

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL**

THURSDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2021

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

PRESENT:

Councillors S Mallender (Chairman), T Combellack (Vice-Chairman), R Adair, S Bailey, B Bansal, M Barney, K Beardsall, A Brennan, R Butler, J Cottee, G Dickman, A Edyvean, M Gaunt, P Gowland, B Gray, L Healy, L Howitt, R Inglis, 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, C Thomas, R Upton, D Viridi, J Walker, R Walker, L Way, G Wheeler, J Wheeler and G Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore	Director of Development and Economic Growth
D Banks	Director of Neighbourhoods
T Coop	Democratic Services Officer
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 N Begum, B Buschman, N Clarke, D Simms, J Stockwood and Mrs M Stockwood

34 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made in respect of Item 13 Bingham Improvement Board:

- a) Councillor Purdue-Horan declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Bingham Town Council and stated that he would not take part in the consideration of the item.
- b) Councillor Williams declared an interest as a member of Bingham Town Council and as a named person in the report and stated that he would leave the room and would not take part in the consideration of the item.

35 Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021

The Leader advised that Councillor Jones wished to make an amendment to the minutes and invited him to do so.

Councillor Jones referred to minute 32 Notices of Motion and advised that for Motion c) his vote had been incorrectly minuted in the recorded vote as against, when he had voted in favour of the motion, and requested that the correction be noted.

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 30 September 2021, were approved as a correct record, subject to the agreed amendment referred to above, and signed by the Mayor.

36 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor informed Council that she had attended numerous events across the Borough since the last Council meeting. Those events had included pumpkin carving in West Bridgford, Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday services, together with the West Bridgford Christmas Lights Switch On. The Mayor highlighted an event that she had attended in the Market Square in Nottingham to show her support for the United Nations International Day for the elimination of violence, where she was joined by Rushcliffe's MP Ruth Edwards to promote the 'Orange the world: end violence against women now' campaign.

The Mayor thanked Farah Jamil for providing refreshments, which would follow the Council meeting and informed Councillors that Farah ran 'Meet, Greet and Eat' which was an organisation which provided support for adults with additional needs and provided them with work experience opportunities in food distribution.

The Mayor reminded Councillors to donate raffle prizes for her Christmas Party, which would raise funds for her chosen charities: Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, Musicworks and the Trent District Community First Responders.

37 Leader's Announcements

The Leader welcomed Councillor Price to her first Council meeting and passed on his best wishes from everyone at the Council to Councillor Clarke, who was currently recovering from an operation, and wished him a speedy recovery.

The Leader referred to the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP), which had recently been published and reflected on the huge implications for Rushcliffe, with the HS2 Hub coming to East Midlands Parkway. The significant investment of over £12 billion to the region was welcomed, as were the planned improvements to the Midlands mainline, which would substantially reduce travel times, helping to improve business links and connectivity.

The Leader referred to two major consultations currently underway, firstly for the Water Bridge to be constructed over the River Trent, forming a crossing from Colwick to Lady Bay; and secondly for the Local Development Order for the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station site, which again will have huge implications for the Borough, and Councillors were asked to participate in both of those consultations.

The Leader referred to recent press coverage regarding future housing

numbers and advised Council that on the Joint Planning Advisory Board, of which Councillor Upton was a member, discussions were ongoing due to the fact that the City Council was unable to fulfil its housing requirements. The Leader confirmed that Rushcliffe was supporting the City Council in petitioning the Government to get its numbers reduced and asking it to be more creative with its planning; however, protecting Rushcliffe's Green Belt would be of paramount importance and Councillor Upton has been tasked with ensuring that the Borough's best interests were secured.

The Leader concluded by wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

38 Chief Executive's Announcements

There were no Chief Executive's announcements.

39 Petitions

Under Standing Order 10, the Mayor invited Mr Storey to present the petition entitled 'Community Governance Review'.

Mr Storey introduced himself as Chairman of the Upper Saxondale Residents Association, a group of resident volunteers seeking to create a new Parish of Upper Saxondale.

Mr Storey provided a brief historical background of the 25 year old David Wilson housing development and highlighted that Upper Saxondale was split between the Parishes of Cropwell Butler and Radcliffe on Trent. Mr Storey explained that it was the desire of the Upper Saxondale Residents' Association with the support of the community to create a separate Parish with its own identity.

Mr Storey explained that should the governance review be successful, the Residents' Association would commit to a seamless transition of the village hall and land to the new Parish Council, which would then provide a continuous management of the community assets.

40 Citizens' Questions

There were no Citizen's Questions.

41 Local Government Boundary Commission for England Draft Proposals for Rushcliffe

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Chief Executive, which asked Council to consider the comments made by Councillors contained in the draft response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) consultation and approve the document before it was presented to the LGBCE.

Councillor Robinson noted the following recommendations by the LGBCE:

- Council to stay at 44 Councillors
- 21 new wards – four fewer than there are now
- More multi-member wards than currently
- Boundaries of most wards changing (three stay the same)
- Names of some wards changing
- Two town / parish councils affected (Bingham and Radcliffe)

Councillor Robinson noted the recommendation outlined in the draft response that the LGBCE should visit both Bingham and the existing Trent Bridge and Lady Bay wards in light of the comments made by Councillors regarding their proposals. It was accepted that Covid-19 had made it difficult for the LGBCE to undertake onsite visits during the earlier stages of consultation; however, visits were now recommended in order for the LGBCE to gain a better understanding of the diversity of community identity between very different but geographically coterminous areas.

Councillor Brennan seconded the recommendations in the report and noted that the majority of the Council's wards had grown significantly in the past couple of years and agreed with the Leader's comments that the LGBCE needed to visit communities such as Tollerton and Lady Bay.

Councillor J Walker supported the recommendations in the report and thanked the LGBCE, officers and Councillors for their work. Councillor Walker referred to comments made by Councillors relating to the increased number of multi-member wards and she stated that three member wards would lead to a lack of representation in the Council Chamber and that the Labour Group would prefer a maximum of two Councillors per ward.

Councillor Jones supported the recommendations but was disappointed that the LGBCE did not respond to the Council's request of increasing the number of Councillors in Rushcliffe to 46.

Councillor R Mallender noted that the recommendations of the LGBCE did not reflect the reality of future development for Rushcliffe over the next few years.

Councillor Gowland noted that despite the report stating that there was general consensus that multi-member wards worked well in non-parished or suburban areas, she did not agree with this and believed that they were also undemocratic in non-parished areas such as West Bridgford.

Councillor R Walker stated that he had worked with Councillor Barney and the parish councils affected by the proposed Barton in Fabis, and Soar Valley wards and it was noted that their comments reflected a clear consensus on a desired way forward, with an alternative suggestion being put forward to the LGBCE's draft recommendation. The alternative suggestion was broadly in line with the current text of the Council's draft response, namely the retention of the existing Gotham ward boundaries, with the Sutton Bonington ward having both Normanton and Stanford on Soar being added to it. However, the report referred to Gotham being a single member ward, which would lead to the Borough having only 43 Councillors, and in light of the agreement of all the parishes, it was hoped that the Council's response could be amended to reflect

the need for an additional Councillor in the Gotham ward.

Councillor Purdue-Horan was disappointed to see the abolishment of the Bingham East and Bingham West wards but agreed that a proposed Bingham North and Bingham South ward was the logical attempt to combine the communities of Bingham. Councillor Purdue-Horan did raise objections to the creation of an enormous East Bridgford ward and the Aslockton and Cropwell ward as a multi-member ward. He commented that the existing Cramner ward already had a strong community and that a multi-member ward would not work in the rural areas covering existing parts of the Thoroton, Cramner, Radcliffe on Trent ward and the whole of the Cropwell ward.

Councillor Barney endorsed the statements of Councillor R Walker and was pleased that all of the parish councils involved supported the recommendations made by Councillor R Walker.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Brennan and **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the draft response to the second stage of the LGBCE consultation be approved; and
- b) officers be instructed to submit the document on the Council's behalf.

42 **Community Infrastructure Levy Allocation and Spend Process**

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Growth, Councillor Edyvean presented the report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth outlining the draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Framework Appraisal document and the proposed allocation and spend process.

Councillor Edyvean confirmed that the CIL had now been in force in the Borough for two years, and the proposals being considered had been scrutinised by the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group and approved by Cabinet. Council noted that the report set out the criteria for using CIL money, together with ways in which the funds could be spent across the Borough and a list of potential projects, details of which were highlighted in the Appendix to the report.

Councillor Edyvean referred to section 4.12 of the report, which outlined the process for the protocol of spending CIL funds. Council noted that within the report, reference was made to the additional money, which would be made available to both parished and non-parished areas without a Neighbourhood Plan. Currently, parishes with a Neighbourhood Plan were allowed 25% of CIL monies collected within their parish, and that money could be used for local projects, within the guidelines of the CIL protocol. By law, parishes or areas without a Neighbourhood Plan were only allowed to receive 15% of CIL monies and Council was advised that it was the wish of both the Scrutiny Group and Cabinet that this percentage should be levelled up by giving an additional 10%. However, it was stressed that the additional 10% would have to be spent locally and within the strategic spend priorities.

In conclusion, Councillor Edyvean referred to comments received from Councillors regarding the importance of ensuring that CIL monies were spent, and Council was advised that parishes without Neighbourhood Plans would be offered support and advice regarding spending the additional funds in a timely manner. An information pack was being produced and Councillors would also be offered training, to allow them to help their own parishes and communities. Clerks would be given training, there would also be regular updates at the Town and Parish Forum meetings and finally, there would be annual monitoring, and parishes would be encouraged to spend their CIL monies.

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

Councillor J Walker referred to the complexity of CIL and recognised the difficulties for officers in dealing with this issue. Council was informed that the Labour Group supported any scheme, which brought money into local communities and asked that parishes and communities continued to be offered support as they navigated this difficult process. Councillor Walker concluded by referring to real life problems being caused by inconsistent policies, and in welcoming the progress made through this report, reaffirmed her objections to the overly bureaucratic and complex nature of the process that could see communities not accessing funds.

Councillor Jones confirmed that in supporting the recommendation, the complexity of the issue was acknowledged. As West Bridgford had no parish council, it was hoped that the consultation would be as extensive as possible, to cover all community groups.

Councillor R Mallender welcomed the report, thanked officers, and reiterated the complexity of CIL funding. It was pleasing to note that training would be made available, and the information pack too, and it was hoped that this support would be extended to West Bridgford, in particular the West Bridgford Area Local Forum. Council was advised that a community group in West Bridgford was currently working on its own Neighbourhood Plan, which was very encouraging.

Councillor Thomas stated that the Council had been collecting CIL monies for over two years, and as yet, none had been spent from the strategic CIL pot. The report did not identify what the money would be spent on, it simply described the process that would be used, which was only a small step forward, as the funds continued to be collected. Council was advised that the single most important issue to local residents concerned the lack of infrastructure being built to support the increasing number of new housing developments. Councillor Thomas noted that developers were contributing significant sums, and it was hoped that everyone would agree how important it was to use those funds. Officers were thanked for their hard work, and it was acknowledged that the processes in place were mostly sound; however, Councillor Thomas considered that the provision for areas without a Neighbourhood Plan to be able to access an additional 10% of funding would be unworkable, and given the complexity of the CIL regulations, there would be very little flexibility as to what that 10% could be spent on. Councillor Thomas considered that the process would add an additional layer of complexity, take

up officer time, frustrate and confuse parishes and local communities, and worst of all, it would tie up the money and slow down the process further. Councillor Thomas concluded by welcoming the assurances that training and advice would be made available and reiterated the importance of that being clear and understandable for everyone, with input from scrutiny on the drafts, and that a date should be set for the infrastructure list to be reviewed, with Councillor involvement. Councillors should also be provided with regular reviews of funds spent and those remaining, at least annually, and finally the importance of all Councillors understanding the process was emphasised.

Councillor Butler referred to his role as the Vice-chairman of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group and confirmed that members had worked extremely hard on this issue and he was pleased to support the recommendations. CIL and Section 106 contributions were complex issues, and the importance of training had already been raised, and Councillor Butler suggested that developers and applicants would benefit from training and advice as well.

Councillor Upton referred to Radcliffe on Trent Parish Council and confirmed that when the Parish Council had been preparing its Neighbourhood Plan, it had received considerable advice and support and he advised that there were now five or six plans being prepared in the Borough, which were in themselves complicated. Council was reminded that in late 2019, it had adopted the CIL and Councillor Upton confirmed that it had been agreed at the time that all areas would receive 25%, not just those areas with a Neighbourhood Plan. The complexity of the issues was reiterated, it was acknowledged that it had taken time to come to this point, and this would provide an equitable solution to ensure that all areas were treated equally, especially areas that did not have the resources to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Moore supported Councillor Upton's comments and stated that he had never agreed with the disparity between areas and also acknowledged that it was a slow and complex process, and it was therefore important to support the report and ensure that money could be distributed as soon as possible. Councillor Moore advised that as of today, £6.3m of Section 106 money had been either spent or allocated in East Leake.

It was proposed by Councillor Edyvean and seconded by Councillor Moore and **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the adoption of the draft CIL Framework Appraisal document and the proposed allocation and spend procedure be approved; and
- b) the Director – Development and Economic Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Business and Growth be delegated authority to make minor amendments to the Framework, as necessary.

43 **Gambling Act 2005 - Draft Statement of Licensing Principles 2022-2025**

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Councillor Inglis presented the report of the Director – Neighbourhoods, which recommended that Council approve the Statement of Licensing Principles 2022-2025 as required by the Gambling

Act 2005. It was noted that the Council was required to produce a Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles upon which it would base its decisions, and once approved the final Policy will be published by no later than 3 January 2022.

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods highlighted the three licensing objectives set out in the Act as follows:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime;
- Ensuring that gambling was conducted in a fair and open way; and
- Protecting children and other vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

It was noted that the Draft Statement of Principles had been fully considered and endorsed by the Council's Licensing Committee at its meeting on 4 November 2022.

Councillor J Walker, Councillor Jones, Councillor R Mallender and Councillor Thomas all supported the recommendation in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Inglis and seconded by Councillor Williams and **RESOLVED** that Council approves the Statement of Licensing Principles 2022-2025.

44 **PSAA External Audit Contract 2023/24 Re-Tender 2023/24 to 2027/28**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Customer Access, Councillor Moore presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services, which recommended that Council accepted the Public Sector Audit Appointments Invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors from 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2028. Councillor Moore informed Council that by opting in it would ensure that the Council complied with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and ensured value for money in the procurement of external auditors.

Councillor Virdi seconded the recommendation and informed Council that the audit market was challenging and not without risk. He advised that this approach provided best value and good governance arrangements.

Councillor Gray, Councillor Jones, Councillor R Mallender and Councillor Thomas all supported the recommendation in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Moore and seconded by Councillor Virdi and **RESOLVED** that the Council accepted the Public Sector Audit Appointments' Invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors from 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2028.

45 **Bingham Improvement Board**

Councillor Williams left the Council Chamber and did not take part in the following debate or vote.

Councillor Purdue-Horan left his seat but remained in the Council Chamber and did not take part in the following debate or vote.

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Chief Executive, which provided the Council with an update detailing the membership and terms of reference of the Bingham Improvement Board.

It was noted that at the September 2021 Council meeting, Council had received a petition from The Bingham Deserves Better pressure group, presented by Mr Anthony Fox, calling for a community governance review of Bingham Town Council, and considered whether the petition was valid. Whilst Council did not accept the petition it did resolve to support a commitment to working collaboratively with Bingham Town Council and to offer to set up an Improvement Board to review governance and improvement issues at the Town Council.

Councillor Robinson informed Council that following the Council's meeting in September, the Chief Executive had written to Bingham Town Council offering Rushcliffe Borough Council's support in setting up an Improvement Board. This was debated at the Bingham Town Council meeting on 19 October and agreed.

It was noted that the Chief Executive had met with Neil Taylor, former Chief Executive of Bassetlaw District Council, Jonathan Owen, Chief Executive of the National Association of Local Councils and David Pye, Advisor at the Local Government Association and parish councillor, who have agreed to be on the Improvement Board alongside two Town Councillors. Additionally, the draft terms of reference for the Board were submitted to the Town Council and were debated and approved at an Extraordinary Council meeting on 23 November.

Councillor Robinson outlined the next steps for the Bingham Improvement Board, which would include the independent members visiting Bingham and meeting Bingham Town Councillors. The Board would then develop a work programme and arrange meetings. The outcomes of those meeting would be reported back to Bingham Town Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council.

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

Councillor Gaunt supported the recommendations outlined in the report and was pleased to see that progress had been made since the last Council meeting. Councillor Gaunt noted that the Bingham Improvement Board was made of all male members and would have preferred to have some female members too and also criticised the use of the word 'chairman' in the report.

Councillor Howitt, Councillor R Mallender and Councillor Thomas all supported the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Edyvean responded to the comments of Councillor Gaunt and assured him that the Council did support inclusivity and that the members of the Bingham Improvement Board had the right skills and experience.

Councillor Robinson noted that two substitute members of the Board representing Bingham Town Council were female and that the senior officers supporting the Board, Mrs Sanjit Sull and Mrs Joanne Riddle were both women.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Edyvean and **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the progress made and the joint commitment by Rushcliffe Borough Council and Bingham Town Council to deliver an Improvement Board in 2022 be noted; and
- b) a further update report be received by Cabinet in Summer 2022.

46 **Committees Membership Update**

The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Borough Wide Leadership, Councillor Robinson presented the report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services, outlining changes to the appointments to committees and member groups for 2021/22 following the election of Councillor Vicky Price in October 2021, and due to changes to the membership of the Conservative Party.

Councillor Robinson confirmed that this was an administrative item, to reflect the changes referred to in the report. Council also noted that a working group was to be established to oversee the construction of the new crematorium, which the Leader had suggested, given that this approach had been used successfully before when the Arena was constructed, and was currently working well for the Bingham Leisure Centre development. The importance of cross-party involvement was emphasised, and given its strategic importance, Councillor Robinson advised that it was therefore appropriate to incorporate the crematorium into the Bingham Chapel Lane Member Working Group. Council noted that the new group would be called the Bingham Chapel Lane and Crematorium Member Working Group, and that the Monitoring Officer be granted delegated authority to revise the terms of reference of the Group.

Councillor Edyvean seconded the recommendations and was pleased to note that the changes would allow the newly elected member to sit on various groups.

Councillor J Walker, Jones, R Mallender and Thomas all supported the recommendations in the report.

It was proposed by Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Edyvean and **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the changes to committee memberships as set out in the Appendix to the report be approved;
- b) the renaming of the Bingham Chapel Lane Member Working Group to the Bingham Chapel Lane and Crematorium Member Working Group be

agreed, and the Monitoring Officer be granted delegated authority to revise the terms of reference of the Group.

47 Notices of Motion

- a) The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Mallender and seconded by Councillor Gowland.

“Full Council agrees to:

1. Declare an ‘Ecological Emergency’;
2. Conduct a cross service review to identify opportunities for service modernisation that will benefit biodiversity;
3. Work with partners and stakeholders to identify opportunities to benefit biodiversity;
4. Report to Communities Scrutiny Group within six months with details of potential actions the Council may implement considering their costs and broader implications associated with implementation;
5. Present the Ecological Emergency Response Plan to Cabinet within one year.”

Councillor Mallender addressed Council, in moving the motion, that as the dominant species, humans needed to recognise and take responsibility for their actions and the impact of industry, development and the way people lived. By creating an Ecological Emergency Strategy, that would support the reintroduction of natural habitats for wildlife and ecosystems and create biodiversity across the Borough. Councillor Mallender informed Council that the climate emergency alone would not be enough to save the planet, and that as a local authority we had a duty to our residents to influence and encourage at a local level the development and return of natural habitats for wildlife, which would, in the long term enhance the world in which we live.

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

Councillor Brennan thanked Councillor Mallender for his heartfelt comments and agreed that the natural environment was not as it should be due to housing development and over intensive farming practises, destroying the natural habitats of small mammals and birds. Councillor Brennan reminded Council that nature and climate work together and with the Council’s commitment to the climate emergency by adopting a Climate Change Strategy in 2019, along with the Nature Conservation Strategy approved by Cabinet in February this year, the Council was already working towards biodiversity improvements across the Borough. Councillor Brennan informed Council that she supported Councillor Mallender’s ambition and the context of the motion, however she stated that the Council was already committed to working towards biodiversity improvements within its Climate Change Strategy, Carbon Reduction Plan and Nature Conservation Strategy, all of which would be reported via the Communities Scrutiny Group work programme. Councillor Brennan informed Council that the Conservative Group would therefore not be supporting this motion.

Councillor Walker informed Council that she would be supporting this motion.

Councillor Jones stated that he was fully aware of the Nature Conservation Strategy but fully supported the motion as he felt developers often ignored the conditions applied to a planning application in respect of tree planting schemes and wildlife corridors and had very little regard for the preservation of nature. Therefore, he felt it was important to establish an Ecological Emergency Plan to provide greater weight with regards to wildlife and conservation when considering planning applications.

Councillor Shaw in supporting the motion referred to the lyrics 'they paved paradise put up a parking lot' from the song Big Yellow Taxi by Joni Mitchel, explaining that this has become an ecological anthem as the lyrics referred to taking things for granted and not appreciating things until they are gone. Councillor Shaw informed Council that recent housing developments had ripped into the countryside with no regard for wildlife and ecosystems and felt that this motion would strengthen the Council's response when considering planning applications.

The Leader expressed his appreciation for the comments made and stated that he understood the frustrations of Councillors in respect of recent housing developments; however, he explained that this motion would not address those issues as they were a matter for planning enforcement. Councillor Robinson advised that creating lots of different policies did not work, building on the framework of what the Council had already adopted with the Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Reduction across all Council services was the way forward and advised that he would not be supporting the motion.

Councillor Gowland, in her right to reply, outlined that as a Council we were all in agreement that in respect of a climate and ecological emergency things need to change. She explained that filling fields with solar panels was not the answer and that the Council needed to recognise the concerns around the ecological emergency that was emerging from loss of natural habitat and over development.

Councillor Mallender, in his right to reply thanked Council and welcomed all the comments made. He stated that the motion would add extra weight to scrutiny and would be a useful aid in the fight the Council had to encourage change.

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

- b) The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor R Jones and seconded by Councillor L Howitt.

"This Council commits to investigating the establishment of a youth council through engagement with each of the eight local schools and Young with a view to implementing this Rushcliffe initiative in early 2022. The Communities Scrutiny Group will consider progress to achieve Youth Council, its remit and interaction with the Council and the Community."

Councillor Jones addressed Council, in moving the motion, that as an organisation the Council prided itself on its inclusivity and the involvement of an age group whose voices were often powerless, but who would inherit the

decisions that we make collectively as a Council now. As a Council we strive for change and young people deserved a brighter future by way of choice and a platform in which to voice their concerns. Councillor Jones reminded Council that when citizens acted together, their presence could often influence change, and this was why a focus on a Youth Council to encourage young people to speak out on actions effecting climate change would be a great achievement.

Councillor Howitt, on seconding the motion advised Council that as the youngest Councillor she welcomed the idea of a Youth Council specifically focused on climate change. Councillor Howitt expressed that a Youth Council would be a fantastic opportunity for the Council to engage with young people in the community on issues that would ultimately impact on their futures.

Councillor J Wheeler thanked Councillor Jones for raising this important topic but felt that the motion was too narrow in its focus. Councillor Wheeler agreed that young people did need a voice, but with a remit across all Council services, not just climate change. Councillor Wheeler advised he would not be supporting the motion as it stood and suggested a Scrutiny Matrix was put together as the next step. That could expand on the aims of this motion to develop a Youth Council that would have a broader programme of topics. That would need to be considered by the Corporate Overview Group and in turn would be reported to the Communities Scrutiny Group. Councillor Wheeler highlighted that the Council had a strong track record in respect of youth related programmes, providing Positive Futures and Young as examples of this.

Councillor Combellack, as Chairman of the Corporate Overview Group advised Council of her understanding and sentiment behind this motion and explained that there were mechanisms for such proposals in respect of scrutiny. She welcomed the views of young people and expressed the importance of those; however, Councillor Combellack advised that she could not support this motion and suggested that Councillor Jones worked with Councillor Wheeler to prepare a more detailed scrutiny item for the Corporate Overview Group to consider.

Councillor J Walker informed Council that she welcomed the motion and felt that by establishing a Youth Council it would provide young people with an insight into local government functions.

Councillor R Mallender informed Council that he would be supporting the motion, as he considered it to be a good idea. Councillor Mallender advised that if the motion was not passed, he would also be supporting the scrutiny item and looked forward to this coming to Communities Scrutiny Group for comment.

Councillor Way informed Council that she would be supporting the motion and advised that she would like to see the concept of a Youth Council go a little further to include the involvement of young people at a more local level within our communities. Councillor Way advised that East Leake Parish Council was proposing a Youth Council that would involve not just secondary school pupils, but primary and uniformed organisations too. Councillor Way stated that if Council rejected this motion it would send a negative message to the younger

citizens of Rushcliffe that the Council did not care about their views and contribution to issues that would ultimately affect their future.

Councillor Gowland advised Council that she understood the commitment of the Council but considered that the intricate mechanisms of scrutiny within the Council would sadly not have the impact this motion would have if it was passed.

Councillor Price informed Council that evidence showed that young people were passionate about single issue politics, particularly climate change and climate anxiety. Councillor Price provided details of a study collated by the Journal 'Nature', which asked 10,000 young people from 10 different countries their concerns around climate change and how their Government's responded. From those surveyed 60% felt very worried or extremely worried, reporting negative emotions and climate change anxiety which impacted on their daily lives. Councillor Price supported the motion and explained that a youth forum specifically aimed at climate change would provide young people with a mechanism to influence change.

Councillor Gaunt welcomed the comments raised and looked forward to the item coming to scrutiny; however, he believed that our younger citizens would be disappointed should the motion not be passed.

Councillor Robinson informed Council that he agreed that young people needed a voice, but felt the motion was too narrow as it stood, adding that young people were interested in a number of issues across Council services and not just climate change. Councillor Robinson stated that young people were not interested in motions but actions and that the Council, with the support of Positive Futures and Young would work with media to provide the platform for young people to voice their concerns and that young people would be delighted with what the Council was proposing.

Councillor Jones in his right to reply, reminded Council that many young people were concerned about single issues and climate change was a key concern for most young people and he considered that the Council's scrutiny mechanism did not provide the impact and had very little action.

On being put to the vote the motion was lost.

48 Questions from Councillors

Question from Councillor Gowland to Councillor Brennan

"As part of their Covid 19 recovery plan have Parkwood reduced the available time at weekends for families to swim at the Arena?"

Councillor Brennan responded by stating that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the whole leisure industry and Parkwood was currently delivering a recovery plan which had seen many leisure users enjoying its wonderful facilities again. It was noted; however, that public safety remained paramount and so Parkwood had maintained the 45-minute sessions across the swim programme which had enabled thorough cleaning

between sessions in line with Covid-19 controls.

The Council had been notified by Parkwood that at Rushcliffe Arena, public swim sessions were prebooked only, which had been introduced to avoid the disappointment witnessed when the leisure centre first reopened public swimming, when long queues had formed and some people had been turned away, when capacity had been reached.

Councillor Brennan noted that there were currently three public swim sessions on a Saturday and one on a Sunday. The current programme had been put together based on feedback surveys, which had showed customers preferred lane swimming and there was still a very high demand for swimming lessons, which have been accommodated as many children had delayed learning during the pandemic. Weekend morning availability for public swimming at Rushcliffe Arena was of course also restricted due to the protected bookings by the Rushcliffe Swim Club and when general swimming had been offered in the early evenings, take up had been poor. Across the entire week there were currently 13 public swim sessions available at Rushcliffe Arena, and in holiday periods more public swimming sessions were programmed. Overall, the whole swimming programme was kept constantly under review and would adapt to meet sustainable customer demand.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

CHAIRMAN