

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, 26 JULY 2018**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Rushcliffe Borough Council

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Mrs M Stockwood (Mayor)  
Councillor Mrs C Jeffreys (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors S Bailey, K Beardsall, A Brown, M Buckle, B Buschman, R Butler, H Chewings, T Combellack, B Cooper, G Davidson, N Clarke, J Cottee, A Dickinson, J Donoghue, M Edwards, A Edyvean, J Greenwood, S Hull, R Inglis, K Khan, R Jones, N Lawrence, J Lungley, A MacInnes, Mrs M Males, S Mallender, D Mason, G Moore, A Phillips, L Plant, F Purdue-Horan, S J Robinson, Mrs J Smith, J Stockwood, J Thurman, R Upton and J Wheeler

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

10 Members of the public

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

D Banks	Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods
M Elliott	Constitutional Services Team Leader
P Linfield	Executive Manager - Finance and Corporate Services
D Mitchell	Executive Manager - Communities
S Sull	Deputy Monitoring Officer
S Whittaker	Financial Services Manager
L Webb	Constitutional Services Officer

**APOLOGIES:**

Councillors R Adair, R Hetherington, R Mallender and G Wheeler

**Opening Prayer**

The Meeting was led in prayer by the Mayor's Chaplain, Canon Alan Haydock.

**11 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Cottee declared a private interest in agenda item 9, motion 1 and announced that he would not take part in the subsequent discussion and vote on the motion.

**12 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24 May 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

### **13 Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor reported that she had attended many varied events since the last meeting of Council and advised that she was very much looking forward to her first charity fundraising event on 13 October 2018 which was to include an auction with TV personality and auctioneer, Charles Hanson.

The Mayor also referred to the following engagements:

- Attending Abbey Road Primary School with Councillor Mason to promote the highly anticipated Tour of Britain cycle race which was coming to Rushcliffe on 8 September 2018.
- Visiting Archbishop Cranmer School during their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.
- Attending the DNRC handover ceremony from Headley Court to Stanford Hall and meeting the Duke of Cambridge and the Duke of Westminster.

The Mayor also announced that her cadet for 2018/19 was Cadet Flight Sergeant Luke Whitham from 1936 (Newton) Squadron and presented him with a certificate to mark the start of his year as Mayor's Cadet.

### **14 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader informed the Council that he had attended the ceremony at Stanford Hall that marked the official handover of the DNRC from Headley Court to Stanford Hall and noted how pleased he was that this important facility was now located in Rushcliffe. The Leader also congratulated Councillor Barrie Cooper for raising almost £7,000 for his chosen charity, The Friary during his year as Mayor in 2017/18. The Leader also announced that signs had been placed around the Borough which stated that the use of helium balloons and sky lanterns were prohibited on Council land which and indicated the Council's continued commitment to be for environmental responsible. The Leader also referred to his pride in the Council being named Best Commercial Council of the Year at the prestigious annual Municipal Journal Awards in June in addition to winning the Entrepreneurial Council of the Year award at the Local Government Chronicle Awards in March.

### **15 Chief Executive's Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **16 Citizens' Questions**

There were no questions.

## 17 Statement of Accounts 2017/18

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services seeking approval for the Statement of Accounts 2017/18 and for approval of the Management Representation letter that confirmed that the external auditors, KPMG, were satisfied with the validity of the financial statements provided by the Council. The Portfolio Holder stated that despite difficult economic circumstances that faced the public sector, the Council had maintained its focus on achieving a viable Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the KPMG auditors had approved the Council's accounts with no major concerns and thanked the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services and the finance team for their hard work in getting the accounts ready on time and meeting the challenges that the bringing forward of the date for when the accounts had had to be finalised this year had presented.

The Portfolio Holder advised that it had been an extremely successful year for Rushcliffe financially which had seen it continuing to have the lowest council tax in Nottinghamshire whilst still delivering excellent services with high resident satisfaction levels. The Portfolio Holder also noted that the Council's Reserves have grown and assured Council that financial issues surrounding capital expenditure underspending would be addressed. The Portfolio Holder also reported that the Council's Strategic Investments had been a success, referencing Chapel Lane in Bingham and the regeneration of Cotgrave Town Centre.

In seconding the report, Councillor Robinson stated the council had a £1.7 million gross income from its investments which placed the Council in a good and sustainable financial position but did note that Brexit did present some uncertainty going forwards, but that the Council was prepared for this uncertainty and that it was always looking at new ways of generating income in order to protect services delivered to residents.

Councillor MacInnes noted that it was excellent to see that the Council's reserves had increased and commended the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services, finance team and the auditors for their work. Councillor Davidson noted his agreement with Councillor MacInnes' comments. Councillor Jones offered further congratulations regarding the statement of accounts and thanked Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services, the finance team and the auditors. Councillor Jones expressed concern about the sustainability of the pension scheme with fewer contributors supporting more pensioners as well as the potential borrowing costs involved in providing a new leisure centre at Bingham.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Statement of Accounts for 2017/18 be approved.
- b) The Management Representation letter be approved.

## 18 Notices of Motion

### Notices of Motion

- a) The following motion was moved by Councillor Jones and seconded by Councillor Khan

“We call on Nottinghamshire County Council to create a street parking strategy for West Bridgford in cooperation with this Council which improves opportunities for residents and the livelihood of local businesses.”

Councillor Jones in moving the motion explained the need for a street parking strategy for West Bridgford. It was noted that residents who lived in older houses within West Bridgford especially within the Melton Road and Musters Road area would often resort to double parking on the road due to lack of off street parking at their property. Councillor Jones also advised that community groups close to West Bridgford town centre relied heavily on street parking and that lack of parking amenities at community facilities such as churches was exacerbating the issue of lack of parking in West Bridgford. Councillor Jones also expressed his disappointment that recent planning applications with no allocated parking spaces for parking had received any objections from Nottinghamshire County Council as the local highways authority.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Khan who reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Edyvean thanked Councillor Jones for proposing the motion and advised that while he fully supported the motion and its aims, he wanted to propose an amendment to the motion as follows.

“Once issues relating to street parking are identified, we will seek to work with Nottinghamshire County Council, and for County to create a street parking strategy for West Bridgford, which improves opportunities for residents and the livelihoods of local business.”

Councillor Edyvean in moving the amendment to the motion advised that it was important for the Council to first understand what the issues were regarding street parking in West Bridgford and what the desired outcomes were before working alongside Nottinghamshire County Council to develop a street parking strategy. Councillor Donoghue seconded the amended motion and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Jones advised that he had provided details regarding the problems of parking in West Bridgford in moving the original motion. Councillor Clarke disagreed and advised that the problems with regard to street parking in West Bridgford had not been stated adequately in the moving of the original motion and that if the Council first researched into the issues of street parking in West Bridgford it would strengthen the need for Nottinghamshire County Council to develop an on street parking strategy.

Councillor MacInnes referenced with concern the ongoing planning applications which proposed for Victorian houses to be converted into houses of multiple occupation no provision for parking. Councillor MacInnes also

expressed concern that this would have a disadvantageous effect on the ability of households that possessed more than one car to be able to park near their property. Councillor Robinson reiterated Councillor Edyvean's statement that the Conservative Group were in full support of the principles of the original motion but noted the importance of first collecting data from local residents, the West Bridgford Growth Board and other stakeholders in order to fully determine what the issues were in regards to street parking in West Bridgford.

Councillor Sue Mallender stated that because cars were getting bigger there was a greater need for an on street parking strategy in West Bridgford but also noted that there was greater need for residents to be encouraged to use public transport, carpooling and cycling to get about and hoped that there would be better provision for cyclists in the future, especially with the Tour of Britain coming to Rushcliffe in September 2018.

Councillor Davidson stated that if the amendment to the motion was carried it would only slow down the process of producing an on street parking strategy for West Bridgford and asked if Councillor Robinson would commit to producing the data on the issues relating to street parking in West Bridgford by the end of 2018 in order for an on street strategy to be produced as soon as possible. Councillor Khan advised that he was willing to support the amendment to the motion but only if the strategy could be reviewed by the West Bridgford Growth Board and that consideration be made for a reduction of car parking charges in West Bridgford. Councillor Plant noted that a set timescale for the required research and drafting of the strategy should be produced and noted that it was important for the Borough Council to work closely with Nottinghamshire County Council as provision for both on street and off street parking were interlinked. Councillor Lawrence noted that problems with on street parking exceeded the West Bridgford area and suggested if consideration could be made for a Borough wide on street parking strategy.

In response to comments made regarding the amendment to the motion Councillor Edyvean stated that workshops would take place to determine the issues of street parking in West Bridgford and that the West Bridgford Growth Board would be involved in the process. Councillor Edyvean stated that the amendment would give officers at Rushcliffe Borough Council time to research the problems of on street parking before working with Nottinghamshire County Council to develop an on street parking strategy for West Bridgford.

Councillor Cottee stated that he was abstaining from the vote as he was the Chairman of the Communities and Place Committee at Nottinghamshire County Council. On being put to the vote the amendment to the motion was declared as carried.

There was no further debate. On being put to the vote the motion was declared as carried. Councillor Cottee abstained from the vote.

- b) The following motion was moved by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Mason.

"This Council fully supports the rights of free speech, including the right of any political party to present their message on the streets of Rushcliffe, providing it is in full compliance with the laws and by laws.

However, this Council commits to ensuring local community events organised by Rushcliffe Borough Council are organised to support the objectives of the Authority and that unless expressly authorised there will be:

- i. No organised political group presence to promote, campaign or recruit to a particular ideology or campaign.
- ii. No facilities sanctioned to display political material, banners, or leaflets”

In moving the motion, Councillor Robinson stated that it was important for Council to note the guidelines included in the Local Government Act 1972 with regard to political activity at events. Councillor Robinson noted that the motion had to be brought to the Council following an incident where the Labour Party had been actively promoting themselves in celebrating 70 years of the NHS during the Taste of Rushcliffe and YouNG Market event which had taken place on Central Avenue, West Bridgford on 7 July 2018. Councillor Robinson noted that it was important for political parties to respect the five community events which the Council ran within the Borough every year and that these events should not be used to promote any political ideology or belief, with residents and visitors being able to enjoy the events without political beliefs being promoted. Councillor Robinson stated that Council staff at the event on 7 July had been placed in a difficult position in having to deal with the activity and that it was not acceptable to them to have had to deal with the incident.

In seconding the motion Councillor Mason stated that families should be able to enjoy visiting Rushcliffe Borough Council's community events without being subjected to the promotion of political ideology and that the use of megaphones by some Labour Party members at the event on 7 July had been totally inappropriate and was not acceptable behaviour. Councillor Mason also noted that the behaviour of some of the Labour Party members at the event had been disappointing and had been disrespectful to the YouNG Market entrepreneurs and performers at the event.

Councillor Plant in responding to the motion advised that the local Labour Party had had a stand in West Bridgford for over thirty years and that the stand attended by Labour members and councillors provided residents with an opportunity to raise local and national issues with the Labour councillors and that the presence of the stall had never attracted any complaints. Councillor Plant stated that the stall on 7 July had not been obstructing the highway and that having looked into the matter she was unable to find any by-laws that stated that a political stand would not be allowed at that community event. Councillor Plant noted that the motion lacked clarity and could be misinterpreted in numerous ways for example if an event was taking place in West Bridgford did that mean that an political stand could not be held elsewhere in the Borough on that day. Councillor Plant also questioned how, if at all such a restriction on political activity could be enforced. Councillor Plant reassured Council that the local Labour Party had not attempted to hi-jack the Taste of Rushcliffe Food Festival/YouNG Market but were instead there as part of a national Labour Party event to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the NHS which by coincidence happened to coincide with the Council's event.

Councillor Jones noted that while he did not see a problem with the Labour Party stand that the use of a megaphone had perhaps been inappropriate. Councillor Jones stated that the motion was not precise enough in many ways, for example who would apply for permission and to whom, and could if approved could easily be misinterpreted. In response to his concerns Councillor Jones proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:

“This Council fully supports the rights of free speech and expression as long as this is within the laws of the land such as not inciting racial hatred. This includes the right of political parties to present their message on the pavements of Rushcliffe as long as they do not obstruct the highway. The Council considers that it is not appropriate for organised public political campaigns to occur within or interfere with official community events organised by the Council. The Council accepts that political campaigns can occur in public locations which are nearby Council community events as long as they are clearly separate and do not interfere with access to or egress from the community event and do not interfere or intrude upon the community event by sound, lighting or other electronic means.”

In seconding the amendment to the motion, Councillor Davidson stated that he was supporting the amended motion but could not support the original motion as submitted as it was far too vague and did not include details with regard to spatial limitation.

Councillor Sue Mallender agreed with Councillor Davidson’s comments and noted that those political groups that promoted racial hatred should not be allowed to promote their political ideology on Council land. Councillor Sue Mallender also noted her agreement with Councillor Plant’s comments on the vagueness of the motion and that caution was needed so that the motion could not be misinterpreted as the Council limiting free speech. Councillor Khan also noted that free speech had its limits and that freedom speech should not be allowed to cause harm and as such clear boundaries on what was acceptable and was not acceptable needed to be made clear.

Councillor Clarke noted the excellent quality of life enjoyed by Rushcliffe residents and that Rushcliffe was an area where people wanted to come and live. Councillor Clarke also noted that in his many years in local politics he had seen much political activity, and that while members of different parties had always disagreed the political debate had always been conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect, however there was a time and a place for debate and that local community events were neither the appropriate time or place. Councillor Clarke noted that the amended motion did not add clarity but instead would create confusion due to its potential subjective interpretation. Councillor Robinson agreed that that the amendment to the motion made it more subjective and that specific guidelines should not need be put in place in order for the Council’s events to be respected parties

Councillor Lawrence noted that local community events would always create a temptation for those involved in politics to express their ideologies to residents but that it also gave events a bad reputation. Councillor Lawrence also raised questions about who would enforce the motion if carried. Councillor Donoghue stated that she had worked as a nurse for the NHS for over 20 years and had

worked hard under both Labour and Conservative Governments for the benefit of patients. Councillor Donoghue stated that she was disappointed that the Labour Party had attempted to hijack the Taste of Rushcliffe/YouNG Market event and the 70th anniversary of the NHS to promote their political beliefs and questioned how this activity celebrated the achievements of the NHS. Councillor Donoghue reiterated that the NHS looked after everybody noted her disappointment that Rushcliffe councillors would participate in this type of activity and noted that the Labour Party should have been representing their constituents rather than promoting political ideology.

Councillor Jones advised that it had been an unfortunate coincidence that the two events had coincided and along with and Councillor Khan raised further concerns about how the proposed motion would be enforced. Councillor Butler noted that the incident on 7 July had been a serious and concerning incident and stated that the Council events staff would be in a position to enforce the requirements of the motion if it was passed. Councillor Moore agreed with the comments of Councillor Butler and noted that the original motion was straight forward and that the motion would be enforced during the five Rushcliffe Borough Council events which were held in West Bridgford every year and that the Council would monitor their events themselves.

In responding to the points raised in the debate on the amendment, Councillor Jones asked for a recorded vote to be taken on the amendment. In accordance with Standing Order 9.2 the vote was taken immediately. The recorded vote was taken as follows.

**FOR:** Councillors H Chewings, G Davidson, M Edwards, S Hull, K Khan, R Jones, A MacInnes, S Mallender, L Plant.

**AGAINST:** Councillors S Bailey, K Beardsall, A Brown, M Buckle, B Buschman, R Butler, T Combellack, B Cooper, N Clarke, J Cottee, A Dickinson, J Donoghue, A Edyvean, J Greenwood, R Inglis, N Lawrence, J Lungley, Mrs M Males, D Mason, G Moore, A Phillips, F Purdue-Horan, S Robinson, Mrs J Smith, J Stockwood, J Thurman, R Upton, J Wheeler.

**ABSTENSION:** Councillors Mrs C Jeffreys and Mrs M Stockwood.

On being put to the vote the amended motion was declared as lost.

In debating the original motion, Councillor Robinson stated that Rushcliffe Borough Council events should not need to be monitored for political activity and asked for political parties to be respectful to not hold stands at Rushcliffe Borough Council events. Councillor Robinson stated that Council officers had been put in a difficult situation during the Taste of Rushcliffe/YouNG Market and that this should not happen. Councillor Purdue-Horan advised of his support for the motion and noted that a Labour Party stand at a recent Bingham Town Council event had received some negative feedback from local residents as to its appropriateness of being at the event.

In responding to the issues raised in the debate Councillor Robinson restated his belief that politics and community events should be kept separate, and that while enforcement would be carried out on a case by case basis, the responsibility of adhering to the motion should fall to local political parties



acting considerately and responsibly.

After being put to the vote the motion was declared as carried.

- c) The following motion was moved by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Edyvean

“This Council acknowledges and celebrates the incredible achievement of being double winners of two of the sectors most prestigious national awards.

By winning both the LGC Entrepreneurial Council and MJ Commercial Council of the Year Awards it reflects the tremendous work done by officers and members to generate new and innovative streams of income. These initiatives have thus enabled this Borough to maintain the very best of front line services and maintain Rushcliffe with the lowest Council Tax charge in Nottinghamshire.”

In moving the motion, Councillor Robinson advised how proud he was that Rushcliffe Borough Council was able to continue to maintain frontline services and the lowest Council Tax charges in Nottinghamshire whilst also maintaining high levels of resident satisfaction in services. Councillor Robinson noted that the Council was able to maintain its front line services due to the Council’s Transformation Strategy which brought in £1.8 million of income annually to the Council. Councillor Robinson also highlighted the employment units at Cotgrave, the reopening of Bridgford Hall and the opening Rushcliffe Arena as some of the Council’s key achievements over the last eighteen months which had enabled the Council to win two prestigious national awards which demonstrated the Council’s commercial approach to income generation.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Edyvean advised that the Council fully embraced commerciality and that business was in the Council’s DNA which had been stated during the recent Corporate Peer Challenge which had taken place in January 2018. Councillor Edyvean also noted that the Council’s awards were welcome but were of secondary importance to the Council’s primary desire to deliver quality services to its residents. Councillor Edyvean highlighted the reopening of Bridgford Hall as great achievement for the Council and that the Hall now generated £120,000 of income per annum for the Council.

Councillor Jonathan Wheeler noted that the Council winning two prestigious awards was a testament to the work of the officers and stated that their hard work was appreciated by the Councillors. Councillor Liz Plant congratulated the Council on behalf of the Labour Party and thanked staff for working hard to generate a substantial income to the Council. Councillor Robinson thanked Councillors Edyvean, Jonathan Wheeler and Plant for their comments and was pleased to note that Rushcliffe was the number one place to live in the East Midlands for quality of life as well as scoring highly with regards to educational achievement and social mobility.

After being put to the vote the motion was declared as carried.

**a) Question from Councillor Jones to Councillor Upton**

“In what way will residents of West Bridgford and their community services benefit from the proposed scheme of Community Infrastructure Charging?”

In response to the question, Councillor Upton stated the Council would decide how to spend the neighbourhood proportion of CIL contributions from any developments in non-parished areas such as West Bridgford and Edwalton. It was noted that the regulations governing CIL required that contributions be spent on, or to support infrastructure in the area where the chargeable development had taken place and that this must be done in consultation with local communities. It was also noted that the exact mechanisms for deciding how such contributions would be spent and for community engagement would be determined during the in between the period of when the CIL was approved and when it would come into force.

**Supplementary Question**

Councillor Jones questioned if the CIL was disadvantageous to non-parished areas within the Borough as they could not qualify for the full 25% of the levy.

Councillor Upton stated that the exact mechanisms were laid down by the regulations of the CIL and that this issue would be looked at during the period of when the CIL was considered for approval and when it would come into force. Councillor Upton advised Councillor Jones to express his concerns in writing during the consultation period so that it could be taken into consideration by the independent examiner.

**b) Question from Councillor Plant to Councillor Robinson**

“Does the Leader agree with me that the leader of the County Council’s unseemly haste for Unitary status for the county without proper consultation and discussion with District and Borough Leaders and a proper business plan is not in the interests of the residents of Rushcliffe and the County as a whole?”

In response to the question, Councillor Robinson stated that the recent meeting of the County Council had approved a business plan to be produced later this year. Councillor Robinson noted that in November 2017 the Council had agreed to increase its dialogue with all local authorities. Councillor Robinson also stated that he had written to the Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council, Councillor Kay Cutts and that he had held a meeting with the Government Minister responsible for Local Government where he had stressed that the District and Borough Councils should receive clearer dialogue from the County Council whilst they were developing their business plan for the creation of a unitary authority. Councillor Robinson noted that the Borough should focus its own priorities of economic growth and should not become distracted.

### **Supplementary Question**

Councillor Plant asked if the Leader agreed that the East Midlands as a region had not received its fair share of funding from the government and that the Leader of the County Council should instead be working with all Leaders of Nottinghamshire District and Borough Councils to lobby for fairer funding within the region instead of asking for the creation of a unitary authority.

In response Councillor Robinson stated that the Council was working at all local Councils and the Local Enterprise Partnership in order to gain recognition for the region.

The meeting closed at 9.06 pm.

MAYOR