

**COUNCIL MEETING
26th February, 2020**

Present:- The Mayor (Councillor Jenny Andrews) (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Bird, Buckley, Carter, Clark, Cooksey, Cowles, Cusworth, B. Cutts, D. Cutts, Elliot, M. Elliott, R. Elliott, Ellis, Hague, Hoddinott, Ireland, Jarvis, Jepson, Jones, Keenan, Khan, Lelliott, McNeely, Mallinder, Marles, Pitchley, Read, Reeder, Roche, Russell, Sansome, Senior, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Steele, Taylor, John Turner, Julie Turner, Tweed, Vjestica, Walsh, Williams, Watson, Whysall, Wyatt and Yasseen.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

303. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor was pleased to present her activity since the last Council meeting which was attached for information to the Mayor's Letter.

304. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Albiston, Allcock, Brookes, Ellis, Marriott, Napper and Price.

305. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

306. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22 January 2020, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

307. PETITIONS

The Mayor introduced the report and confirmed the receipt of three petitions received since the last Council meeting which had not met the threshold for consideration by Council.

- Containing 122 signatures calling on the Council to stop Kiveton Youth Centre Demolition.
- Containing 22 signatures calling on the Council to review the process for Public questions at Council meetings.

COUNCIL MEETING - 26/02/20

- Containing 30 signatures calling on the Council to reinstate back to grass the tarmac driveway cutting across the communal greenspace and play area on Keppel Road.

Mrs Ibbotson, the lead petitioner addressed Council as part of the presentation of the petition.

Resolved: -

- (1) That the report be received.
- (2) That the relevant Strategic Directors be required to respond to the lead petitioners as set out 11 March 2020.

308. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

309. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. “T” asked the Leader of the Council “What training has the Leader of RMBC had in improving his understanding of the impact of CSE on victims and survivors after they have been through a trial, what type of training did he have, when did he have it, how long did it last for, and exactly what did it cover?”.

In response the Leader advised that he had not received any training on this specific aspect of CSE.

As a supplementary question “T” asked what the Leader’s opinion was of the online training provided for Council staff on CSE. The Leader in response advised that the training had been created for the Council by professionals in the field of CSE, but that if “T” had any feedback on the training that she would like to provide, then that feedback would be welcomed.

2. **Mr Peter Thirlwall** asked the Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee “Does the Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee believe a dangerous precedent has been set by allowing Councillor Cutts not to face any sanctions for the cavalier attitude he has taken towards completing his 'Register of Interests' and ignoring the many reminders he has been given? What sort of message does the Chair believe that sends to other Councillors?”.

In response the Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee in advised that she didn’t believe that the way in which this case had been dealt with set any precedent, as each case was dealt with on its own merits. The Chair reiterated what she had said at the previous meeting of Council, that it was not appropriate to discuss individual cases in the Council meeting (Minute No.287), and noted that Mr

Thirlwall had been previously assured in writing that the matter had been fully and properly addressed. The Chair also noted that members were regularly reminded and would continue to be reminded about the requirement for their Register of Interests to be kept up to date.

As a supplementary question Mr Thirlwall stated that he was not satisfied with the response that he had received from the Chair and noted that his complaint had only been verbally reported at, and not discussed fully at a meeting of the Standards and Ethics Committee. Mr Thirlwall stated that no sanction had been applied to Councillor Brian Cutts for his conduct on this matter and that in his opinion Councillor Cutts should no longer be a Councillor and asked whether the Chair agreed.

The Chair advised that she did not agree and referred Mr Thirlwall to her original response. The Chair noted that Mr Thirlwall was fully aware that Standards Committees had, due the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 very limited ability to apply sanctions on Councillors. The Chair referred to the Government consultation that had taken place on Standards matters and sanctions in local authorities and encouraged Mr Thirlwall to lobby the area's MP's to put pressure on the Government to move the required legislation to give more power to Standards Committees in the future.

3. **Ms Sadie Healey** asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health "In September 2018 I asked a question after you stated the number of people wanting to attend day centres had gone right down. In reply you said there were 84 people attending the Oaks. Now it's closed how many of those 84 have gone on to attend another day centre?"

In response the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health advised that of that of original group, the number of people currently attending another day centre was nine, and that all of those nine service users had been assessed as having complex needs. The Cabinet Member reaffirmed that the support given to any individual was based upon their needs and aspirations, and that it had never been the Council's intention that anyone would be unable to access day care. The Cabinet Member advised that the other 75 service users had gone on to enjoy a wide range of other activities, based on their reassessments. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that any changes to provision could be worrying for service users and their families, but noted that many of the people who had now made the transition would never choose to go back, but for those people who did need day care, the council would continue to be a direct provider.

As a supplementary question Ms Healey asked that as unlike the Oaks Centre the Addison Centre was in good structural condition, could it be kept open? In response the Cabinet Member advised that as the costs involved in keeping the centre open had not been the main consideration in the decision to close the centre, that the planned closure of the centre would go ahead.

4. **Mr Liam Harron** asked the Leader of the Council “When answering a question from a member of the public in Council meetings, sometimes you appear to read out from a written prepared statement. How do you ensure that the information given to you by officers is true?”.

In response the Leader stated that the notes he used when answering questions were his own notes, but that these were informed by Strategic Directors. The Leader advised that if at any point doubt arose as to the accuracy of information provided by officers then formal processes were in place that members of public could access.

As a supplementary question Mr Harron asked why he had not had replies to correspondence that he had sent to the Leader on two separate occasions over a period of two years and asked for an explanation of why 1,400 copies of the book “Voices of hope, voices of despair” had been returned to him. The Leader in response stated that he was in regular communication with Mr Harron and was sure that the correspondence referred to had been replied to, but that he would take steps to check that responses had indeed been sent. The Leader advised that the publication referred to had been returned as following expert advice from the Commissioners who were running the Council at the time, the publication was not deemed suitable for the use requested. The Leader emphasised that the decision had not been made by him but had been on the advice of experts.

5. **Mrs Mavis Reed** asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health “A cynic might view the postponement of the closure of the Addison Centre until March 2021 as an attempt to avoid a backlash at the ballot box in May. What is the reason for the delay?”.

In response the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care in advised that he appreciated Mrs Reed’s concerns about the changes that were being made, but reaffirmed that until all the reassessments and reviews had taken place, and alternative solutions found for service users, then the Addison Centre would remain open. The Cabinet Member advised that whilst the original outlined timetable had suggested Addison would close at the end of March 2020, this was now no longer practical, and that the needs of service users would come first. The Cabinet Member added that every assessment and outcome would be based on the individual needs and it would therefore be difficult to predict an actual closure date. The Cabinet Member stated that he had never set or spoken of a date of March 2021 for the closure of the centre.

As a supplementary question Mrs Reed stated that she and others were campaigning to keep the centre open and that as the local MP, Alexander Stafford also opposed the closure, asked why a Labour Council was implementing Tory cuts impacting on the borough's most vulnerable residents. The Cabinet Member in response reaffirmed that it was the Council's intention to support services users by giving each individual user the best possible day based on their individual needs and advised that carers and service users would be kept fully updated on all proposed changes. The Cabinet Member noted that the closure of The Oaks Centre had enabled excellent outcomes for the service users involved, who were in many cases were now receiving a better service than they had before.

6. **Mr Robin Symonds** asked the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Neighbourhood Working "I welcome the good news story that RMBC will provide local children's homes for local children. Is this an acknowledgement that the decision taken in 2016 to close 2 homes to (as you put it) help the Council to meet the aspirations of children in care was a mistake?"

In response the Deputy Leader noted that decision made to close Rotherham's children's homes in 2016 was taken appropriately in the context of the quality of the provision at that time in that Ofsted had found two of Rotherham's children's homes inadequate and the others not fit for purpose. The Deputy Leader advised that as circumstances had changed significantly, and that as the new residential provision would operate within a context of significantly improved social work practice at Rotherham that had been judged in January 2018 by Ofsted as Good, that the decision taken in 2016 to close the homes had been the right one.

As a supplementary question Mr Symonds asked why the Council should be believed about its approach to the closure of day centres when it got the decision wrong regarding the closure of children's homes in 2016. In response the Deputy Leader stated that the decision to close the homes in 2016 had been the right decision, and referring to the answer previously given by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health as to why the day centres were closing advised that that was the right decision at the current time.

7. **Mr Mitchell Edwards** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question "Rotherham was recently voted the fifth worst place to live in the UK, given this cataclysmic failure to make our town a success will RMBC put a plan in place to address the issue? If not, will they ask the Chuckle Brothers to take over administration of the Borough?" would receive a written response.

COUNCIL MEETING - 26/02/20

8. **Mr Marcus Wheatcroft** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question “Did Rotherham Council ever stop a 20-minute film called "My Dangerous Loverboy" which told the story of child sexual exploitation from being shown in schools and other locations to raise awareness around CSE? If it's good enough for the Atlantic Film Festival in Canada in 2009 then its good enough for Rotherham” would receive a written response.
9. **“Elizabeth”** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question “The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse was formed in November 2018. On 11.2.20 Sarah Champion published her report looking at whether adult survivors of child sexual abuse have access to support services and the criminal justice system. Has the Leader read it? From what he has read, how does the report apply to RMBC?” would receive a written response.
10. **Mr John Smith** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question “My daughter was exploited and abused as a child in Rotherham. My daughter and my family have been helped enormously at Swinton Lock. Since the Jay Report, lies have been told about the Voices publication and Swinton Lock has been under attack for more than three years. Is this why only a minority of victims have come forward?” would receive a written response.
11. **Mrs Charlotte Carter** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question asked the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy “Brinsworth residents feel cut off since the 208 bus replaced the previous bus service that stopped at Meadowhall Interchange. Will the council lobby the bus providers to reintroduce this vital service for residents?” would receive a written response.
12. **Mr Ged Dempsey** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question “Do you honestly believe it is appropriate for Cllrs Who were aware of CSE abuse who attended seminar and covered it up for years to be still a councillor, to re-stand as a candidate or to be considered as a future Mayor of Rotherham? And not to be held accountable for their failures by facing prosecution? Not fit for purpose” would receive a written response.
13. **Mr Martin Shepherd** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question “A FOI response stated that Jean Imray was paid three days pay to attend the RMB Council meeting on 6th September 2017, more than two years after she completed her report about Children A to O in Professor Jay's Report. How much was the three days pay and what was the total cost to RMBC of Jean Imray's Report?” would receive a written response.

14. **Ms Imelda Delwar** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question “How is RMBC monitoring the outcomes for adult survivors who are receiving a service from specialist CSE providers in Rotherham?” would receive a written response.
15. **Mr Andy Graydon** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question “What was the total cost of training about Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) in the financial year 2018-19, what is the estimated total cost for the financial year 2019-20 and how many employees and elected members have had formal costed training over these two years?” would receive a written response.
16. **Ms Margaret Edge** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question “How does Rotherham Council know which services are working for which survivors of CSE?” would receive a written response.
17. **Ms Alicia Harrison** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question “What training has the Chief Executive of RMBC had in improving her understanding of the impact of CSE on victims and survivors after they have been through a trial, what type of training did she have, when did she have it, how long did it last for, and exactly what did it cover?” would receive a written response.
18. **Ms Philomena Holland** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question “I have kept a close interest in RMBC for a few years and I am heart-broken at what I have observed from watching Council meeting webcasts. Does the Leader agree with me that victims and survivors are still being badly let down and what single action will he take to remedy so many mistakes before the Council elections in May?” would receive a written response.
19. **Ms Katie Andrews** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question “Page 17 of the Report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse (published by Sarah Champion MP) recommends that resources and time should be provided so that trauma-informed responses can be delivered to those exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences. How is the Council ensuring that trauma-informed responses can be delivered appropriately?” would receive a written response.
20. **Mr Paddy Cawkwell** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question “What checks or balances exist to ensure that when a Member of the Cabinet gives a commitment to do something or provide information, that its followed through in a timely manner, especially when it relates to survivors of

child sexual exploitation asking questions/for information, do you agree these issues require specific attention to ensure a swift resolution for all concerned?" would receive a written response.

21. **Mrs Mary Harron** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question "What services are there in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) for: 1 adult survivors of CSE; 2 the safeguarding of children: 3 the safeguarding of adults; and how do these three services relate to each other and work together in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for adult survivors of CSE?" would receive a written response.

22. **Mr John Cape** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that his question "After Jean Imray produced her report about Children A to O in Professor Jay's Report in March 2015, she was employed in a senior officer role in Children's Services, initially for six months. What rate of pay was the position advertised for and what was the actual rate of pay?" would receive a written response.

23. **Ms Marie Lear** was unable to attend the Council Meeting, so it was advised by the Mayor that her question "Which charities based in Rotherham deliver training to a range of professionals outside Rotherham about how best to support those who have suffered from CSE and which charities based in Rotherham deliver training to employees of the Council and elected members?" would receive a written response.

310. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Mayor advised that there were no items requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

311. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT

The Leader presented his update statement, referring to:

The Council's response to the recent Incidents of Severe Flooding

The Leader advised that while Storms Ciara and Dennis had not caused as severe flooding as seen in November, 2019, staff from all parts of the Council had been out in the borough helping to ensure that disruption in Rotherham had been kept to a minimum.

The Leader advised that in order to highlight the serious situation that councils across Yorkshire faced responding to the repeated flooding, officers from the Sheffield City Region Combined Authorities and the four South Yorkshire Councils had been working together to produce a programme of investment to ensure that the recent flooding events were not repeated. The Leader advised that the proposed programme of

schemes, totalling more than £270m of investment would protect over 2,800 businesses and over 10,300 homes across South Yorkshire and that Mayor Jarvis has written to the new Secretary of State for DEFRA making the case to secure this essential funding to protect local people and communities.

The South Yorkshire Devolution Consultation

The Leader advised that the public consultation on a proposed South Yorkshire deal was now taking place. The Leader noted that the proposed deal would provide £30 million a year in additional funding for economic growth locally as well as giving local control of the £35 million adult education budget as well as additional powers to local leaders covering transport, skills, and governance.

Yorkshire Day 2020

The Leader advised that Rotherham would be hosting the civic celebrations for Yorkshire Day on 1 August 2020 noting that the event would be fantastic opportunity to showcase Rotherham.

312. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS

Resolved: - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 20 January and 20 February 2020, be received.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

313. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2020-21 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Further to Minute No.120 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 17 February 2020, consideration was given to the report that proposed the Council's Budget and Council Tax for 2020/21. This was based on the outcome of the Council's Final Local Government Finance Settlement, budget consultation process and consideration of Directorate budget proposals through the Council's formal Budget and Scrutiny processes (Overview and Scrutiny Management Board), alongside a review of the financial planning assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy. It was noted in the report that since the introduction of austerity measures in 2010 the Council had been successful in making savings in excess of £200m in response to significant reductions in Central Government funding. This figure included savings of £16m that had been approved by Council in February 2019 in setting a two-year budget for 2019/20 and 2020/21 (Minute No.156, 2019/20) still to be delivered during 2020/21.

COUNCIL MEETING - 26/02/20

In moving the recommendations, the Leader thanked everyone who had contributed to mammoth process of pulling the budget proposals together, in particular the Strategic Director – Finance and Customer Services and her team, the Cabinet Member - Corporate Services and Finance, and Cabinet colleagues.

The Leader noted that in 2019 a two year budget had been approved in order to meet the challenges of a £30million budget gap following a £170million reduction in the Council's budget since 2010 created by cuts in Government funding, and that overall these reductions had amounted to £1,700 of cuts for every household in the borough.

The Leader noted that in 2013, the then Local Government Minister, Brandon Lewis had stated that the decentralisation of local government finance would put councils in charge and reward them for supporting local enterprise, building more homes and backing local jobs. The Leader stated that despite this statement the reality for Rotherham was, despite being one of the fastest growing local economies in the region, that in ten years over 1,800 jobs had been lost at the Council.

The Leader outlined several examples of the vital role that Council services played in supporting the elderly, disabled and children in the Council's care to have the quality of life that they deserved and were entitled to, as well as the cost of providing these essential services, noting that nearly two thirds of the Council's budget was spent on providing essential social care services. The Leader stated that it was right to say that the that the people who provided these critical, intimate services deserved more than poverty pay, and that while the number of people needing home care had risen 10% per year every year for the last three years, the Council's 800 home care staff would be paid the Real Living Wage from this April in recognition of how important that work was.

The Leader expressed his frustration that the Government had still not comprehensively reviewed how local authorities were funded, and that yet again a "sticking plaster" solution had been provided with some, but not enough extra funding, and one off funding provsion to avert a social care catastrophe. The Leader noted his concern on the Local Government Association's figures that showed another £6million could be lost from the Council's budget in future years with money being diverted to wealthier parts of the country.

The Leader advised that despite extra funding from Government the Council still faced a £5million gap in its budget for 2020/21, and as such tough choices had had to be made to ensure residents still received the services they deserved. The Leader stated that with the changes in services that had been approved in 2019, along with the proposed budget, it would mean that no additional job losses or cuts to frontline services would be required in 2020/21.

The Leader acknowledged that no one liked rises in Council Tax, but advised that the proposed overall 3% rise in Council Tax for 2020/21 would be lower than in most other parts of the country, and that for most households in the borough the proposed increase would be 58p extra a week, or 5p per week for those on the very lowest incomes because of the Council Tax support scheme. The Leader provided information on the proposed spending increases on services that were possible due to the budget decisions that had been made including ending the one day a week closure at the Household Waste Recycling Centres, increased on-street youth work provision, increased resources for tackling noise nuisance and being able to prevent further cuts to tendered bus services.

The Leader provided information on some of proposed spending activities contained in the budget including £1.7million in the Capital Programme to give the new Streetpride neighbourhood teams the equipment that they needed to keep the borough clean, a four year, £24 million programme of road resurfacing and increased investment in all of the council's libraries. The Leader also advised that the council continue its programme of investment in Rotherham town centre, seeking to secure more Government funding, and upgrading all the key car parks.

The Leader concluded by noting that five years ago when he had delivered his first budget speech the Council was in crisis, but that today, now that Children's Services had been transformed and the Council rebuilt there was the opportunity to be able to deliver further improvements to the lives of local people

The Leader noted his determination to maintain and provide Social Care services that met the needs the most vulnerable, create a vibrant local economy, stand up against poverty pay, provide more affordable housing, better roads and a decent local environment and to work in every neighbourhood to build a better borough.

In seconding the recommendations, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Finance advised that the budget showed a commitment to putting the needs of residents first in spite of cuts in funding from the Government, and thanked officers and members for their support in bringing the budget together. The Cabinet Member noted with concern that further cuts to funding were being predicted, and that the diversion of funding away from Rotherham and towards wealthier areas was both unfair and discriminatory, and as such further difficult budget decisions would need to be made in the near future. The Cabinet Member advised that in facing the financial challenges of the future it was essential that the Council thought creatively in order to protect services for residents of Rotherham.

At this point the Mayor advised that there had been an amendment proposed to the budget and that this amendment was detailed at Appendix B of the Mayors' Letter.

COUNCIL MEETING - 26/02/20

It was moved by Councillor Cowles and seconded by Councillor R Elliott:

“That the Budget and Council Tax be accepted as proposed with the exception of an amendment to reserves to:

- utilise up to £500,000 of the Transformation Reserve to pay for a feasibility study to be commissioned to provide accurate and reliable information in order that we can make information based decisions in relation to the implementation of green infrastructure and transportation within the region; and
- Subsequently develop a road map detailing the steps along the way toward setting up a green business park to attract green businesses to the area with the intention of capturing as many jobs within the green economy as possible; and
- To co-locate those green businesses, as the benefits of co-location are well understood and, there are proven examples of the benefits of doing so including our own AMP.”

In moving the motion Councillor Cowles stated that the Council needed to be ambitious with regards to its green agenda and that it needed to take the required actions now in order for the Council to actively pursue its green ambitions in the future. Councillor Cowles noted the challenges of emerging green technology, such as an electric cars and of the infrastructure needed in support of these innovations. Councillor Cowles advised that in order for the Council to have a clear vision on how to deliver a green future for the borough, and to transform the borough into a aspirational hub of green thinking, innovation and business from a run-down backwater, Councillor Cowles advised that to achieve this up to £500,000 of reserves should be utilised to engage consultants to create a “road map” of how the Council could reach this objective. This “road map” would show how the Council could transform Rotherham into a hub of green innovation by detailing the role of the Council and that of its delivery partners, and the actions required in making Rotherham a hub of green innovation.

Councillor R Elliott then seconded the motion.

Councillor Walsh noted that the proposed amendment, while right to focus on green issues had been ill thought out with regard to the detail of the green agenda and technology. Councillor Walsh also noted his objection to the borough being described as a rundown back water as well as to comments that Councillor Cowles had made regarding the state of, and development activity in various town and village centres across the borough that he had taken to be insulting to the borough and its residents.

Councillor Roche noted his support for the green agenda and detailed many of the green initiatives and activities being carried out by the Council, including the upcoming Climate Emergency Plan. Councillor

Roche also expressed his objection to Rotherham being described as a rundown backwater, noting many of the forward-looking initiatives that were taking place across the borough.

Councillors Mallinder and Atkin noted their objection to Councillor Cowles' comments regarding Dinnington and Wath town centres respectively. Councillor Wyatt noted his agreement for the sentiments expressed in amendment and for the need to develop green infrastructure, but noted that due to the current funding uncertainties for local government it was essential that the Council's reserves were maintained in order to protect services in the future.

The Leader noted his agreement with the comments of Councillor Wyatt, and advised that while he agreed support should be given to attract green industry and to build green infrastructure, that at the current time the use of reserves to fund such speculative activity was unwise given the future threats and uncertainty surrounding local government funding.

The Mayor asked when responding to the debate on the amendment whether Councillor Cowles would like to withdraw his comments regarding the state of, and development activity in various town and village centres across the borough.

Councillor Cowles declined to withdraw the comments, noting that developers often acted in their own best interests and not in the best interests of the locations and communities that they were operating in. In responding to the issues raised in the debate on the amendment Councillor Cowles advised that Council reserves had in the past been spent on supporting poorly thought out budgets, and that spending reserves on developing the green credentials of the borough would ultimately be for the benefit of all residents and would put the Council at the forefront of activity of bringing green businesses to the borough. Councillor Cowles also reasserted that he was proposing that up to £500,000 of reserves be used, and that not all of the money would need to be utilised immediately.

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

Members then proceeded to debate the original motion.

Councillor Cusworth noted the great achievements and the political will and creativity of the administration in delivering services and initiatives, including the improved Children's Services and plans for Forge Island, against a background of Tory cuts.

Councillor B Cutts noted the political skill of the Leader's speech and its focus on Tory cuts, rather than cuts to services that were in his view, the result of the Council's own spending activities.

COUNCIL MEETING - 26/02/20

Councillor Beck highlighted the investment that was being made in housing delivery programmes and the healthy position of the Housing Revenue Account, noting that politics was about choices, and that the Labour administration had chosen not to accept a reduction in the quality of housing due to cuts imposed on the Council.

Councillor Hoddinott welcomed the budget, noting that its contents showed that the administration had listened to the needs of residents and prioritised areas that mattered to them. These prioritised services included returning the opening hours of Household Waste Recycling Centres to seven days a week, investing in the borough's roads and protecting services valued by residents including the domestic abuse service and increased enforcement activity to address fly tipping.

Councillor Jepson noted his support for the revised opening times of the Household Waste Recycling Centres and asked for reassurance that officers involved in enforcement activities would be provided with the appropriate resources to keep them safe when carrying out enforcement action.

Councillor Cooksey welcomed the extension of the out of hours noise nuisance service and noted the value of the service to residents. Councillor Cooksey also expressed surprise at the change of position of the Brexit, formally UKIP group with regard to the green agenda as UKIP policy had been to withdraw the UK from the Paris agreement on climate change.

Councillor Atkin highlighted the role of volunteers working with Council staff to manage litter in the borough and noted his support for the extra staff that would now be employed to keep the borough clean and tidy. Councillor Atkin also emphasised how the administration had managed to keep to its budget commitments and at the same time protect jobs and services without raising Council Tax by the full amount allowed by the Government. Councillor McNeely expressed disappointment at the opposition's late budget amendment, noting that they could have, if they wished, submitted a full alternative budget for consideration.

Councillor Lelliott noted the wide range of initiatives to develop Rotherham and other town centres in the Borough, in particular the commencement of work at Forge Island and plans to bid for money from the Future High Streets Fund.

Councillor Allen stated that what had originally motivated her to seek election and to become a councillor was a desire to improve the lives of local residents and advised that the proposed budget would support and develop services that would help residents right across the borough. Councillor Allen highlighted the library consultation and the investment that was being made across all libraries in the borough and the increased numbers of directly employed grounds maintenance staff who would help keep the borough clean and tidy as particular areas that would positively

impact the quality of life of local residents. Councillor Allen also noted the role that Overview and Scrutiny Management Board members had had in the decision making processes that had led to the move away from the use of agency staff to directly employing seasonal grounds maintenance staff.

Councillor M Elliott noted the dirty condition of many directional signage on roads across the borough and asked if there were plans to the bollards to be cleaned. Councillor Cowles advised that he had played a full part in the consultation processes involved in setting the budget, and as such would be supporting it.

Councillor Roche noted the overspend on Adult Services for 2019/20, and that while difficult decisions had had to be made in this budget area, these decisions had however been thoroughly thought through and would enable more effective services to be delivered at a lower cost. Councillor Roche noted that due to the further pressures of continued austerity and of an ageing population, pressures in this budget area would however continue.

Councillor Watson noted the difficult choices that always had to be made in setting a budget and asked all members to vote in support of the budget, noting that if any member was considering voting against the budget then they should state their reasons for doing so. Councillor Watson noted the transformation of Children's Services over the previous four years and welcomed the extra funding for youth services that was contained in the budget.

Councillor Steele noted that while the decisions taken in the formulation of the budget had been difficult, the budget supported the delivery of Labour values by protecting services and supporting the residents of the borough. Councillor Steele noted his congratulations to the members of the Cabinet for the budget that was being proposed.

Councillor Carter advised that while he was supportive of some elements of the budget, such as the paying of the Real Living Wage to third party social care staff, he would be however be voting against the budget. Councillor Carter noted that he did not believe the budget was as bold or ambitious as it needed to be, especially with regard to the transformation of town centres and the development of brownfield sites.

Councillor Buckley welcomed the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Cowles' statement that he would be voting for the budget, as Councillor Cowles had been involved in its development. Councillor Buckley noted his disappointment however that Councillor Carter would not be voting for the budget as well as at Councillor Carter's lack of engagement in the workings of the Council.

COUNCIL MEETING - 26/02/20

In responding to the debate on Leader thanked members for their comments in supporting the budget and responded to specific questions raised by members. In response to Councillor Jepson's question regarding the safety of enforcement staff carrying out their duties the Leader advised that measures, including the trialling of bodycams were in place for enforcement staff. In response to Councillor M Elliott's question on the cleaning of reflective directional signage the Leader advised that no specific budget had been available for the maintenance of central reservations, but that a programme of work on their maintenance would be starting imminently. The Leader placed on record his thanks to Councillor Cooksey for the often unacknowledged, but very valuable work that she did in support of social issues across the borough.

In response to Councillor Carter's comment that the budget was not bold or ambitious enough the Leader advised that the budget was both bold and ambitious and that it set a way for forward for a better future the borough and its residents, and as such commended it to Council for approval.

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

For: Councillors Alam, Andrews, Allen, Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Bird, Buckley, Clark, Cooksey, Cowles, Cusworth, D Cutts, Elliot, M. Elliott, R.Elliott, Hague, Hoddinott, Ireland, Jarvis, Jepson, Jones, Khan, Lelliott, McNeeley, Mallinder, Marles, Pitchley, Read, Reeder, Roche, Russell, Sansome, Senior, Sheppard, Short, Simpson, Steele, Taylor, John Turner, Julie Turner, Tweed, Vjestica, Walsh, Williams, Watson, Wilson, Whysall, Wyatt and Yaseen.

Against: Councillor Carter

Abstentions: Councillor B Cutts

Resolved: -

- (1) That the Budget and Financial Strategy for 2020/21, as set out in the report and appendices, including the proposed budget adjustments and investments, a basic Council Tax increase of 0.99% and an Adult Social Care precept of 2.0%, be approved.
- (2) That the updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) up to 2022/23 be approved.
- (3) That the Reserves Strategy, as set out in Section 2.8, be approved, noting that the final determination of Reserves will be approved as part of reporting the financial outturn for 2019/20.

- (4) That the comments and advice of the Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services (Section 151 Officer), provided in compliance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as to the robustness of the estimates included in the Budget and the adequacy of reserves for which the Budget provides (Section 2.12), be accepted and noted.
- (5) That the feedback from the public, partners and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, following the public consultation on the Council's budget for 2020/21 that took place from 13 December 2019 to 13 January 2020 (Section 4), be noted.
- (6) That the increases in Adult Social Care provider contracts as set out in Section 2.4, be approved.
- (7) That the changes to allowances for Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders, as set out in Paragraph 2.6.9, be approved.
- (8) That the investment proposals, as set out at Section 2.7 and Appendix 2, be approved.
- (9) That the Council Fees and Charges schedules for 2020/21, as detailed at Appendix 7, be approved.
- (10) That in line with Government guidance, the application of the Business Rates Reliefs, as set out at Section 2.9, be approved.
- (11) That the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme, as set out at Section 2.10 and in Appendices 3A to 3F, be approved.
- (12) That the Treasury Management Matters for 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 4 of the report, including the Prudential Indicators, the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, the Treasury Management Strategy and the Investment Strategy be approved.
- (13) That the Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2020/21, as set out at Appendix 5), be approved.
- (14) That the Statutory Resolution of Council Tax for 2020/21, as set out at Appendix 6, Incorporating the precept figures as advised from the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority and the Parish Councils within the Borough, be approved.
- (15) That the Capital Programme budget continues to be managed in line with the following key principles:
 - i. Any underspends on the existing approved Capital Programme in respect of 2019/20 be rolled forward into future years, subject to an individual review of each carry forward to be set out within

the Financial Outturn 2019/20 report to Cabinet.

- ii. In line with Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules 6.17 and 13.9, any successful grant applications in respect of capital projects will be added to the Council's approved Capital Programme on an ongoing basis.
- iii. Capitalisation opportunities and capital receipts flexibilities will be maximised, with capital receipts earmarked to minimise revenue costs.

314. THE ROTHERHAM (ELECTORAL CHANGES) AMENDMENT ORDER 2020

Consideration was given to a report submitted for information to ensure that all Members were aware of the final amendment to the Electoral Changes Order for Rotherham, which was scheduled to take effect in May 2020.

It was noted that the Council received the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) final recommendations for the future warding of Rotherham in October 2017, which confirmed that there should be 59 councillors in the borough elected from 25 wards from May 2020. As part of the review, the LGBCE took into account parish councillor numbers and inadvertently reduced the number of parish councillors to be elected to Bramley Parish Council from 13 to seven in the order laid before Parliament in January 2018. The error by the LGBCE had now been corrected via The Rotherham (Electoral Changes) Amendment Order 2020.

Resolved: -

That the Rotherham (Electoral Changes) Amendment Order 2020, and the specific correction therein of returning the number of members of Bramley Parish Council to 13 parish councillors, be noted.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Watson

315. CALENDAR OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THE 2020-21 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Consideration was given to the report which detailed how the Council amended the Procedure Rules in the Constitution in September 2017 to require the Calendar of Meetings to be presented for approval at the Budget Council meeting. This report was, therefore, submitted in accordance with that requirement.

Resolved: - That the Calendar of Meetings for the 2020/21 municipal year be approved.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Watson

316. NOTICE OF MOTION - SALE AND USE OF FIREWORKS

Proposed by Councillor Simpson and seconded by Councillor Jepson: -

This Council notes that:

- Fireworks are only permitted for sale for Chinese New Year and three days prior, Diwali and three days prior, from 15 October to 10 November (for Guy Fawkes Night), and from 26 to 31 December (for New Year)
- Using or buying fireworks illegally can result in a £5,000 fine or imprisonment for up to 6 months.
- Fireworks must not be let off between 11pm and 7am, except on Chinese New Year, Diwali and New Year's Eve, when the period is extended until 1am, and on Guy Fawkes Night, when the period is extended until midnight.
- It is illegal to set off fireworks (including sparklers) in the street or public place
- Breaking these laws can result in an on-the-spot fine of £90.

This Council resolves that:

- the Cabinet liaise with South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority to better control the year-round licensed sales and use of fireworks ensuring that:
 - sales should be restricted to licence holders only; and
 - a leaflet or notice should be issued by all licensed sellers, to include the times of use, to improve awareness and understanding of the law on the usage of fireworks.

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

317. NOTICE OF MOTION - DROPPINGWELL LANDFILL

Proposed by Councillor Hague and seconded by Councillor Cowles.

That this Council notes:

- Over the years, the Droppingwell site has suffered from poor administration and enforcement action by both the environment agency and RMBC and this has brought about apathy within the local community towards any local authority decision.

This Council believes that:

- by conducting consultation it would re-instate some of the confidence in the authorities administration over planning.
- this is a public amenity and therefore all efforts should be made to garner all relevant views to any alterations which could carry significant risks to the users of this public resource and it should not be a decision that should be taken by a faceless officer without public scrutiny.

This Council resolves that:

- echoing the call from the residents of Droppingwell, Kimberworth and Blackburn, the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety and the Chair of the Planning Board should give a cast iron guarantee today that, prior to any further planning permission, variations or amendments in relation to the Grange Park site, including the Grange landfill site, its accesses, access lane and any alteration to entrances or junctions, a full and comprehensive consultation will be conducted. This would include all patrons of the site, the football club and all local residents.

It was proposed by Councillor Hoddinott and seconded by Councillor Watson that the motion be amended as follows.

That this Council notes:

Over the years, the Droppingwell site has suffered from poor administration and enforcement action by both the environment agency and RMBC and this has brought about apathy within the local community towards any local authority decision.

INSERT:

The situation with Droppingwell Tip is unique in the country. The planning permission that dates back to the 1950s excludes the kinds of requirements that would be expected from such a planning permission today.

The re-opening of the tip has been consistently opposed by members of this Council.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety wrote to the then Minister of State (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) (Therese Coffey MP) on 3rd September 2019, setting out significant concerns about the site reopening and asking for urgent action to be taken.

The Chief Executive of Rotherham Council wrote to the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick MP) in November 2019 and again January 2020, to set out the Council's concerns about the operation of the site and the Council's lack of available legislative powers to regulate it. To date, no response has been received.

The Council wrote to Grange Landfill Ltd in January 2020 to express concern about the risks associated with vehicle movements on the access road and the use of Council land as a turning circle, and to ask that appropriate action was taken by Grange Landfill to mitigate any risks. It is the council's intention to block the turning circle this month.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board heard the petition of residents on this subject on 28th January 2020 and have made recommendations that Cabinet will formally respond to in March.

The continued concern of local residents as to the validity of test data that is required by the Environment Agency, including data that relies on borehole samples.

This Council believes that:

- by conducting consultation it would re-instate some of the confidence in the authorities administration over planning.
- this is a public amenity and therefore all efforts should be made to garner all relevant views to any alterations which could carry significant risks to the users of this public resource and it should not be a decision that should be taken by a faceless officer without public scrutiny.

This Council resolves that:

- echoing the call from the residents of Droppingwell, Kimberworth and Blackburn, the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety and the Chair of the Planning Board should give a cast iron guarantee today that, prior to any further planning permission, variations or amendments in relation to the Grange Park site, including the Grange landfill site, its accesses, access lane and any alteration to entrances or junctions, a full and comprehensive consultation will be conducted. This would include all patrons of the site, the football club and all local residents.

INSERT:

- *the Council will continue to raise our concerns about the re-opening of the site with the Environment Agency and government including the lack of modern planning controls.*
- *the Council will support the efforts being made by Sarah Champion MP to ensure that the Environment Agency validates the test samples from the site to ensure that these have been, and continue to be, legitimate.*

On being put to the vote the amendment to the motion was declared as carried and as such became the substantive motion.

On being put to the vote, the now substantive motion was declared as carried.

318. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Resolved: - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board of 22 January 2020 be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor Roche

Seconder: - Councillor Mallinder

319. STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Resolved: - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Ethics Committee of 30 January 2020 be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor McNeely

Seconder:- Councillor Clark

320. AUDIT COMMITTEE

Resolved: - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee of 6 February 2020 be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor Wyatt

Seconder: - Councillor Walsh

321. PLANNING BOARD

Resolved: - That subject to a minor amendment, regarding a planning application number contained in the minutes of the 16 January meeting, the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board of 16 January and 6 February 2020 be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor Sheppard

Seconder: - Councillor Williams

322. LICENSING BOARD

Resolved: - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Board, Licensing Board Sub-Committee, Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee of 13, 27 and 30 January and 3 February be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor Beaumont

Seconder: - Councillor Steele

323. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS

Councillor Cowles asked "We elected a PCC, to oversee the role of the police and their budget. In other places the job is combined, e.g. Manchester. He now has a staff of 24 unelected personnel; at least two earn in excess of £50k. We were not told he would need a whole department at taxpayers' expense, what are they all doing?".

In response, Councillor Sansome, as the Council's Designated Spokesperson on South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel noted that as Manchester had an elected Mayor that that role was combined with that of a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), with the PCC function being delegated to a Deputy PCC for Policing, but that in South Yorkshire the PCC had never appointed a Deputy.

Councillor Sansome advised that the role of the PCC in South Yorkshire was much wider than that of just overseeing the role of the police and also included responsibility for supporting the Local Criminal Justice Board and commissioning services for victims. Councillor Sansome also noted that additionally the South Yorkshire PCC had responsibility for managing 'legacy issues', including civil claims arising out of the Hillsborough disaster and CSE in Rotherham as well as for the National Crime Agency's investigation into non-recent CSE in Rotherham, an area that no other PCC had been involved in. Also, as a result of legacy issues the South Yorkshire PCC was also required to have robust 'holding to

account' arrangements and communications in place. Councillor Sansome advised that the two officers who earned in excess of £50,000 were the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, noting that these posts were a legal requirement and that their pay levels reflected the size of the police force area and their professional skills, as did the pay of the Chief Constable.

As a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked for further information on how the increase of the Police and Crime Commissioner precept was being spent, noting cuts to police services that had been discussed in the media and advising that the increase in the precept would pay for a greater increase in police officers than that was being proposed. Councillor Cowles stated that it was his belief that the increase in the precept was being used to pay for legacy issues caused by mistakes made by South Yorkshire Police.

In response Councillor Sansome noted the lowest weekly cost to a resident in Rotherham of the increase to the precept would be seven pence, noting that he would hope most people would think that was a price worth paying for more police officers. Councillor Sansome noted that cuts that had been made to police budgets had been required due to budget pressures but had enabled smarter working practices to be used in the force.

324. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN

- 1. Councillor Mallinder** asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health "Can the Cabinet Member outline for me where we are in terms of providing respite care for people with disabilities?"

In response the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care advised that he was pleased to note that Cabinet had agreed on 17 February to approve two brand new adapted detached properties at Conway Crescent, East Herringthorpe to become a residential respite home for up to eight people per day, and that this Council run provision would replace the existing facilities at Treefields and Quarryhill through a phased period from April 2020.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Conway Crescent properties would enable a respite offer to be made to a wider range of people who previously could not always use Council in-house respite facilities due to access issues. The Cabinet Member advised that it was proposed that one of the Conway Crescent properties would specialise in provision for people with Autism and the other would be for people with a Learning Disabilities who also had limited mobility, although all eight beds could be utilised by anyone with a Learning Disability and/or Autism requiring care and support.

The Cabinet Member also provided details of other respite options that would be available to service users.

There was no supplementary question.

- 2. Councillor Sansome** asked the Leader of the Council “Do you agree that the comments made by Cllr Hague concerning a Britain First Member “he is an ok kinda guy” are divisive given the history of Britain First, unwanted, against the fabric of community cohesion and dividing our community? Whereas the Labour Group continue to build our communities despite years of austerity and countless visits by far-right groups.”

In response the Leader noted that he had not seen the video of where the alleged comment had been made. The Leader stated that he completely agreed with Councillor Sansome’s comments on the importance of building of community cohesion and that he hoped all members would concur with this sentiment, especially given the damage that far right groups like the EDL had done in Rotherham. The Leader commented if that was what passed as “OK” in the new Rotherham Democratic Party then he I didn’t think the public of Rotherham would want anything to do with them.

As a supplementary question Councillor Sansome asked whether the Leader agreed with his statement that extremism of any variety was not welcome in the Borough. The Leader noted his full agreement with this sentiment and reaffirmed that far-right groups were not welcome in Rotherham.

- 3. Councillor B Cutts** asked the Leader of the Council “When in 2012 I asked for details of the number of foreign nationals registered in Rotherham, I was advised they were not kept. Subsequently, I learnt that Barnsley provided the research - 3744 in total to date. What is the annual cost to Rotherham for this registration?”.

In response the Leader advised that the Council did not collect statistics on the number of foreign nationals registered in Rotherham, however, the Council could access this information from a number of different publicly accessible sources that provided a picture of the diversity of the town including its non-British population. The Leader noted that using the most recent available official statistics, Migration Yorkshire had estimated that the local population in Rotherham was 264,700 in 2018, showing an increase of around 1,300 people [0.5%] since 2017, with the non-British population making up 4% of the community.

The Leader further advised that as the Council did register foreign nationals there was no annual cost to Rotherham Council for registration. The Leader reminded Councillor Cutts that he had asked a similar question at two previous Council meetings in May 2017 and in February 2019 and had on both occasions been provided with the publicly accessible information that was held by Migration Yorkshire.

As Councillor B Cutts' supplementary question was substantially the same as the original question the Mayor advised the Leader that no further response was required.

- 4. Councillor Cowles** asked the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety "A recent road survey of Spinneyfield Road produced the following statistics: There were 8,377 vehicles in the week, that's 1196 a day; there were 15% over the speed limit that's 1,256 a week that's 180 a day. Given such high numbers for an estate road will the council consider imposing speed restrictions?"

In response the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety noted that Spinneyfield was a traffic calmed road that was subject to a 30mph speed limit and that following concerns being expressed about speeding a survey had been carried out between the 9 and 15 October 2019. The Cabinet Member advised that this study had shown that the majority of motorists were found to be travelling at, or below 30.4mph, with average speeds of 26.3mph and that while 15% of recorded vehicle movements were travelling above 30mph, only 34 (0.4%) were recorded at travelling in excess of 35 mph.

The Cabinet Member advised that despite the survey, given the concerns raised by residents, Spinneyfield had been added to the list of locations for consideration of a temporary vehicular activated sign, to be installed to target those not complying with the speed limit. The Cabinet Member noted that this issue was the type of potential scheme for which £450,000 of funding had been put aside for in 2019. The Cabinet Member urged Councillor Cowles to see if there were options within that funding that would address the concerns that had been raised by his residents.

As a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked that as there hadn't been a serious accident on the road and as such funding wasn't available, would the Council consider a 20mph speed limit for Spinneyfield and also for Grange Road.

In response the Cabinet Member advised that the £450,000 of funding that had been put aside was for such requests that did not meet the criteria for the funding received from the Government. The Cabinet Member advised that Councillor Cowles should submit this request regarding a new speed limit the next time bids to the fund could be submitted.

5. **Councillor Cowles** asked the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy “Whiston has experienced 3 floods since 2007, two serious. Residents are required to clean up the mess and pay for damage to the banks caused primarily by water from outside of Whiston. Housing developments are proposed that will exacerbate the problem. Will you guarantee to our residents that planning consent will be withheld until Whiston is adequately protected?”.

In response the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy expressed her sympathies for the residents of Whiston who had suffered from the incidents of flooding.

The Cabinet Member advised that there were two sites allocated in the Local Plan for housing in the Whiston area, one being a site off Lathe Road and the other being a site off Shrogswood Road. It was noted that the site off Lathe Road was the subject of a current undecided planning application, however there was no decision date for this application yet as further considerations were being given to transportation issues surrounding the site. It was noted further that to date no planning application for the Shrogswood Road site had been received.

The Cabinet Member stated that for any schemes to be agreed, a drainage strategy would be required for both these development sites that would demonstrate that the run-off from the sites would have no greater impact on the surrounding drainage than the sites did as a green field sites. Any strategy and proposed mitigation for the sites would be assessed by the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and the Council’s own drainage engineers as part of the approval process before any work could be started on the sites.

The Cabinet Member urged Councillor Cowles to speak to colleagues on the Planning Board who would be directly involved with applications for these sites, as, as a Cabinet member she was not involved in the determination of individual planning applications.

As a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked that as much of the water causing the flooding in the area was caused by Yorkshire Water releasing water into the brook from other areas, was it reasonable to expect residents to pay for the remedial work to remedy a situation that was out of their control. In response the Cabinet Member while expressing her sympathies with local residents, urged Councillor Cowles to discuss the issue with the Chair and members of the Planning Board.

6. **Councillor Cowles** asked the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety “In Eastwood recently £400 fines galore for back yards full of rubbish and fly-tipping. In the past we have heard all kinds of excuses as to why enforcement was not possible. Why all of a sudden are we able to identify perpetrators and issue fines?”.

In response the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety welcomed the continued increase in the use of £400 Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping. The Cabinet Member noted that the Council had increased its use of the powers relating to Fixed Penalty Notices, and that over the previous 12 months the Council had issued 53 fines for fly-tipping, compared to 20 in the previous year. The Cabinet Member advised that the improvement in performance had been of a result of changes to the way the service was managed and a greater focus by partners on fly-tipping and other environmental crime, noting that the integrated management of Council and Police resources in local areas had delivered real improvements in this area. The Cabinet Member stated that she was pleased to have overseen these improvements and would continue to ensure that the Council took all possible steps to tackle fly tipping.

Councillor Cowles noted his full support for the stronger action on fly tipping that was being taken but expressed his frustration that this action had not been taken earlier and that the Council had spent significant amounts of money cleaning up fly tipping. As a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked whether the fencing that had been erected to the rear of properties at Grosvenor Road, Eastwood had been paid for by the Council. In response the Cabinet Member advised that she would need to look into this question and would come back to Councillor Cowles when she had the information.

- 7. Councillor Cowles** asked the Cabinet Member for Cleaner Greener Communities “Early last year Councillor Allen attended Whiston Parish Council with a colleague and informed us she was doing a review of parish councils. I asked when the report would be available and was informed October. What has happened to the report?”.

In response the Cabinet Member for Cleaner Greener Communities emphasised that that the visits she and the Council’s Parish Liaison Officer had made to meet with Parish and Town Councils over the previous 12 months had been to look at how the Borough Council worked with the Parish Councils and was not a review of Parish and Town Councils themselves. The Cabinet Member advised that this process and the ongoing discussions with Parish Councillors and Clerks had highlighted a number of key mutual concerns between the Council and the Town and Parish Councils. The Cabinet Member detailed some of these concerns and the actions that were being taken in response to them and advised that a full report on the visits and the proposed actions had been shared with Parish Councils in the September newsletter that was sent to all Parish Clerks and also at the Joint Working Group Meeting on 29 October 2019.

As a supplementary question Councillor Cowles asked to see the report and noted his concerns how Parish Councils currently operated without checks or balances. The Cabinet Member advised that Councillor Cowles was welcome to attend a future meeting of the Joint Working Group in order to share his concerns and advised that she would send the report to Councillor Cowles.

- 8. Councillor Carter** asked the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety “Areas such as Catcliffe, Treeton and Whiston have flooded or been close to flooding in the past few months. What solutions to prevent this from happening again is the council taking and what changes are they lobbying for.

In response the Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety stated that as the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Council had a duty to investigate any flooding incident and noted that the detailed investigations into the incidents in November had not yet been concluded. The Cabinet Member advised however that the borough needed around £51m of funding to be urgently allocated to ensure that Rotherham was properly protected in the future, including flood defences along the River Don at Parkgate and Kilnhurst, and in Whiston, Catcliffe and Dinnington. The Cabinet Member noted that the Council was working with the other South Yorkshire Authorities and the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority, through the South Yorkshire Mayor, to seek this additional government funding for flood alleviation.

As a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked whether the Cabinet Member believed that the proposed flood gate solution for Catcliffe was suitable.

In response the Cabinet Member noted that the issue of flooding and future remediation measures had been the subject of an in depth and valuable discussion at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, which had Councillor Carter attended he could have used the opportunity to ask his question to the specialist officers who had been at that meeting. The Cabinet Member advised it was essential that all the South Yorkshire councils worked together regarding flooding to provide the best solution, but as she was not familiar with the technical details of specific schemes, she would ensure that an answer was sent to Councillor Carter regarding the proposed flood gates at Catcliffe.

- 9. Councillor Carter** asked the Cabinet Member for Cleaner Greener Communities “New technology which allows for a library to be open without staff being present is proposed to be piloted at some libraries in the borough. How does the council see that working?”.

In response the Cabinet Member for Cleaner Greener Communities noted the widespread and nationwide use of the self-service technology that would be used to enable library services to be

available to users without staff being present. The Cabinet Member advised that entry to the libraries during self-service hours would be via a secure keypad and that security would be provided through CCTV monitoring and that an emergency phone would also be available in order to ensure safety of customers. The Cabinet Member noted further that customers who wished to access a library during self-service operating hours would need to have met all the eligibility criteria, read and agreed to the terms and conditions and have completed an induction with staff, and that in the interests of safety, unaccompanied children and young people under the age of 16 would not be permitted during these hours.

The Cabinet Member stated that contrary to any reduction in service, the self-service technology offered the potential for the weekly opening hours at libraries to significantly increase, giving customers greater choice in how and when they used the library service, with the days and times of increased opening hours being informed by the results of the current libraries consultation. The Cabinet Member highlighted the £250,000 that had been secured for a new library building at Brinsworth by the Council working in cooperation with the Parish Council and noted that Councillor Carter had not contributed to this activity.

As a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked whether the installation of self-service technology created the potential for staff reductions at libraries in the future. In response the Cabinet Member stated that she did not agree with that statement and that the changes being proposed were about creating an improved service, and not about reducing numbers of library staff.

10. Councillor Carter asked the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy “Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that the proposed solution to increase the parkway to three running lanes from Catcliffe to Junction 33 is the wrong solution for both local residents and users of the parkway?.

In response the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy stated that she did not agree and advised she thought that most people who had been in rush hour queues at the Rotherham end of the Parkway would also disagree with Councillor Carter’s statement. The Cabinet Member advised that the scheme had been carefully designed to reduce any impact on local residents, with the widening being contained within the existing highway footprint and also introducing a new 50mph speed limit that would improve air quality in the local area. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that local residents did have concerns and advised that there would be further engagement and consultation on the proposals carried out.

As a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked how the proposed scheme would enable easier travel between Sheffield and Rotherham via the motorway junction. In response the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy advised that assessments and studies relating to the scheme were currently being carried out, but that the proposed scheme would improve traffic flow and make journeys easier, as well as improving local air quality, rather than just displacing traffic elsewhere.

- 11. Councillor Carter** asked the Deputy Leader of the Council “What financial, staff, or resource support has the council provided to try and keep the Dinnington campus of Rotherham College from closing?”.

In response the Deputy Leader noted that Rotherham, North Notts College (Dinnington Campus) was outside of Local Authority control, and as an independent organisation received its funding directly from the Department for Education (DfE) (Education and Skills Funding Agency) and as such was directly accountable to the DfE. The Deputy Leader advised that the Council received no funding from the Department for Education in relation to financial, staffing and resource support for any colleges in the borough.

The Deputy Leader noted that whilst the building was subject to consultation on its closure it was understood that it was proposed that the courses at the college be delivered in alternative locations. The Deputy Leader noted the current petition to keep the college open and provided information on the recent public meeting that he had attended regarding the proposed closure, advising that he, other local councillors and the Town Council would do everything they could to keep the site open.

As a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked if the Council was looking at other potential accommodation for the college. In response the Deputy Leader advised that all options were being looked at as it would be a disaster if the college was lost.

- 12. Councillor Carter** asked the Deputy Leader of the Council “How does the council explain its failure to provide enough foster carers in the borough for some of our most vulnerable children?”.

In response the Deputy Leader stated that he did not accept the question and stated that as of February 2020 81.4 % or 493 of Rotherham’s 605 Looked After Children were placed in a family-based setting, including foster care. The Deputy Leader advised that all the foster care placements were either provided by in-house foster carers or commissioned through an Independent Fostering Agency; both options that provided a high quality of care and stability for Rotherham’s Looked After Children.

The Deputy Leader noted that naturally the Council would like more of those foster parents to work directly, in-house with the council and advised that eight new fostering families had been approved to date this year who would be able to provide placements for up to 13 children and that additionally a further 13 new prospective fostering families were scheduled to be seen by Fostering Panel for approval. The Deputy Leader advised that the Council was doing as much as it possibly could to provide quality in-borough foster placements.

There was no supplementary question.

- 13. Councillor Carter** asked the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy “What is the council’s current position regarding the opening of Wood Lane, off Brinsworth Road to the public?”.

In response the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy stated that the current position was that Wood Lane was a bus only road, however a number of requests to open Wood Lane to general traffic had been received recently. The Cabinet Member advised that while opening Wood Lane to general traffic may be beneficial to some Brinsworth residents, it could also have a significant negative impact on others. The Cabinet Member noted that Sheffield City Council had commissioned a study of the wider traffic movements between the Advanced Manufacturing Park, Sheffield Business Park and the adjacent areas including Waverley, Brinsworth and Catcliffe, and that this study included Wood Lane and would provide the evidence to help to determine whether this link should remain as a bus only and pedestrian/cycle route or potentially be reopened to all traffic.

As a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked for information on the study that was taking place. The Cabinet Member advised that she would provide Councillor Carter with the details of the study when they had been received.

- 14. Councillor Cusworth** asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health “Last week the General Secretary of Unison, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care all signed Unison’s “Ethical Care Charter” – Can the Cabinet Member tell us what this means for Rotherham?”.

In response the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health thanked Unison for working with the Council on this issue and noted that signing of the Charter was a really positive step for the Council, with the Council being the 46th signatory to the charter since it had been established in 2013. The Cabinet Member noted that the Unison Ethical Care Charter committed the Council to continue working with the borough’s care providers to ensure that care visits met the needs of customers, offered consistent care staff, encouraged permanent contracts, rather than zero-hour contracts and reflected travel time between home care visits in care workers’ pay. As a result of this

commitment, all home care providers contracted to work with the Council would be paid at least the real living wage from April 2020. This change would give a pay rise to around 800 home care workers, who would also additionally be entitled to occupational sick pay.

The Cabinet Member advised that under the Social Value Policy agreed by Cabinet in October 2019, the Council had a commitment to promote the Real Living Wage and that activity was taking place to ascertain the feasibility of expanding this to other sectors of Adult Social Care in the future, considering available budget and market conditions. It was noted that discussions had also taken place with other key organisations in Rotherham, through the Rotherham Together Partnership to further expand the principles of the Social Value Policy beyond the Council and into other public services which would include commitments to paying staff and contractors the Real Living Wage.

There was no supplementary question.

325. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items for consideration.