was key to the Council's eco credentials, and that was why the charges were being frozen to ensure that incentives were available, and people were using the bins. The Leader stated that it was about striking a balance, and this small rise of seven pence a week for excellent services in one of the best councils in the country fulfilled those objectives.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council Tax Resolution for 2022/23 as detailed at Appendix A be approved.

<b>Band</b>	<b>Rushcliffe Borough Council</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire County Council</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire Police &amp; Crime Commissioner</b>	<b>Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
A	100.62	1,096.06	169.50	56.38	1,422.56
B	117.39	1,278.74	197.75	65.78	1,659.66
C	134.16	1,461.41	226.00	75.17	1,896.74
<b>D</b>	150.93	1,644.09	254.25	84.57	2,133.84
E	184.47	2,009.44	310.75	103.36	2,608.02
F	218.01	2,374.80	367.25	122.16	3,082.22
G	251.55	2,740.15	423.75	140.95	3,556.40
H	301.86	3,288.18	508.50	169.14	4,267.68

## Appendix A (i)

### Council Tax to be Levied Within the Borough for Year Ending 31 March 2023

2022/23	PARISH/AREA	TAX BASE	PRECEPT	SPECIAL CHARGES	TAX RATE PARISH AREA	MAJOR PRECEPTS	COUNCIL TAX BAND D
	ASLOCKTON	436.3	14,372	0	32.94	2,133.84	2,166.78
	BARTON-IN-FABIS	210.1	5,446	0	25.92	2,133.84	2,159.76
	BINGHAM	3,767.6	341,724	0	90.70	2,133.84	2,224.54
	BRADMORE	169.5	4,000	0	23.60	2,133.84	2,157.44
	BUNNY	295.0	23,570	0	79.90	2,133.84	2,213.74
	CAR COLSTON	91.1	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	CLIPSTON	31.1	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	COLSTON BASSETT	134.2	11,200	0	83.46	2,133.84	2,217.30
	COSTOCK	302.9	19,000	0	62.73	2,133.84	2,196.57
	COTGRAVE	2,433.8	234,660	0	96.42	2,133.84	2,230.26
	CROPWELL BISHOP	671.6	99,490	0	148.14	2,133.84	2,281.98
	CROPWELL BUTLER	340.4	12,500	0	36.72	2,133.84	2,170.56
	EAST BRIDGFORD	854.9	43,325	0	50.68	2,133.84	2,184.52
	EAST LEAKE	3,262.3	318,550	0	97.65	2,133.84	2,231.49
	ELTON-ON-THE-HILL	49.9	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	FLAWBOROUGH	27.1	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	FLINTHAM	220.4	23,000	0	104.36	2,133.84	2,238.20
	GOTHAM	622.4	39,100	0	62.82	2,133.84	2,196.66
	GRANBY-CUM-SUTTON	180.7	10,700	0	59.21	2,133.84	2,193.05
	HAWKSWORTH	71.6	11,200	0	156.42	2,133.84	2,290.26
	HICKLING	261.0	8,740	0	33.49	2,133.84	2,167.33
	HOLME PIERREPONT & GAMSTON	1,099.4	37,450	0	34.06	2,133.84	2,167.90
	KEYWORTH	2,791.0	201,710	9,200	75.57	2,133.84	2,209.41
	KINGSTON-ON-SOAR	137.5	5,000	0	36.36	2,133.84	2,170.20
	KINOULTON	430.7	6,626	0	15.38	2,133.84	2,149.22
	KNEETON	26.9	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	LANGAR-CUM-BARNSTONE	361.8	42,158	0	116.52	2,133.84	2,250.36
	NEWTON	335.7	20,065	0	59.77	2,133.84	2,193.61
	NORMANTON-ON-SOAR	190.2	14,435	0	75.89	2,133.84	2,209.73
	NORMANTON-ON-THE-WOLDS	154.8	8,500	0	54.91	2,133.84	2,188.75
	ORSTON	227.5	9,500	0	41.76	2,133.84	2,175.60
	OWTHORPE	51.3	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	PLUMTREE	123.5	5,365	0	43.44	2,133.84	2,177.28
	RADCLIFFE-ON-TRENT	3,400.3	328,605	0	96.64	2,133.84	2,230.48
	RATCLIFFE-ON-SOAR	59.9	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	REMPSTONE	209.9	5,815	0	27.70	2,133.84	2,161.54
	RUDDINGTON	2,908.8	329,130	11,100	116.97	2,133.84	2,250.81
	SAXONDALE	15.0	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	SCARRINGTON	84.6	750	0	8.87	2,133.84	2,142.71
	SCREVETON	84.0	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
	SHELFORD	116.0	10,000	0	86.21	2,133.84	2,220.05
	SHELTON	62.3	790	0	12.68	2,133.84	2,146.52

SIBTHORPE	60.3	1,840	0	30.51	2,133.84	2,164.35
STANFORD-ON-SOAR	66.9	4,000	0	59.79	2,133.84	2,193.63
STANTON-ON-THE-WOLDS	216.6	7,340	0	33.89	2,133.84	2,167.73
SUTTON BONINGTON	653.5	38,500	0	58.91	2,133.84	2,192.75
THOROTON	78.0	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
THRUMPTON	73.9	3,680	0	49.80	2,133.84	2,183.64
TOLLERTON	818.5	69,115	0	84.44	2,133.84	2,218.28
UPPER BROUGHTON	163.8	8,500	0	51.89	2,133.84	2,185.73
WEST BRIDGFORD	14,773.7	0	796,400	53.91	2,133.84	2,187.75
WEST LEAKE	68.4	2,100	0	30.70	2,133.84	2,164.54
WHATTON-IN-THE-VALE	381.3	20,755	0	54.43	2,133.84	2,188.27
WIDMERPOOL	170.2	8,500	0	49.94	2,133.84	2,183.78
WILLOUGHBY-ON-WOLDS	296.4	11,090	0	37.42	2,133.84	2,171.26
WIVERTON & TITHBY	53.8	0	0	-	2,133.84	2,133.84
WYSALL & THORPE IN THE GLEBE	207.3	17,800	0	85.87	2,133.84	2,219.71
TOTAL RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL	45,387.6	2,439,696	816,700	71.75		

## Appendix A (ii)

### RUSHCLIFFE BOROUGH COUNCIL – COUNCIL TAX BANDS – 2022/23

At its meeting on 3 March 2022, Rushcliffe Borough Council, in accordance with Section 30 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, set the amounts shown below as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2022/2023 for each of the categories of dwellings and areas indicated.

**PARISH AREA**

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Aslockton	1,444.52	1,685.28	1,926.02	2,166.78	2,648.28	3,129.80	3,611.30	4,333.56
Barton-in-Fabis	1,439.84	1,679.82	1,919.78	2,159.76	2,639.70	3,119.66	3,599.60	4,319.52
Bingham	1,483.03	1,730.20	1,977.36	2,224.54	2,718.88	3,213.23	3,707.57	4,449.08
Bradmore	1,438.29	1,678.02	1,917.72	2,157.44	2,636.86	3,116.31	3,595.73	4,314.88
Bunny	1,475.83	1,721.80	1,967.76	2,213.74	2,705.68	3,197.63	3,689.57	4,427.48
Car Colston	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Clipston	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Colston Bassett	1,478.20	1,724.57	1,970.93	2,217.30	2,710.03	3,202.77	3,695.50	4,434.60
Costock	1,464.38	1,708.45	1,952.50	2,196.57	2,684.69	3,172.83	3,660.95	4,393.14
Cotgrave	1,486.84	1,734.65	1,982.45	2,230.26	2,725.87	3,221.49	3,717.10	4,460.52
Cropwell Bishop	1,521.32	1,774.88	2,028.42	2,281.98	2,789.08	3,296.20	3,803.30	4,563.96
Cropwell Butler	1,447.04	1,688.22	1,929.38	2,170.56	2,652.90	3,135.26	3,617.60	4,341.12
East Bridgford	1,456.35	1,699.08	1,941.79	2,184.52	2,669.96	3,155.42	3,640.87	4,369.04
East Leake	1,487.66	1,735.61	1,983.54	2,231.49	2,727.37	3,223.27	3,719.15	4,462.98
Elton	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Flawborough	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Flintham	1,492.13	1,740.83	1,989.50	2,238.20	2,735.57	3,232.96	3,730.33	4,476.40
Gotham	1,464.44	1,708.52	1,952.58	2,196.66	2,684.80	3,172.96	3,661.10	4,393.32
Granby	1,462.03	1,705.71	1,949.37	2,193.05	2,680.39	3,167.75	3,655.08	4,386.10
Hawksworth	1,526.84	1,781.32	2,035.78	2,290.26	2,799.20	3,308.16	3,817.10	4,580.52
Hickling	1,444.89	1,685.71	1,926.51	2,167.33	2,648.95	3,130.59	3,612.22	4,334.66
Holme Pierrepont & Gamston	1,445.27	1,686.15	1,927.02	2,167.90	2,649.65	3,131.42	3,613.17	4,335.80
Keyworth	1,472.94	1,718.44	1,963.91	2,209.41	2,700.38	3,191.38	3,682.35	4,418.82
Kingston-on-Soar	1,446.80	1,687.94	1,929.06	2,170.20	2,652.46	3,134.74	3,617.00	4,340.40
Kinoulton	1,432.81	1,671.62	1,910.41	2,149.22	2,626.82	3,104.44	3,582.03	4,298.44
Kneeton	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Langar cum Barnstone	1,500.24	1,750.29	2,000.31	2,250.36	2,750.43	3,250.53	3,750.60	4,500.72
Newton	1,462.41	1,706.15	1,949.87	2,193.61	2,681.07	3,168.55	3,656.02	4,387.22
Normanton-on-Soar	1,473.15	1,718.69	1,964.20	2,209.73	2,700.77	3,191.84	3,682.88	4,419.46
Normanton-on-the-Wolds	1,459.17	1,702.37	1,945.55	2,188.75	2,675.13	3,161.53	3,647.92	4,377.50
Orston	1,450.40	1,692.14	1,933.86	2,175.60	2,659.06	3,142.54	3,626.00	4,351.20
Owthorpe	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Plumtree	1,451.52	1,693.45	1,935.35	2,177.28	2,661.11	3,144.97	3,628.80	4,354.56
Radcliffe-on-Trent	1,486.99	1,734.82	1,982.64	2,230.48	2,726.14	3,221.81	3,717.47	4,460.96
Ratcliffe-on-Soar	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Rempstone	1,441.03	1,681.20	1,921.36	2,161.54	2,641.88	3,122.23	3,602.57	4,323.08
Ruddington	1,500.54	1,750.64	2,000.72	2,250.81	2,750.98	3,251.18	3,751.35	4,501.62
Saxondale	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Scarrington	1,428.47	1,666.56	1,904.62	2,142.71	2,618.86	3,095.03	3,571.18	4,285.42
Screveton	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Shelford	1,480.03	1,726.71	1,973.37	2,220.05	2,713.39	3,206.75	3,700.08	4,440.10
Shelton	1,431.01	1,669.52	1,908.01	2,146.52	2,623.52	3,100.54	3,577.53	4,293.04
Sibthorpe	1,442.90	1,683.39	1,923.86	2,164.35	2,645.31	3,126.29	3,607.25	4,328.70
Stanford-on-Soar	1,462.42	1,706.16	1,949.89	2,193.63	2,681.10	3,168.58	3,656.05	4,387.26
Stanton-on-the-Wolds	1,445.15	1,686.02	1,926.86	2,167.73	2,649.44	3,131.17	3,612.88	4,335.46
Sutton Bonington	1,461.83	1,705.48	1,949.10	2,192.75	2,680.02	3,167.31	3,654.58	4,385.50
Thoroton	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Thrumpton	1,455.76	1,698.39	1,941.01	2,183.64	2,668.89	3,154.15	3,639.40	4,367.28
Tollerton	1,478.85	1,725.34	1,971.80	2,218.28	2,711.22	3,204.19	3,697.13	4,436.56
Upper Broughton	1,457.15	1,700.02	1,942.86	2,185.73	2,671.44	3,157.17	3,642.88	4,371.46
West Bridgford	1,458.50	1,701.59	1,944.66	2,187.75	2,673.91	3,160.09	3,646.25	4,375.50
West Leake	1,443.03	1,683.54	1,924.03	2,164.54	2,645.54	3,126.56	3,607.57	4,329.08
Whatton	1,458.85	1,701.99	1,945.12	2,188.27	2,674.55	3,160.84	3,647.12	4,376.54
Widmerpool	1,455.85	1,698.50	1,941.13	2,183.78	2,669.06	3,154.36	3,639.63	4,367.56
Willoughby-on-the-Wolds	1,447.51	1,688.76	1,930.00	2,171.26	2,653.76	3,136.27	3,618.77	4,342.52
Wiverton & Tithby	1,422.56	1,659.66	1,896.74	2,133.84	2,608.02	3,082.22	3,556.40	4,267.68
Wysall & Thorpe in the Glebe	1,479.81	1,726.45	1,973.07	2,219.71	2,712.97	3,206.25	3,699.52	4,439.42

## 57 **Levelling Up White Paper and Devolution Opportunities**

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Chief Executive give an update on the Levelling Up White Paper including how it could affect district councils with suggested timescales and next steps.

The Leader explained that Rushcliffe Borough Council was a member of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee (EPC), alongside all the local authorities in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Council noted that the contents of the Levelling Up White Paper and the potential for a county deal, or combined authority for the area were discussed at those meetings. The Leader hoped that the work undertaken would enable local authorities to work collaboratively on various strands of work including the environment, economy, skills, land, and housing, supporting young people and transport. It was anticipated that a business case would then be presented to government for a “County Deal” for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The Leader stated that in order for the East Midlands to have the biggest opportunity for investment in the area, the highest level of devolved powers would have to be implemented which included having a directly elected Mayor across a functioning economic area. The Leader advised that he was pleased to note that Nottingham and Nottinghamshire were mentioned in the Levelling Up White Paper as a pathfinder for the first round of county deals to be agreed. However, there were several areas for consideration to be debated and agreed, including the geography of a deal and the scope of what it would cover. The Leader provided the Council with the example of the N2 local authorities joining with the D2 authorities on a joint bid – covering the same geography as the Local Enterprise Partnership (D2N2) which would cover the population of 2.2 million.

Council was informed that the power to request and negotiate any of the county deal options set lay with the upper tier authorities and that district councils did not have the power of veto. However, the leaders of Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City Councils had expressed their desire to carry on full engagement with district councils, which could bring their influence and expertise to the table.

Councillor Robinson asked the Council to support the recommendations outlined in the report, as it was important for negotiations to move forward quickly. It was explained that the first areas to agree a county deal would be asked to put forward proposals later this year with agreement by the end of the year, and that in the case of a new Mayoral Combined Authority, elections could be as soon as May 2023.

In conclusion, Councillor Robinson noted the lack of investment in the East Midlands and stated that by agreeing to the recommendations in the report, the potential opportunities contained within the Levelling Up White Paper could be continued to be explored.

Councillor Edyvean seconded the recommendations in the report and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Gaunt supported the levelling up white paper and the devolving of local powers, agreed that the East Midlands had been underfunded and hoped that its radical aims and missions would allow the East Midlands to return to pre-austerity levels. Councillor Gaunt also asked how this was aimed to be achieved by 2030.

Councillor Jones supported the recommendations in the report and believed that devolution opportunities were important to attract extra income. Councillor Jones also supported the suggestion that the elected Mayor could replace the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Councillor Jones agreed with Councillor Gaunt's statement that its aims and missions were ambitious and also stated that it was important that resources were kept at the lowest level.

Councillor R Mallender stated that the removal of the power of veto would take away the power of those living outside of cities. Councillor Mallender also advised that he disagreed with the first past the post method of election; however, despite this, he agreed that it was important for local authorities to work collaboratively on tackling the climate change crisis and believed that the devolving of powers would benefit residents and neighbouring authorities.

Councillor Thomas stated that another layer of government would provide more confusion to residents about the roles of the three tiers of Council's in addition to their MP, Police and Crime Commissioner, the roles of the Development Corporation, the LEP and D2N2. However, Councillor Thomas noted that there was a huge financial incentive to participate in the continuation of devolution and for Rushcliffe Borough Council to use its influence to benefit its residents. Councillor Thomas also thanked the Leader and the Chief Executive for representing the Council on the Economic Prosperity Committee and stated that the Leake Independents would support the recommendations in the report.

In response to the comments made by the Councillors, the Leader noted the success of combined authorities in areas such as the West Midlands and also assured the Council that district councils would still be involved in the decision-making process where possible, and that the Council would be kept updated on any progress made.

It was **RESOLVED** that the opportunities for enhanced devolution contained within the Levelling Up White Paper be acknowledged and that the Leader and Chief Executive continue to work with the other local authority leaders and chief executives in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on any devolution bids and brings an update to a future Council meeting for further debate.

## 58 **Upper Saxondale Community Governance Review**

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Growth, Councillor Edyvean presented the report of the Chief Executive, updating Council on the Upper Saxondale Community Governance Review.

Councillor Edyvean reminded Council that a petition had been received from the residents of Upper Saxondale at the December meeting of Council, which had subsequently been validated and accepted. This report set out the next



steps to undertake a Community Governance Review of Upper Saxondale, to address the petition request that the area become parished in its own right and elect its own parish council in May 2023. Councillor Edyvean asked Council to support the establishment of a Member Task and Finish Group to oversee the Community Governance Review and report back to Council in September.

Councillor Brennan seconded the recommendations and reserved the right to speak.

Councillors J Walker, Jones, R Mallender and Thomas all expressed their intention to support the recommendations and Councillor Upton, who represented the ward where Upper Saxondale currently sat, also expressed his support after describing to Council how Upper Saxondale was a distinct and separate area of his ward.

Councillors Brennan and Edyvean both thanked Councillors for their support.

Before moving to the vote, the Monitoring Officer asked Councillors Barney and Purdue-Horan to abstain from voting as they had missed a substantial amount of debate on this item.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the process involved for the delivery of a Community Governance Review and the proposed timetable be noted;
- b) the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review (Appendix Two) be approved;
- c) a cross party Task and Finish Group to consider the Council's position in response to the consultation to be undertaken as part of the Review be established; and
- d) the Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference (Appendix Three) be approved.

## 59 **Hickling Parish Neighbourhood Plan**

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Growth, Councillor Edyvean presented the report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth, which recommended that Council adopted the Plan.

Councillor Edyvean reminded Council that it had approved a number of reports of this nature in recent years and this marked the point at which the community of Hickling was able to decide about whether it supported the Neighbourhood Plan for the area. Following the referendum, which was being held today, the Council was asked to adopt (make) the Plan if the community support reached over 50%. As the residents of Hickling had put a lot of time and effort into creating their Neighbourhood Plan, Councillor Edyvean urged Councillors to vote in favour of the recommendations.

Councillor Brennan seconded the recommendations and reserved the right to

speak.

Councillors J Walker, Jones, R Mallender and Thomas all expressed support for the recommendations and congratulated the residents of Hickling in taking an active role in the future of their community.

Councillors Brennan and Edyvean also congratulated the community and had nothing further to add to the debate.

It was **RESOLVED** that, subject to a majority vote in the referendum:

- a) the Hickling Parish Neighbourhood Plan be 'made' (adopted); and
- b) authority be delegated to the Director – Development and Economic Growth to issue a statement setting out this decision as soon as possible following the referendum.

## 60 Notices of Motion

- a. The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Thomas and seconded by Councillor R Mallender.

“This Council recognises the contribution that solar power can make in moving Rushcliffe towards net zero carbon by means of solar power generation in/on new buildings, and also that it is possible to position, design, build and operate solar farms to produce valuable renewable energy in a way that benefits the community, biodiversity, wildlife, and recreational enjoyment of the countryside. However, Council also recognises the potential negative impacts of solar farms, for example in terms of loss of agricultural land, management methods that reduce biodiversity, restriction of movement of wildlife, loss of habitat variety, reduced recreational access to the countryside, negative impact on the landscape and openness of the countryside, and impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. Council will:

1. Before the next Local Plan, issue planning guidance to:

- maximise opportunities for solar power generation and energy efficiency in new buildings, in line with current Local Plan and National policies; and
- supplement Policy 16 of Local Plan Part 2 in terms of the location and design of solar farms to help ensure negative impacts are minimised.

2. In the next Local Plan:

- strengthen policies to achieve improved solar power generation and energy efficiency in new buildings; and
- advance the positive benefits of solar farms for the community, whilst protecting against the negative impacts.

3. Call on the government to strengthen national planning policies relating to solar power generation and energy efficiency in new buildings so that this does not rely on local policies.”

Councillor Thomas informed Council, in moving the motion, that in line with the Local Plan, the Council was providing development sites for new housing and employment for the Nottingham area. Council noted the vision of each new

housing estate having the potential to become a mini power station by design, with solar power generation in mind. Newer technologies would also provide ways for other building materials to generate electricity. Councillor Thomas stated that the required infrastructure to link to the grid and provide battery storage could efficiently be added during the build, whilst at the same time, building design could maximise energy efficiency to reduce the energy each new home consumes. Unfortunately, none of this was happening because it was not a planning requirement, and the objective of developers was, understandably, to maximise the profit for their stakeholders not improve energy efficiency or electricity generation for longer term benefit. Councillor Thomas went on to highlight that in the meantime Rushcliffe's green fields were being identified as locations for huge solar farms, to generate profit for a different group of developers. There was no question that this country needed to develop renewable energy sources, but it was also possible to build solar farms that sat well in the landscape without disrupting residents and the environment. Regrettably, if badly designed, these could also be obtrusive, ugly, disruptive, and damaging to wildlife, habitats, and biodiversity.

Councillor Thomas stated that resolving this issue would require work locally, and parts one and two of the motion covered what the Council could do here in the Borough, and nationally, and the third part of the motion related to the need for central government to act. However, Councillor Thomas shared her concerns that the next Local Plan was currently somewhat off, and action was required sooner. Council was advised that scrutiny into alternative energy sources had been scheduled but not until September 2022, due to concerns over officer workloads. Councillor Thomas concluded by expressing her concern that this would be too late and that by investing time in setting clear policies, the Council would save officer time in the long run as well as making its intentions in this area clear.

Councillor R Mallender seconded the motion and informed Council that the average energy consumption in the UK is about 30gigawatts per hour, with about 30% generated from fossil fuels, around 16% from nuclear power, 7% from biomass, with the remaining quarter being generated from renewable sources. Whilst this is a distinct improvement on the figures from 10 years ago, there was room for improvement. In principle, solar panels were a good idea, but poor use was made of the available. Council noted that by putting solar panels on roofs, beautiful green countryside in the Borough was being protected, whilst creating an easy way to help tackle climate change.

Councillor Edyvean informed Council that he, and his party, supported the sentiment behind the motion, which was why, as a Council, so much was already being done. The Council's Local Plan already contained references to sustainable and renewable energies such as solar and wind technologies. The Council was in the process of creating a Supplementary Planning Document specifically related to solar energy and Councillor Edyvean reminded Council that whatever was done locally needed to be in line with national policy; indeed, the Council had been instrumental in pushing for design guidance across the county and would continue to work on that moving forward. The development at Abbey Road highlighted the Council's ambition in this area at a level that it could influence and control. Councillor Edyvean also informed Council that alternative energies including solar would be scrutinised at the

Growth and Development Scrutiny Group later this year. In summary, Councillor Edyvean highlighted that the Council was already working towards achieving much of what was contained within the motion and, therefore, he could not see what else could be done at this stage.

Councillor Gaunt stated that the standard of housing being built was not fit for purpose to be environmentally sustainable and the government should be lobbied to reinstate previous legislation that had required all new housing be net zero by 2015. Councillor Gaunt considered that seven years had been lost and this motion at least showed the Council's intent to move forward on this issue.

Councillor Jones understood the reasons behind Councillor's Thomas' motion and told Council that he felt these were an improvement on current levels of activity and existing policy. He concluded by saying that it was very disappointing that this motion was being seen as negative.

Councillor Clarke reported to Council that he fully supported the passion and sentiment of Councillor Thomas' motion but also understood, as Councillor Edyvean had said, that action was already being taken by the Council to address those concerns. Councillor Clarke stated that the wording in the motion was too vague, and he offered to meet with Councillor Thomas, and any other Councillors that wished to be involved, informally before this item came to scrutiny to discuss more practical and implementable solutions to bring forward.

Councillor R Walker thanked Councillor Thomas for her motion as it brought an important issue to the attention of Council, as residents in his ward were feeling particularly threatened by the potential for large swathes of local land to be changed from beautiful countryside into solar farms. Councillor Walker reported that he did not think the motion would do enough, or that the proposed scrutiny would be enough, and so he welcomed Councillor Clarke's offer, as he felt that it was important to start somewhere.

Councillor Barney reported to Council that he had met with Councillors R Walker and R Mallender about this topic recently in relation to a current application in the Borough for a solar farm. Council noted that Councillor Barney would be taking Councillor Clarke up on his offer in the hope that the decision-making process can be made fairer, more rational and with the best interests of residents at its heart.

Councillor Thomas expressed her disappointment that the motion would not be supported.

On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

b. The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Way and seconded by Councillor Gowland.

Council was informed that Councillor Way was unable to attend Council to present her motion and asked for leave to allow Councillor Thomas to present it on her behalf. The meeting consented.

Prior to presenting the motion Councillor Thomas informed the Mayor that she wished to make a small alteration under Standing Order 14 (highlighted in italics below). After outlining the alteration, consent was given by Council and Councillor Thomas proceeded to move the motion.

“Council recognises that use of chemical pesticides (including herbicides and insecticides) has the potential to harm the health of our residents and have negative impacts on the environment and biodiversity. Council resolves to:

1. Build on existing actions to reduce the use of pesticides in its own operations, replacing with less harmful alternatives over a three year period, except for a ***limited*** list of permitted exceptions to be determined.
2. Work with partner organisations, including Nottinghamshire County Council, to influence their own use of the pesticides in public areas within Rushcliffe.
3. Conduct a public awareness campaign and otherwise use its influence to encourage the public and businesses in Rushcliffe to similarly eliminate the use of pesticides on their own land.
4. Include appropriate advisory notes in planning consents for residential developments which include public open spaces to incorporate construction management plans and ongoing management agreements for public open space which ***strive to be*** similarly pesticide-free.”

In moving the motion, Councillor Thomas informed Council that according to the World Health Organisation there were over 1000 different pesticides in use around the world, there was increasingly compelling evidence that a wide range of pesticides might be harmful to human health, and that several other local authorities had already taken steps to limit pesticide use or stop using pesticides altogether. After outlining the dangers of pesticide use to children, pets, and the biodiversity of the Borough, Councillor Thomas reminded Councillors about the commitments made in the Nature Conservation Strategy and recognised that the Council was already taking action to reduce chemical use. This motion asked the Council to commit to ensuring that, within a three-year period, pesticides were only used in very limited circumstances. Councillor Thomas went on to provide detail on other areas of the motion, such as the Council using its communications channels to influence other users of pesticides in the Borough, including local businesses and residents, and the potential of using planning conditions to control the use of pesticides on new housing developments by developers or subsequent management companies. Councillor Thomas concluded by saying that she understood that it may not be possible to discontinue all pesticide use but that this should be restricted to areas where all other attempts have failed.

Councillor Gowland seconded the motion and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Brennan informed Councillors that the Council had already demonstrated commitment to this important agenda and was working towards minimising pesticide use through the Nature Conservation Strategy adopted at

Cabinet in February 2021. Councillor Brennan agreed that it was not possible to have a blanket ban on pesticide use as there were instances where their use was necessary but believed that it was possible for the Council to make a wider commitment to reduce overall pesticide usage in the Borough, and although there were no easy answers it was incumbent on everyone to try and minimise their use. Council was advised that the Conservative Party would be supporting the motion to extend the commitment of the Council to reduce pesticide use, including the development of a limited list of exceptions, as well as working with partners and contractors to find alternative means of control, and use Rushcliffe Reports and the Council's social media channels to inform residents of the perils of pesticide use. Unfortunately, the Council could not use planning conditions to control the actions of developers and management companies but would commit to using its influence where it could.

Councillor Jones expressed his support for the motion, informed Council about his own personal commitment to reduce pesticide use and stated that he was particularly pleased to see that the motion contained measures to increase resident awareness and encourage change beyond the reach of the Council.

Councillor R Mallender explained that much needed to be done to educate residents, as well as the Council leading by example in its own operations, as well as influencing contractors and other users and he would be happy to support the motion.

Councillor Bailey informed Council that as well as damaging the environment, pesticides could also have a detrimental effect on non-target species leading to even greater damage. Councillor Bailey reiterated that alternatives did exist and welcomed the measures in the motion and suggested that consideration be given to this as an item for the town and parish council forum, as she felt they also had a part to play in this change.

Councillor Gowland expressed disappointment that the language in the motion had been modified to be less specific but welcomed the support that the motion had received from both sides of the Council Chamber. She stressed the Council's role in leading this change and looked forward to progress being made.

Councillor Thomas stated that she was heartened by the support, as Councillor Way would be and reiterated that the way forward was to use pesticides in exceptional circumstances, rather than as the norm.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

## **61 Questions from Councillors**

Question from Councillor Gowland to Councillor Brennan

“Given the operational issues with the sauna and steam room at Rushcliffe Arena will the Council be looking to provide such facilities in the future as part of its wider Leisure Strategy offer?”

In response, Councillor Brennan informed Council that it was the Council's

ambition to always provide leisure facilities that met the Council's strategic vision of providing high quality, financially sustainable leisure facilities to support Rushcliffe residents to enjoy active and healthy lives. Taking on board the operational and cost issues associated with the sauna and steam facilities which opened here at the Arena in West Bridgford in 2016, including vandalism, abuse of the facility and additional insurance costs, it was decided, in conjunction with the Council's leisure operator, not to include such facilities in the specification for the new Arena and to focus on providing core facilities which better met the Council's vision. This position would also be reflected in the mid-term review of the Leisure Facilities Strategy which was due this year.

Supplementary question

Councillor Gowland asked how much it had cost to install the sauna and steam room at Rushcliffe Arena.

Councillor Brennan did not have that information to hand but will ensure that it is sent on to Councillor Gowland.

The meeting closed at 9.23 pm.

CHAIRMAN