

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET
TUESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2017**

Held at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors S J Robinson (Chairman), A J Edyvean, D J Mason, G S Moore, R G Upton

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors A MacInnes, G R Mallender, R M Jones
4 members of the public

OFFICERS PRESENT:

M Elliott	Constitutional Services Team Leader
A Graham	Chief Executive
P Linfield	Executive Manager - Finance and Corporate Services
K Marriott	Executive Manager - Operations and Transformation
D Mitchell	Executive Manager – Communities
G O’Connell	Monitoring Officer
L Webb	Constitutional Services Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

There were no apologies for absence

28. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

29. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 October 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

30. Rushcliffe Skate-park Improvement Fund

Pursuant to Cabinet Minute No.26 (2017/18), the Portfolio Holder for Community and Leisure presented the report of the Executive Manager – Communities to provide details of a proposed new time limited skate-park improvement fund to support providers of existing skate park facilities across the Borough to access sufficient funds to enable investment to be made to ensure the parks long-term sustainability.

The report noted that there were nine skate-parks across Rushcliffe, seven of which were owned by Town and Parish Councils, and in the drafting of the Council’s Playing Pitch Strategy the poor quality of many of the skate park sites as well as the need for substantial investment to bring them up to the required standard had become apparent. In order to assist the owners of the

skate parks to improve these important community facilities it was proposed that a time limited grant fund of £500,000 be made available until March 2021 to enable the Council to support the owners of existing skate parks in the Borough to apply for match funding which would then enable the owners to secure external funding to replace poor quality timber skate-parks with low maintenance concrete facilities which were expensive to install. The Portfolio Holder noted that the skate parks in West Bridgford and at Rushcliffe Country Park, as well as those managed by Town and Parish Councils, would be able to access the funding from the scheme.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the maximum grant allocation would be £150,000 to contribute to up to 50% of the total cost of improvement costs with the Town and Parish Councils needing to seek grant funding from other external sources to meet the other 50% of the costs of improvements. The officer's report included full details of the proposed eligibility and conditions of the new grant fund

The Monitoring Officer advised that since the agenda had been published section 4.3 of the officer's report had been amended and read as follows:

4.3 Completed application forms received by the Council will be assessed by case officers, approved by Executive Manager following consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio holder for Community and Leisure, with any spend reported in accordance with the normal financial reporting processes to Corporate Governance Group and Cabinet.

and that consequently there had been a change to recommendation (b) as follows:

(b) adopt the eligibility, conditions of grant and governance procedures as detailed in section 4.3 and 4.4 of this report.

The officer's report also contained details of alternative options to the skate park improvement fund which had been considered and rejected including the provision of loans on a commercial basis.

Councillor Edyvean in seconding the recommendations noted that as skate boarding had recently become an Olympic sport he was pleased to support the introduction of a skate-park improvement fund and to support possible Olympians of the future.

Councillor Robinson welcomed the recommendations but advised that it was important to note that the owners of the skate parks would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the skate parks after the improvements had been made. Councillor Upton noted that skate boarding was a great and enduring sport for not only for young people but for people of all ages and was pleased that the fund would facilitate the construction of long lasting and durable skate parks.

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) a skate-park improvement fund be created to operate for a period of three years from December 2017 to 31 March 2021.
- b) the eligibility, conditions of grant and governance procedures, as detailed in sections 4.3 and 4.4 of the officer's report be adopted.
- c) subject to approval by Full Council, £500,000 be allocated (until 31 March 2021) to the Capital Programme, as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- d) the principle that any urgent skateboard park expenditure required in 2017/18 be met from capital contingency, be approved.

Reason for decisions

Without grant funding support for skate park facility providers, it is anticipated that the quality of existing skate-parks would continue to deteriorate over the coming years which may in turn lead to a reduction in provision of important facilities for young people in the Borough.

31. Rushcliffe Property Company Options

The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Business presented the report of the Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations to update Cabinet on the work undertaken since March 2017 to explore various property company options and to recommend further investigation of an insourcing option.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Business noted that in the current economic climate with its low interest rates, property investments were becoming an increasingly important part of many Councils' investment strategies, enabling Councils to support budgets and secure the provision of services. The Portfolio Holder noted that, as a consequence of this environment, the setting up of property development companies was becoming an increasingly popular option taken up by many Councils to support their budgets.

The officer's report contained details and analysis of the work that had been carried out since March 2017 by officers to explore the various property company options that were available against the objectives of the Council of to not only generate revenue to support services but also to ensure the provision of affordable housing within the Borough. The Portfolio Holder advised that after careful consideration the creation of a property company was not currently the best option for the Council and that provision of affordable housing in the Borough was currently best delivered by the Council in partnership with registered housing providers. The Portfolio Holder also noted that over 360 new affordable homes had been delivered since 2011 across the Borough.

The Portfolio Holder advised that as an alternative to the Council establishing a property company, another option that could be considered further would be to work with "Public Sector Plc" (PSP), an organisation that was assisting councils set up and deliver property companies. It was noted that PSP worked to an "insourcing model", bringing commercial skills into a Council rather than

the Council outsourcing its property or regeneration projects. The report recommended that officers explore the PSP model in more detail as part of a detailed options review for the potential development of the sites at Abbey Road, West Bridgford and COT1 in Cotgrave, subject to them being included in the Local Plan Part 2, with a report on this work being submitted to a future Cabinet meeting for consideration.

Councillor Mason in seconding the recommendations thanked officers for their work in preparing the report and noted her confidence in the partnership working between the Council and registered housing providers to continue to deliver affordable housing across the Borough.

Councillor Upton noted that the option of further investigation of working with PSP was beneficial to the Council as it would not only reduce the amount of risk that a property company could expose the Council to, but also allow greater flexibility for site specific solutions. Councillor Robinson noted that the average price of a house in Rushcliffe was now £257,000 compared to £128,000 in Nottingham City, and that it was essential that the Council worked in the most effective ways possible to deliver new affordable homes in the Borough. Councillor Robinson noted that the 370 new affordable homes that had been delivered since 2011 by all registered providers was a significant achievement in challenging circumstances and also thanked Metropolitan Housing for their continued contribution in delivering affordable housing in the Borough.

It was RESOLVED that:

- a) Cabinet agreed that further provision of affordable housing in the Borough be best delivered by the Council in partnership with registered providers rather than through a property company.
- b) there be further investigation of the Public Sector PLC (PSP) relational partnering model to develop a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) to deliver discrete property development projects in the Borough.
- c) Officers continue to identify the best opportunities and delivery models for delivering the best value return from the Council's land assets.

Reason for decisions

To provide clarity on the Council's position and what the Council might look to deliver via a property development company in the future.

32. Growth Deal Funding

The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Business presented the report of the Executive Manager – Transformation and Operations to update Cabinet on proposed changes to the use of previously allocated Growth Deal funding.

The Portfolio Holder advised that in 2015 Rushcliffe Borough Council had secured £6.25m of Growth Deal funding from the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This funding had been allocated to contribute towards the

upfront infrastructure costs of developing three key strategic sites in the Borough along the A46 corridor at Bingham, Cotgrave and the former RAF Newton. Since the allocation of this funding there had, however, been changes in circumstances in relation to the Bingham and RAF Newton schemes which meant that the allocation of funding was no longer required for the purposes that it had originally been allocated for. The Portfolio Holder advised that this equated to £3.25 million of LEP funding that was now unallocated and advised that it was proposed that a business case be developed that would be put to the LEP to request that the funding be instead used to support the acceleration of delivery of alternative sites at Chapel Lane, Bingham and at land South of Clifton.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Business noted that the sites at Chapel Lane, Bingham and the land South of Clifton outlined in the officer's report would meet the criteria set by the LEP to secure the Growth Deal funding as for example, the land South of Clifton could sustain up to 1,900 jobs and also accommodate up to 3,000 houses. It was also recommended that the reallocation of £3.25 million of Growth Deal funding within the Capital Programme be recommended to Full Council for approval as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy in 2018.

Councillor Mason in seconding the recommendations noted that, if reallocated, the Growth Deal funding would enable economic growth within the Borough as it would provide new jobs, houses and employment land.

Councillor Robinson asked about the time scales involved in the proposed reallocation of funding. The Executive Manager – Transformation and Operations advised that the Council were due to attend a meeting with the D2N2 Infrastructure Investment Board in which the Council would ask to resubmit their business case for the Growth Deal funding. The Executive Manager noted that it was important to understand that the Infrastructure Investment Board could reject the Council's proposals for reallocation of the funding to alternative sites case as the funding was not financing the original sites, but, if approved in principle, a new full business case for the use of the funding would be submitted during 2018.

Councillor Robinson advised that he hoped that the proposed uses for this funding would act as a stimulus to the building of houses on the land South of Clifton, with the outline planning application for this site being due to be considered by the Planning Committee in January, 2018. Councillor Robinson also thanked the officers for producing the report and for identifying how the funding could potentially be retained in Rushcliffe for the benefit of the Borough.

It was RESOLVED that:

the proposals for the reallocation of £3.25 million of Growth Deal funding within the Capital programme, as set out in the report, be supported, and that this reallocation be recommended to Full Council for approval as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy in 2018.

Reason for decision

To enable £3.25 million of Growth Deal Funding no longer required for the A46 corridor to be reallocated and used for schemes within Rushcliffe, rather than the money being returned to the D2N2 LEP which could then be allocated for schemes outside of the Borough.

The meeting closed at 7.26pm.

CHAIRMAN