

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CABINET  
TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 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 J Robinson (Chairman), A Edyvean (Vice-Chairman), A Brennan,  
R Inglis, G Moore and R Upton

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillor R Mallender

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
G Dennis	Monitoring Officer
K Marriott	Chief Executive
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager
S Whittaker	Service Manager - Finance

**18 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**19 Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 July 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12 July 2022, were declared a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**20 Citizens' Questions**

There were no citizens' questions.

**21 Opposition Group Leaders' Questions**

There were no Opposition Group Leaders' questions.

**22 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2022/23 - Financial Update  
Quarter 1**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Services, Councillor Moore presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the budget position for revenue and capital as of 30 June 2022.

Councillor Moore referred to the continued challenging financial times faced by everyone and advised that this report had been considered by the Corporate

Overview Group on 6 September, which had identified no significant issues. Continued prudent financial management ensured that the Council continued to manage identified risks, and Councillor Moore confirmed that a revenue budget efficiency of just over £1m was projected.

Reference was made to the Capital Programme, with details of the estimated underspend of £6.1m highlighted in paragraph 4.7 of the report. Councillor Moore advised that given the concerns with the cost of living crisis, paragraph 4.11 of the report detailed the various collection rates, and Cabinet noted that although that currently looked positive, the situation could change.

Councillor Moore referred to two of the Council's significant projects, the Crematorium and the Bingham Leisure Hub, details of which were highlighted in paragraph 4.12 of the report and advised that due to external factors completion would be delayed, although it was hoped that they would be completed soon.

In respect of the Council's intention to secure external funding to deliver both the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up funding, Cabinet noted that the former related to £2.5m over three years, with the later related to delivering new infrastructure and improvements, details of which were highlighted in paragraphs 4.14 and 5.15 of the report.

Councillor Moore referred to Appendix E, which detailed the Quarter 1 position of the Special Expenses budget and advised that it was expected to be on budget, although that might change through the year as variances were identified.

Councillor Moore concluded by reminding Cabinet that it was due to the Council's good financial position that it could face current and future challenges, and as the situation continued to change, the Council would need to remain prudent.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Edyvean thanked Councillor Moore for his comprehensive summary and reminded Cabinet that although the Bingham Leisure Hub project had been delayed, which was disappointing, it would be completed below budget by £1m, despite rapidly increasing building costs. Councillor Edyvean stated that the Council remained debt free, commended the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and his team for their excellent work and noted that although there would continue to be challenging times ahead, the Council would face those with its continued good financial planning.

The Leader stated that the only advantage of rising inflation was the increased interest rates, which generated additional income through the Council's investments and that positive aspect should be noted.

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

- a) the expected revenue budget efficiency for the year of £1.073m and proposals to earmark this for cost pressures;

- b) the capital budget efficiencies of £6.170m including the re-profiling of provisions totalling £1.465m to 2023/24 for Cotgrave Leisure Centre, Keyworth Leisure Centre, and West Park;
- c) the transfer of £0.15m from the Streetwise Loan Provision to Capital Contingency;
- d) the expected outturn position for Special Expenses to be in line with the budget; and
- e) the Council positively engaging in securing external funding with regards to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Levelling-up and Safer Streets.

## 23 **Customer Access Strategy 2022-25**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Services, Councillor Moore presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Customer Access Strategy for 2022-2025.

Councillor Moore referred to the Foreword of the Strategy, which set out the aim of increased customer access, to deliver contemporary, efficient, and easy to use contact channels and services, by responding to customer's current and future needs, within existing budgets, whilst identifying innovative digital options customers could relate to. Cabinet noted that the Council was committed to customers accessing its services in ways that suited their needs, and whilst increasing digital services, a balance would be struck to ensure that face to face contact continued, together with exploring customer offers with partner organisations and communities, during this post lockdown environment.

Councillor Moore stated that customers required services that were easy to access, simple to use, reliable and cost effective, and it was important that the Council increasingly adapted to deliver those services, including further engagement with self-service channels, increased free internet access and mobile technology, in line with customer expectations.

Councillor Moore advised that the Strategy would support delivery of the Council's priority of efficient services, whilst complimenting its associated External and Internal Communications Strategy and ultimately it aimed to engage and enable its customers to retain a great quality of life.

In conclusion, Councillor Moore stated that this was a very comprehensive document, which detailed how customers contacted the Council and how that was changing in the digital world, and he considered that the Council currently had an excellent reputation, although it was important to innovate and improve, including as part of that plans for the new website.

In seconding the recommendation Councillor Brennan endorsed previous comments and stated that this excellent document encapsulated the ethos of the Communications Strategy itself and it made it clear why the Council had responded in the way it had to data received. It was interesting to see how people contacting the Council had changed pre and post Covid, and how

trends had been accelerated and that was why updating the website was very important. Councillor Brennan stated that it was pleasing that the Council could adapt quickly to customer needs, and despite the increased digital communication, it was important to retain a physical presence in local communities.

The Leader concurred with previous comments and stated that good communications and access should never be taken for granted. The Leader expressed surprise at the differing ratios between West Bridgford and the other contact points, with ten times the number of people coming to West Bridgford, although it was noted that this could be reflected by the differing opening times. The Leader stated that given the effect of the pandemic, it would be interesting to see how things changed going forward.

Councillor Upton stated that whilst supporting face to face contact, if the trend went to a critical point, where given the numbers accessing it, a stand-alone Council facility was perhaps not viable, he hoped that the Council would look at partnering with other organisations.

The Leader agreed and highlighted that at Cotgrave, it was a multi service facility, which worked successfully. The Leader also noted that many other councils had significantly more face to face contact compared to Rushcliffe, although that was likely to be associated with the different services that they provided, so it was difficult to compare.

**It was RESOLVED that** the adoption of the Customer Access Strategy 2022-2025 be approved.

## 24 **Aslockton Conservation Area Consultation**

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Councillor Upton presented the report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth outlining the Aslockton Conservation Area consultation.

Councillor Upton advised that the proposed public consultation would be held for 21 days and include a public event in the village. Councillor Upton considered that this would be the first of many reports, as conservation areas in the Borough would be reviewed as part of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Cabinet noted that it was not a legal requirement to consult the public; however, it was considered good practice to do so. The document had been reviewed by officers, in partnership with the local community representatives and a copy of the draft Character Appraisal was appended to the report.

Councillor Upton concluded by stating that any responses to the consultation would be considered and changes made, before a report was brought back to Cabinet for final adoption.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Inglis referred to the importance of conservation areas in protecting the special characteristics and unique qualities of villages and he considered that it was appropriate to consult residents, to gain their views.

The Leader noted that Rushcliffe had more conservation areas than any other authority in Nottinghamshire, referred to their importance and looked forward to seeing this progress.

**It was RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

- a) agrees that the village of Aslockton still possesses qualities of special architectural and historic interest, which would warrant its continued designation as a conservation area under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; and
- b) approves the Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal and proposed conservation area boundary for the purposes of public consultation, to last a period of 21 days and to include a public consultation event held in the village.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

CHAIRMAN