

**COUNCIL MEETING  
29th September, 2021**

Present:- The Mayor (Councillor Jenny Andrews) (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Atkin, Aveyard, Bacon, Baker-Rogers, Ball, Barker, Barley, Baum-Dixon, Beck, Bird, Brookes, Browne, Burnett, A Carter, C Carter, Castledine-Dack, Clark, Collingham, Cooksey, Cowen, Cusworth, R. Elliott, Ellis, Fisher, Griffin, Haleem, Havard, Hoddinott, Hughes, Hunter, Jones, Khan, Lelliott, Mills, Miro, Monk, Read, Reynolds, Roche, Sheppard, Singleton, Sylvester, Thompson, Tinsley, Whomersley, Wilson, Wooding and Yasseen.

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

**42. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor referred with sadness to the death of former Councillor and Leader of the Council, Roger Stone and sent her sincere condolences to his wife, daughters, grandchildren and all of those who had been close to him.

The Mayor offered her warmest congratulations to Councillor Michael Sylvester on his marriage on 24th September and noted that as a consequence Councillor Sylvester would be changing his surname to Bennett-Sylvester.

The Mayor referred to the many Mayoral events that she had attended since the previous Council meeting, including:

- attending the relaunch of the Rotherham Military Community Veterans Centre following the Covid pandemic and the launch of the Hidden Faces Project.
- taking part in the virtual judging of the Rotherham Garden Competition that had been organised by Housing Services.
- attending the three-day Rotherham Show.
- attending a Battle of Britain wreath laying and Memorial Service at the Clifton Park cenotaph.
- visiting Anston Cricket Club to celebrate another successful season for the club and joining club members for afternoon tea.

**43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Austin, Keenan, McClure, McNeely, Pitchley, Sansome and Wyatt.

## **COUNCIL MEETING - 29/09/21**

### **44. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications.

### **45. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING**

**Resolved:** - That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 21st July, 2021, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover: - Councillor Allen

Seconder: - Councillor Read

### **46. PETITIONS**

No petitions had been received since the previous Council meeting.

### **47. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **48. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

- 1) Mr. L Harron was unable to attend the meeting. The Mayor advised that he would receive a written response to his question.
- 2) Mr. A Fenwick-Green was unable to attend the meeting. The Mayor advised that he would receive a written response to his question.
- 3) Mrs. D Fenwick-Green was unable to attend the meeting. The Mayor advised that she would receive a written response to her question.

### **49. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

### **50. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT**

The Leader welcomed everyone to the meeting of Council being held at Magna.

The Leader advised how pleased he was to share some positive news with the meeting regarding the Council's long commitment to raise the incomes of the lowest paid staff. The Leader noted that 7 years ago it had been agreed with trade union colleagues that all directly employed staff would receive at least the level of the Real Living Wage and that in 2019 it had been agreed with the Council's home care providers that they too would pay at that level. The Leader advised that these actions had raised the incomes of more than 2,000 people in the Borough.

The Leader noted that in May 2021 the Council had made a commitment to achieve accredited “Real Living Wage Employer” status. The Leader advised that he was delighted to be able to confirm that this commitment had now been kept with the Council now being an accredited Living Wage employer. The Leader noted that the Real Living Wage, currently paid at a minimum of £9.50 per hour, was providing a major boost to the wellbeing of many families and local economies.

The Leader advised that since implementing the Council’s Social Value Policy, the Council had continued to negotiate Living Wage implementation with the Council’s contractors and, whilst there was still more to do, the Council would complete the remainder of the negotiations over the next few years as they came up for renewal in line with the Council’s Living Wage accreditation. The Leader noted that the accreditation of “Living Wage Employer” by the Living Wage Foundation was a key milestone in the Council’s journey of social value, adding that if it helped to keep more money in the local economy then that would be greatly welcomed.

The Leader advised that since the last Council Meeting Kimberworth Children’s Home had received an overall a rating of “good” during a recent inspection. The Leader stated that was positive achievement to have another home on its first Ofsted inspection to have achieved a “good” overall rating. The Leader advised that the Council’s investment in new, purpose built residential care facilities were delivering real improvements in the lives of the children for whom all Elected Members were corporate parents.

The Leader advised that he was sure that all Members would join him in thanking all of those who had worked to create a different but wonderful Rotherham Show, noting that it had been a wonderful weekend with much thought having been given to running a large outdoor event safely and that enabled much needed entertainment and joy. The Leader thanked the Events Team, staff and volunteers who had helped bring the event together.

The Leader provided an update on the latest situation with regard to Covid-19 in Rotherham and encouraged everyone to carry on acting safely and to get vaccinated when invited to do so.

## 51. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS

**Resolved:** - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 19th July and 16th August, 2021 be received.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Allen

## COUNCIL MEETING - 29/09/21

### **52. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER**

Consideration was given to a report that detailed the appointment of a new Assistant Director - Legal Services and that also sought Council approval for their appointment as the Council's Monitoring Officer.

**Resolved:** -

- 1) That the appointment of Mr. Philip Horsfield as Assistant Director - Legal Services, be noted.
- 2) That with effect of 8th November, 2021, Mr. Philip Horsfield be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Mover: - Councillor Alam

Seconder: - Councillor Read

### **53. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval for the Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21 that had been endorsed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 29th July, 2021 (Minute No.28).

It was noted that the purpose of the Audit Annual Report 2020/21 was to bring together in one document a summary of the work that had been undertaken by the Council's Audit Committee. The production of the report complied with current best practice for audit committees and allowed the Audit Committee to demonstrate that it had fulfilled its terms of reference and to share its achievements with the Council.

**Resolved:** - That the Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21 be approved.

Mover: - Councillor Baker-Rodgers      Seconder: - Councillor Browne

### **54. AMENDMENTS TO APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND PANELS**

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval for amendments to the membership of various Committees, Boards and Panels.

**Resolved:** -

That the amendments to the memberships of the following Committees, Boards and Panels of the Council, as detailed below, be approved, and that the amendments be implemented from 29th September, 2021:-

#### **Adoption Panel**

Councillor Hughes to be appointed.

### **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Councillor Bird to be appointed.  
Councillor Brown to be appointed.  
Councillor Castledine-Dack to be appointed.  
Councillor Griffin to be appointed.  
Councillor McClure to be removed.  
Councillor Yasseen to be appointed.

### **Fostering Panel:**

Councillor Bird to be appointed.

### **Health Select Commission**

Councillor A. Carter to be removed.  
Councillor Miro to be appointed.

### **Improving Lives Select Commission**

Councillor Burnett to be removed.  
Councillor Bacon to be appointed.

### **Licensing Board**

Councillor Whomersley to be removed.

### **Planning Board**

Councillor A. Carter to be appointed.  
Councillor Khan – to be appointed as a reserve member on the Planning Board.  
Councillor Miro to be removed.

### **Standards and Ethics Committee**

Parish Council representatives to the Standards and Ethics Committee  
Councillor A. Buckley (Brinsworth Parish Council) to be appointed.  
Councillor M. Carroll (Woodsetts Parish Council) to be appointed.  
Councillor R. Swann (Woodsetts Parish Council) to be appointed.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Allen

## **55. CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS**

Consideration was given to a report that had been submitted for approval that detailed a series of amendments to various parts of the Council's Constitution following a periodic review of the Constitution by the Constitution Working Group.

**Resolved:** -

- 1) That the revised Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules be approved.
- 2) That the revisions to Constitution Appendix 4 - Council Procedure Rules (Part 1 - Procedure Rule 8 - Appointment of Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council and Part 1 - Procedure Rule 4 – Budget Council Meetings), be approved.
- 3) That the published Constitution be updated to reflect the approved amendments.

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Allen

**56. CABINET RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCRUTINY REVIEW OF BUILDING USE**

Consideration was given to a report that detailed the Cabinet's response to the Scrutiny Review of Building Use. It was noted that under the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet was required to respond to any recommendations made by scrutiny. At its meeting held on 20th September, 2021, Cabinet had considered and agreed a response to the report (Minute No.52).

The full Cabinet response had been attached as an appendix to the officer's report.

**Resolved:** - That Cabinet's response to the scrutiny review of Building Use, as set out at Appendix A of the report, be noted.

Mover: - Councillor Alam

Seconder: - Councillor Lelliott

**57. NOTICE OF MOTION - UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

In accordance with Rule of Procedure 19 (2) Councillor Sheppard requested that a recorded vote should be taken on the proposed motion. In accordance with the Rule of Procedure 5 Members stood to show their support for a recorded vote to be taken on the motion.

It was moved by Councillor Sheppard and seconded by Councillor Allen:

"That this Council notes: -

The Government is currently continuing to press ahead with its plans to cut £20 per week from recipients of Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit on 6th October.

This means almost 30,000 households in our Borough will suffer from increased anxiety over how to make ends meet, as £20 each week is removed from an already extremely tight budget. Figures from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation show that 16,380 of the households in the Borough of Rotherham are families with children.

The devastating impact of this proposed cut is unimaginable, unnecessary and unconscionable.

Therefore, this Council resolves to call on the Government to protect the most vulnerable households in our Borough and across the country by not withdrawing £20 per week from those with the lowest incomes in our society.”

At this point it was moved by Councillor A. Carter and seconded by Councillor Miro that the motion be amended as follows.

“That this Council notes: -

The Government is currently continuing to press ahead with its plans to cut £20 per week from recipients of Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit on the 6th October.

This means almost 30,000 households in our Borough will suffer from increased anxiety over how to make ends meet, as £20 each week is removed from an already extremely tight budget. Figures from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation show that 16,380 of the households in the Borough of Rotherham are families with children.

The devastating impact of this proposed cut is unimaginable, unnecessary, and unconscionable.

**INSERT:** -

***The Joseph Rowntree Foundation reports that the number of workers in poverty has increased in recent years. Just under half of workers in poverty are full-time employees, just over 30 per cent are part-time employees and around 20 per cent are self-employed.***

Therefore, this Council resolves to call on the Government to: -

- protect the most vulnerable households in our Borough and across the country by not withdrawing £20 per week from those with the lowest incomes in our society;

**INSERT:** -

- ***increase the National Living Wage to the Living Wage recommended by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to help improve the lives of workers who are living in poverty.”***

## COUNCIL MEETING - 29/09/21

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

The substantive motion (as moved by Councillor Sheppard and seconded by Councillor Allen) was now debated.

In accordance with Rule of Procedure 19 (1) a recorded vote was taken on the motion as follows:

**FOR:** Councillors Alam, Allen, Andrews, Atkin, Aveyard, Baker-Rogers, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, Bird, Brookes, Browne, A. Carter, C. Carter, Clark, Cooksey, Cowen, Cusworth, Elliott, Ellis, Griffin, Haleem, Havard, Hoddinott, Hughes, Jones, Khan, Lelliott, Miro, Monk, Read, Roche, Sheppard, and Yasseen

**AGAINST:** Bacon, Ball, Barker, Barley, Baum-Dixon, Burnett, Collingham, Fisher, Hunter, Mills, Reynolds, Singleton, Thompson, Tinsley, Whomersley, Wilson and Wooding

**ABSTENSIONS:** None.

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

Mover: - Councillor Sheppard                    Seconder: - Councillor Allen

58.

### **NOTICE OF MOTION - END 'FIRE AND REHIRE' NOW!**

It was moved by Councillor Cooksey and seconded by Councillor Yasseen that:

"This Council notes: -

- 1 in 10 workers have experienced 'fire and rehire' - told to reapply for their jobs on worse pay, terms and conditions or face the sack, with BME workers facing this at twice the rate of white workers since March 2020 (TUC research, January 2021). A quarter of all workers have experienced a worsening of their terms and conditions – including a cut in their pay - since the pandemic began.
- That while the Prime Minister has called the practice "unacceptable", he has continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he will not intervene in this race to the bottom as an escalating number of employers, across all sectors, take advantage of our weak employment protections and force their staff to accept worse terms and conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay, with what can be devastating consequences for workers and their families.

- Even before the pandemic, 1 in 9 workers – 3.8 million people – were already ‘insecure’, meaning they did not have access to basic rights at work and could be dismissed at will; including those on zero hour contracts and agency workers.
- Despite austerity, as a Labour-led Council we pay our employees the Real Living Wage. It is important that working people have a decent wage to live off and the Council is committed to working towards being a Living Wage Employer and encouraging others to do the same.
- We have been committed to improving pay and conditions and preventing exploitation by signing up to initiatives such as Unison’s Ethical Care Charter and the Charter against Modern Slavery. The latter of which placed conditions on our suppliers including the right to join a trade union.
- We have strengthened our community wealth building approach and introduced a Social Value Policy to ensure that good employment practice and support for local business is prioritised.

This Council, therefore, resolves to: -

- Ensure local residents are protected against such unscrupulous employers and agrees to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister demanding he outlaw fire and rehire and act now to keep his promise to local residents to protect their employment terms and conditions.
- Not use fire and rehire itself as an employer and discourage its use by Council contractors, and to ensure the Council has a procurement practice that means we are working with contractors that have good employment, trade union, equality and environmental records.
- Promote the increasing number of progressive local employers prioritising their employees’ standard of living and their wellbeing, work with our anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans to ensure all have best practice employment and to work with recognised trade unions on this.
- Support the TUC campaign for a ‘New Deal for Working People’.”

At this point it was moved by Councillor Miro and seconded by Councillor C. Carter that the motion be amended as follows.

“This Council notes: -

- 1 in 10 workers have experienced ‘fire and rehire’ - told to reapply for their jobs on worse pay, terms and conditions or face the sack, with BME workers facing this at twice the rate of white workers since March 2020 (TUC research, January 2021). A quarter of all workers

have experienced a worsening of their terms and conditions – including a cut in their pay - since the pandemic began.

- That while the Prime Minister has called the practice “unacceptable,” he has continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he will not intervene in this race to the bottom as an escalating number of employers, across all sectors, take advantage of our weak employment protections and force their staff to accept worse terms and conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay, with what can be devastating consequences for workers and their families.
- Even before the pandemic, 1 in 9 workers – 3.8 million people – were already ‘insecure’, meaning they did not have access to basic rights at work and could be dismissed at will; including those on zero hour contracts and agency workers.
- Despite austerity, as a Labour-led Council we pay our employees the Real Living Wage. It is important that working people have a decent wage to live off and the Council is committed to working towards being a Living Wage Employer and encouraging others to do the same.
- We have been committed to improving pay and conditions and preventing exploitation by signing up to initiatives such as Unison’s Ethical Care Charter and the Charter against Modern Slavery. The latter of which placed conditions on our suppliers including the right to join a trade union.
- We have strengthened our community wealth building approach and introduced a Social Value Policy to ensure that good employment practice and support for local business is prioritised.

This Council, therefore, resolves to: -

- Ensure local residents are protected against such unscrupulous employers and agrees to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister demanding he outlaw fire and rehire and act now to keep his promise to local residents to protect their employment terms and conditions.
- Not use fire and rehire itself as an employer and discourage its use by council contractors.

***INSERT: -***

- ***Make sure the Council's Social Value Policy is updated to ensure that preferential treatment is given to contractors who do not use fire and rehire and who have good employment, trade union, equality, and environmental records.***

- *Create a Council Accreditation Scheme (within 6 months) to recognise employers in the Borough who have good employment, trade union, equality, and environmental records and who prioritise their employees' standard of living and their wellbeing.*
- *Work with our anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans to ensure all have best practice employment and to work with recognised trade unions on this.*

***DELETE:*** -

- *Support the TUC campaign for a ‘New Deal for Working People’.*

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

At this point it was moved by Councillor Barley and seconded by Councillor Collingham that the motion be amended as follows.

***DELETE:*** -

“This Council notes: -

- 1 in 10 workers have experienced ‘fire and rehire’ - told to reapply for their jobs on worse pay, terms and conditions or face the sack, with BME workers facing this at twice the rate of white workers since March 2020 (TUC research, January 2021). A quarter of all workers have experienced a worsening of their terms and conditions – including a cut in their pay - since the pandemic began.
- That while the Prime Minister has called the practice “unacceptable”, he has continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he will not intervene in this race to the bottom as an escalating number of employers, across all sectors, take advantage of our weak employment protections and force their staff to accept worse terms and conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay, with what can be devastating consequences for workers and their families.
- Even before the pandemic, 1 in 9 workers – 3.8 million people – were already ‘insecure’, meaning they did not have access to basic rights at work and could be dismissed at will; including those on zero hour contracts and agency workers.

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- Despite austerity, as a Labour-led Council we pay our employees the Real Living Wage. It is important that working people have a decent wage to live off and the council is committed to working towards being a Living Wage Employer and encouraging others to do the same.
- We have been committed to improving pay and conditions and preventing exploitation by signing up to initiatives such as Unison's Ethical Care Charter and the Charter against Modern Slavery. The latter of which placed conditions on our suppliers including the right to join a trade union.
- We have strengthened our community wealth building approach and introduced a Social Value Policy to ensure that good employment practice and support for local business is prioritised.

This Council, therefore, resolves to: -

- Ensure local residents are protected against such unscrupulous employers and agrees to ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister demanding he outlaw fire and rehire and act now to keep his promise to local residents to protect their employment terms and conditions.

### ***INSERT: -***

The practice of fire and rehire (also called dismissal and re-engagement) occurs when an employer dismisses an employee and offers to rehire them on new, usually worse, terms.

This Council resolves to:

### ***DELETE: -***

- and to ensure the Council has a procurement practice that means we are working with contractors that have good employment, trade union, equality and environmental records.
- Promote the increasing number of progressive local employers prioritising their employees' standard of living and their wellbeing, work with our anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans to ensure all have best practice employment and to work with recognised trade unions on this.
- Support the TUC campaign for a 'New Deal for Working People'."

**The amended motion proposed now read:-**

“The practice of fire and rehire (also called dismissal and re-engagement) occurs when an employer dismisses an employee and offers to rehire them on new, usually worse, terms.

## This Council resolves to:

Not use fire and rehire itself as an employer and discourage its use by Council contractors.”

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

The substantive motion (as moved by Councillor Cooksey and seconded by Councillor Yasseen) was now debated.

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

59.

## **NOTICE OF MOTION - REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADES**

It was moved by Councillor Barley and seconded by Councillor Tinsley:

“Each November, communities come together to honour those who have fought to defend our freedoms, and pay respects to our fallen soldiers.

Remembrance Day Parades are a feature of these acts of commemoration up and down the country, but in our Borough they are under threat.

In the past, road closures to allow parades to go ahead in villages across the Borough have been facilitated by South Yorkshire Police, but a change in police policy means this will no longer be the case. Instead, local event organisers will need to apply to RMBC for a temporary road closure, provide a traffic management plan, and use volunteers or a traffic management company to facilitate closures.

At present, the process for doing so is opaque and no information or guidance from RMBC is publicly available. The costs for smaller scale event organisers may also be prohibitive.

Unless the Council takes action, Remembrance Day Parades are unlikely to go ahead in villages where they usually take place.

Therefore, we call on the Council to: -

- Set out a clear process for community event organisers to apply for temporary road closures for Remembrance Day Parades and other community events;
- Provide written guidance, a template traffic management plan, a template risk assessment, and Officer support to event organisers;
- Share the costs associated with road closures to enable Remembrance Day Parades with organisers, in recognition of the important role these events have within communities and out of respect for the armed forces;
- Make all reasonable efforts to assist community organisers and enable Remembrance Day Parades to go ahead this year.””

At this point it was moved by Councillor C. Carter and seconded by Councillor A. Carter that the motion be amended as follows:

“Each November, communities come together to honour those who have fought to defend our freedoms,

***DELETE: -***

***The word “and”***

***INSERT: -***

***recognise the sacrifice that those abroad (such as interpreters) have made supporting our troops in conflicts, and acknowledge our responsibility to work for the peace that they fought to achieve.***

***TO READ:-***

***Each November, communities come together to honour those who have fought to defend our freedoms, pay respects to our fallen soldiers, recognise the sacrifice that those abroad (such as interpreters) have made supporting our troops in conflicts, and acknowledge our responsibility to work for the peace that they fought to achieve.***

Remembrance Day Parades are a feature of these acts of commemoration up and down the country, but in our Borough they are under threat.

In the past, road closures to allow parades to go ahead in villages across the Borough have been facilitated by South Yorkshire Police, but a change in police policy means this will no longer be the case. Instead, local event organisers will need to apply to RMBC for a temporary road closure, provide a traffic management plan, and use volunteers or a traffic management company to facilitate closures.

At present, the process for doing so is opaque and no information or guidance from RMBC is publicly available. The costs for smaller scale event organisers may also be prohibitive.

Unless the Council takes action, Remembrance Day Parades are unlikely to go ahead in villages where they usually take place.

Therefore, we call on the Council to: -

- Set out a clear process for community event organisers to apply for temporary road closures for Remembrance Day Parades and other community events;
- Provide written guidance, a template traffic management plan, a template risk assessment, and Officer support to event organisers;

***INSERT:-***

- ***Publicise to volunteers already known to the Council (e.g. Rotherham Heroes, Love Where You Live) any Remembrance Day Parade organisers that need volunteers to help the events run smoothly;***

***INSERT, AND DELETE THE WORDS “share the costs” TO READ: -***

- ***Waive the costs associated with road closures for up to one parade in each town and village in the Borough to enable Remembrance Day Parades with organisers, in recognition of the important role these events have within communities and out of respect for the armed forces;***
- Make all reasonable efforts to assist community organisers and enable Remembrance Day Parades to go ahead this year.”

Councillor Barley stated that she accepted the proposed amendment to the motion without a vote being taken.

At this point it was moved by Councillor Read and seconded by Councillor Beck that the amended motion (as moved by Councillor C. Carter and amended by Councillor A. Carter) be amended as follows:

“Each November, communities come together to honour those who have fought to defend our freedoms, and pay respects to our fallen soldiers.

Remembrance Day Parades are a feature of these acts of commemoration up and down the country, but in our Borough they are under threat.

In the past, road closures to allow parades to go ahead in villages across the Borough have been facilitated by South Yorkshire Police, but a change in police policy means this will no longer be the case. Instead, local event organisers will need to apply to RMBC for a temporary road closure, provide a traffic management plan, and use volunteers or a traffic management company to facilitate closures.

At present, the process for doing so is opaque and no information or guidance from RMBC is publicly available. The costs for smaller scale event organisers may also be prohibitive.

Unless the Council takes action, Remembrance Day Parades are unlikely to go ahead in villages where they usually take place.

Therefore, we call on the Council to:-

- Set out a clear process for community event organisers to apply for temporary road closures for Remembrance Day Parades and other community events;
- Provide written guidance, a template traffic management plan, a template risk assessment, and Officer support to event organisers;
- Publicise to volunteers already known to the Council (e.g. Rotherham Heroes, Love Where You Live) any Remembrance Day Parade organisers that need volunteers to help the events run smoothly;
- Waive the costs associated with road closures for up to one parade in each town and village in the Borough to enable Remembrance Day Parades with organisers, in recognition of the important role these events have within communities and out of respect for the armed forces;
- Make all reasonable efforts to assist community organisers and enable Remembrance Day Parades to go ahead this year.

***DELETE:*** -

- **Provide written guidance, a template traffic management plan, a template risk assessment, and Officer support to event organisers;**

***INSERT:*** -

- **Provide written guidance, and a template risk assessment, subject to applicants having the necessary public liability insurance.””**

On being put to the vote the amendment to the motion was declared as won.

The now substantive motion (as moved by Councillor Read and seconded by Councillor Beck) was now debated.

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

Mover: - Councillor Read

Seconder: - Councillor Beck

**60. AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:** - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 29th July, 2021, be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor Baker-Rodgers

Seconder: - Councillor Browne

**61. PLANNING BOARD**

**Resolved:** - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board held on 22nd July and 12th August, 2021, be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor Atkin

Seconder: - Councillor Bird

**62. LICENSING BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE AND LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Resolved:** - That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on 15th July and 16th September 2021 and of the meeting of the Licensing Board Sub-Committee held on 13th September, 2021, be adopted.

Mover: - Councillor Ellis

Seconder: - Councillor Hughes

**63. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS**

No questions had been submitted.

**64. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRPERSONS**

**(1) Councillor Hoddinott** referred to families feeling the pressure of increasing bills and costs, including the cost of school uniforms and asked how could the Council help low income families facing these problems?

The Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion explained the Council had been able to make good use of COVID response funding to support low income families and those struggling with utility costs. During 2021, the Council had been able to contribute to school uniform costs for 10,276 children. Support for low income households towards utility costs helped a further 4,535 households with their bills.

Prioritisation for school uniform support was based on children who qualified for free school meals which was then applied to year groups, with those starting in a new school, reception year children and year seven pupils being amongst the first to be supported. Children from asylum seeker families were also helped along with some siblings from larger families. Schools were directly involved in providing vouchers for the children. The combination of using free school meals eligibility and the engagement of schools to provide the vouchers meant that no-one missed out which was key or had to go through any application process. Everyone eligible received support.

Alongside welfare rights and advice, support with Council Tax, free school meals vouchers, and the Community Food Network, the Council was progressing the support for social supermarkets, seeking the appointment of an officer to lead on this work, in addition to making available grant support, as committed in budget proposals earlier this year. This would support the development of 3 new social supermarkets to provide an affordable way to buy food for residents who needed it, and who were being cruelly let down by this Government.

In a supplementary question Councillor Hoddinott welcomed the support being provided by the Council, but expressed concern about the costs for school uniforms when some schools were branding items of clothing which meant doubling the cost. She asked the Cabinet Member if he would support the calls to bring forward this statutory guidance. Mike Amesbury M.P. had put forward a Private Members' Bill to reduce the cost, but the Government was yet to bring in the statutory guidance and this was very much needed going forward.

Councillor Sheppard acknowledged how costs on uniforms could soon increase when changes or brands were made and gave examples of this across the country where children were sent home for not being compliant. The guidance was very much needed and he fully supported the work of Mike Amesbury and would do whatever he could to back this.

**(2) Councillor Jones** asked could the Leader explain his interpretation of the Motion passed by full Council in February, 2020, which stated "prior to any further planning permission, variations or amendments in relation to the Grange Park site, including its access, access lane and any alteration to entrances or junctions?"

The Leader confirmed the wording before that related to consultation on planning permission. His interpretation, looking how it appeared now, was the commitment to any consultation on any planning matters that affected the site.

In a supplementary question Councillor Jones referred how in June, 2021 he questioned why RMBC had given permission for borehole No. 5 to be redrilled on public land without any consultation. He was told that the Motion passed by this Council in February, 2020 was not relevant because it only covered planning permissions. He stated that this had been interpreted wrong. He knew this because he himself had wrote the Motion. He knew not paying attention at school may have been detrimental, but when interpreting legal information like on Licensing or on other matters taught to do by the Council, he was always taught to refer to the original source, i.e. himself. He posted this question on social media thinking it was just his interpretation that was wrong and surprisingly he received answers from 2 former Council Officers, one former Council Officer from another area, 2 English Lecturers and a Solicitor, who all interpreted the information the same as himself. Something about the placement of commas making each part of the list carry equivalent weight of each other, therefore, they did not directly relate just to planning. He, therefore, asked what gave the Leader and the Cabinet the right to undermine the democracy of this Chamber by imposing their own interpretation as opposed to the rest of Rotherham.

The Leader pointed out if the mover of that Motion had not been able to make those points at the relevant time he was not sure why, it was then his responsibility to interpret information for Councillor Jones.

In terms of the substantive issue of the borehole, the choice that officers faced was did they reinstate the borehole when asked to do so which then allowed for the monitoring of water quality on the site and offer some assurances if the tip re-opened, or did they not. If the tip re-opened then the information would simply be lost. It was clear that if they chose not to reinstate that borehole that would not prevent the tip from re-opening. It would simply be a weaker position for monitoring controls and this was the position of choice, which officers did in good faith. Anything else was simply misleading.

**(3) Councillor Whomersley** referred to the plantation of wildflowers in Rotherham which seemed to have been a success, however, he was disappointed that there were no wildflowers planted in Dinnington. He asked if the Council could please look to include Dinnington in the roll out next year and could local residents also be involved in choosing the locations?

The Cabinet Member for Transport and Regeneration gratefully received comments about the wildflower areas across the Borough. Rotherham was really proud of being one of the first Councils in the country to use wildflowers on central reservations and were pleased that this could be expanded to 12 more trial areas this year as part of last year's budget. Feedback had been very positive from the majority of residents and the Council was looking at ways to expand the approach in future.

As part of last year's budget ,money was put aside to commission an Ecological Survey, which would report back in December. This would enable the Council to develop a pollinator friendly plan and to support approaches in the future. This should hopefully provide support to expand the areas in future and increase biodiversity, whilst at the same time delivering it in a financially sustainable way.

Councillor Whomersley was advised that it was also possible to fund similar work through his Ward budget if he so wished in Dinnington.

**(4) Councillor Reynolds** asked what safeguards were in place to ensure that what was approved for planning, was what actually gets built?

The Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy explained the Council viewed breaches of planning control very seriously and the Planning Department responded to complaints that were made when there were concerns that there were breaches of planning regulations.

These could relate to concerns that planning permissions granted were not being built correctly or that something was being done without having first obtained planning permission.

This year had seen a significant rise in the number of complaints being submitted and money was placed into the budget to employ an additional temporary Enforcement Officer to help deal with this volume of work.

There were penalties for doing things without the correct planning permission in place and, unless the breach was causing irreparable harm to amenity, the Enforcement Team would always try and work to achieve an acceptable solution. If matters could not be resolved the Council could decide to take enforcement action if that was deemed necessary. Non-compliance with an Enforcement Notice could become a criminal offence and liable to prosecution.

In 2019 the Council received 366 complaints. This rose to 475 in 2020 with 412 already made in 2021.

63 Enforcement Notices have been served in the last 2 years.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Reynolds expressed his surprise and shared information on some developments he was aware of that had not adhered to the planning permission they had been granted. On contacting officers he was advised that due to limited resources the Service relied on members of the public notifying the Department of planning breaches and little consequence was made of where breaches were identified. He asked how this loophole could be addressed.

The Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy pointed out that last year the service received 1,759 applications of which 1,596 were approved. 475 complaint were received and from these 63 resulted in enforcement action being upheld.

From the limited resources for enforcement it was not possible to police every single application that received permission. The Service did have a robust planning system and where breaches of permission were made Enforcement Officers did visit sites. This was why Rotherham had been voted the top Planning Service in the country.

**(5) Councillor A. Carter** asked following the 4 week postponement of the Garden Waste Collection Service over the summer, would the Council commit to giving all residents who have subscribed to this Service a refund for the missed collections?

Councillor Beck fully appreciated the disruption to garden waste collections which had had a significant impact on residents. It had been, and still was, a hugely challenging time for Waste Collection Services in Rotherham and challenges across the country.

The Council was able to offer a £5.00 discount to re-subscribers as a gesture of goodwill following last year's Covid-related interruptions to Service. In light of the ongoing disruption nationally and locally, the Council was not yet in a position to confirm what measures could be taken appropriately going forward, but would be considering this in due course.

In a supplementary question Councillor A. Carter found it disappointing that following last year, he believed an announcement to be pretty imminent that there was going to be a reimbursement this year. He, therefore, asked for assurances that a discount or refund would be offered to residents who had been affected by the reduction in the Garden Waste Service, what the timescales would be for a decision to be made and what level this would be.

Councillor Beck would not be lured into giving an answer as the country was still in the middle of a crisis through the difficulty of local and national issues with HGV drivers, but confirmed the Garden Waste Service remained operational in Rotherham. Consideration would be given to various options and a decision would be made in due course.

**(6) Councillor Jones** noted that in the financial year 2019/2020 RMBC had built a cycle path from Wortley Road to Greasbrough and asked for information on the final costs of the project and how many people a week were using the new cycle path.

In response the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment advised that the total cost for the provision of the shared cycle footway on Fenton Road had been £1,344,298.

In a supplementary question Councillor Jones noted the low usage of the cycle path that he had observed and asked whether the money spent on the project would have been better utilised on maintaining pavements in the area.

The Cabinet Member advised that the funding used for the cycle path project had been fully delivered using external funding, with grants from Department for Transport, the Transforming Cities Fund phase 1 and Local Transport Plan programmes, and as such the funding could not have been used for the maintenance of pavements. The Cabinet Member reaffirmed the Council's commitment to promoting active travel across the Borough.

**(7) Councillor Ball** asked why RMBC only allowed qualified stonemasons to carry out the cleaning of headstones within the Rotherham area when other local authorities allowed cleaning companies to perform this task.

In response the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance, advised that the management of the municipal cemeteries in Rotherham was carried out by a third-party contractor, Dignity Funerals Limited, and that any work carried out on memorials within these cemeteries was required to be undertaken in accordance with the Rotherham Memorial Mason Registration Scheme and associated work permit that had been the Council scheme that had transferred to Dignity when the contract had been formed in 2008.

The Cabinet Member advised that a requirement of the scheme was that the cleaning of a memorial was always undertaken off-site before being re-installed by a National Association for Memorial Masons or a British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons registered contractor. The Cabinet Member noted that this meant that cleaning companies who were not currently nationally registered were not permitted to undertake memorial cleaning in Rotherham.

The Cabinet Member advised that following feedback on the scheme being received from grave owners, memorial masons and third-party cleaning companies, that in March 2021 it had been requested that Dignity undertake a review of the Memorial Mason's Registration Scheme. This review had been requested as it was felt that the scheme needed reviewing and renewing given the length of time that it had been in place and to reflect a similar approach to other cemetery services in the wider South Yorkshire region.

As supplementary question Councillor Ball requested that the scheme be removed in order to save residents money. The Cabinet Member advised that while the policy was being reviewed, it was still in place and as such it was required to be adhered to.

**(8) Councillor Reynolds** asked why the Council was allowing a further 300+ houses in Ravenfield Greenbelt to be built when serious drainage and flooding issues were yet to be resolved.

The Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy advised that the site in Ravenfield had been identified in the Local Plan (site H65) and had been granted outline planning permission in February 2021. The Cabinet

Member stated that whilst the outline permission had agreed the principle of the development at the site, the permission that had been granted was subject to conditions that required full details of the drainage and flooding mitigation works to be submitted to and approved by the Council.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Planning Service was currently considering those reserved matters under application RB2021/1532, with the reserved matters relating to layout, scale, landscaping and external appearance not being determined until the drainage and flooding issues had been resolved.

The Cabinet Member noted that the drainage and flooding requirements were:

- A drainage strategy and masterplan for the whole of the site,
- Details of a foul and surface water drainage scheme,
- An updated Flood Risk Assessment based on existing flood risk,
- Proposals to mitigate flood risk,
- Sustainable drainage principles,
- A flood route drawing,
- And a foul water sewer modelling assessment,

and that until the Council was satisfied that all of these issues had been addressed then the development could not go ahead.

As a supplementary question Councillor Reynolds sought assurance that all the factors relating to flooding had been taken into account in the granting of planning permission for the site.

In response the Cabinet Member noted the requirement that had been placed on the Council by the Government to identify suitable housing sites in a Local Plan. The Cabinet Member advised that whilst the Council had been successful in negotiating down the number of homes and therefore the number of sites required that it had still been necessary to identify numerous sites for housing. The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Reynolds that all planning applications were determined in line with National Planning Policy Framework rules, and that conditions were always put in place to ensure that issues such as flooding were addressed.

**(9) Councillor Jones** stated that in December 2018 Councillors for Rotherham West and Keppel Wards had been supplied with a legal summary relating to legal action against the Environment Agency and had been told that now that their complaints procedures had been exhausted, legal proceedings could be brought with the authorisation of the Cabinet Member. Councillor Jones asked who had made the decision not to proceed and why.

In response the Leader advised that in 2018, Counsel had advised that the Council could consider taking action against the Environment Agency by way of Judicial Review, and that in order to give that full consideration, the Council then sought further legal advice from Counsel on the prospects of success.

The Leader noted that the Council had published an executive summary of the legal advice on this matter which was available on its website. The Leader advised that the executive summary had made it clear that the prospects of success in relation to a Judicial Review against the Environment Agency were below 20%, and that as a result of this advice, it was clear that a Judicial Review was not a viable option and therefore no recommendation to take such action had been made. The Leader noted that, as detailed within the executive summary, any such action would be purely speculative and would leave the Council liable to significant costs.

There was no supplementary question.

**(10) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester** noted that devolved funding for local housing hub projects averaged £10 per Council home across Rotherham and that Sitwell Ward received £17.02 per home whilst Dalton, East Herringthorpe and Thrybergh received £7.32 per home. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked what the justification for this difference in funding was.

In response the Cabinet Member for Housing noted that the annual Ward Housing Hub budget was currently £203,700, which was distributed across the 25 Wards in the Borough. The Cabinet Member advised that there were 2 elements to the Ward budget allocation, a base budget of £4,000 which was allocated to each Ward and then a 'top up' of funding, which was allocated based upon the number of Council homes in the Ward as a percentage of the Borough total. The Cabinet Member advised that this method of budget setting ensured that each Ward received a minimum guaranteed budget allocation with the final allocation reflecting the difference in the number of Council homes in each Ward.

As a supplementary question Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked how the approach was fair as it meant that some Wards lost out in comparison to others.

In response the Cabinet Member advised that the current system of allocating funds was much fairer than the previous system, noting that all systems that could be used had both advantages and disadvantages.

**(11) Councillor Ball** asked about the money spent on solar compactors, how it seemed to be a matter of going "green for greens sake" and should Rotherham be really having 61 of these located in the Town Centre?

Councillor Beck confirmed the Council began installing solar litter bins in the Town Centre as part of a trial in 2019. This was a success, reducing the number of times the bins needed to be emptied and improving street cleanliness. In some places where operatives were having to empty a bin more than once a day they were only needing to do so once a week, freeing staff up to do other tasks. Pleasingly the Council were able to allocate further funding to install 98 more solar litter bins both in the Town Centre and in townships and areas with significant footfall.

The solar litter bins have a number of benefits over standard bins. The solar powered compactor reduced the volume of litter by up to 90% so that each bin could hold more litter before it needed emptying. The bin also sent a message to the Service to say when it was full and needed emptying. The data from the bins would allow the Council to plan the service better and to use limited resources more efficiently.

In a supplementary question Councillor Ball confirmed he had had a previous discussion about the size of the bins, but he raised concern about the money spent on them when the funds could have gone towards electric vehicles collecting household and street waste. He asked was this something the Cabinet Member would consider in the future.

Councillor Beck confirmed he would, but it was a matter of priorities. Members supported the use of these innovative solar bins to tackle litter in areas and more importantly in areas with high footfall. This had freed up staff to do other tasks. The solar bins would continue to be rolled out over a 3 year programme and so far had been a success.

**(12) Councillor Jones** referred earlier this year to the Council seeking an executive summary around its current chances of legal action against the Environment Agency, now classed as low as 20%, and asked could the Leader give the exact wording of the instructions given to counsel, Andrew Thomas, Q.C. for him to form this opinion?

The Leader was unable to comment as the purpose of publishing an executive summary was to protect the legal privilege status of the substantive advice from Counsel. The executive summary was placed in the public domain as this was the most information that could be shared given that it was a matter of considerable public interest.

In a supplementary question Councillor Jones confirmed the Leader was unable to share what the instruction had been to Counsel so he shared his interpretation. From reading the Environmental Agency brief that the QC returned the Council's position was not to look at any new ways of stopping the tip, but to close down any future challenges to the Council for not acting about that claim. It was now claimed that the chances of winning that claim were as low as 20%, but this ignored the 2 main areas that had now timed out that stood a good chance of success according to the QC in his first brief. Due to the Council kicking the issue into the long

grass who asked for the second opinion to be sought and why were their attempts to try to cover the fact up.

The Leader believed Councillor Jones' interpretation to be incorrect. The discussions about seeking Legal advice were precisely the opposite and were to explore every avenue possible in order to find ways to prevent the tip re-opening. The discussions were in the interest of the taxpayers of Rotherham, which was why the Council had spent so much money chasing down those avenues. This was the right thing to do, even though it did not get the action everyone wanted to see.

**(13) Councillor Miro** asked, in view of the double whammy of rising energy prices and the cut to the Universal Credit allowance, did Rotherham Borough Council agree to expand District Heating Schemes to all towns and villages in the Borough?

Councillor Brookes confirmed the Council managed 18 separate District Heating Schemes throughout Rotherham with circa 1,250 properties connected to these networks. Developing further District Heating Schemes would involve major infrastructure and engineering works, requiring substantial capital investment and ongoing future maintenance costs, and as such at the moment there were no such plans.

**(14) Councillor Reynolds** asked what were the short, medium and long term future options for Riverside House as the Council's Main Office/HQ?

Councillor Lelliott explained there were no plans to change the use of Riverside House as the Council's Main Office/Head Quarters in the short, medium or long term.

In a supplementary question Councillor Reynolds asked long term for Riverside House, what happened to the building during lockdown, if there were any plans to seek a lease reduction during this period and with the onset of a hybrid working arrangement rendering half the space available, were there any long term sub-leases proposed and what impact would this have on the costs and lease?

Councillor Lelliott explained that during the height of the pandemic the building remained operational, though with significantly reduced staff use and the public areas closed during the lockdowns. Since the lifting of restrictions, the public areas of Riverside House had re-opened and more staff were attending as part of a phased return to the office.

The Council held the lease for a further 32 years (with no break provisions), and since the most recent lease re-negotiation in 2018 the Council had much greater flexibility in its use of Riverside House. Therefore, there were opportunities for the sub-letting of any remaining space, not only for further office space for partner organisations or offered on a commercial basis, but for other potential uses subject to the necessary planning consents.

At the end of the lease the Council would have the opportunity to buy the Freehold interest for £1 so that it effectively owned the building

**(15) Councillor Ball** asked about the provision of solar bins and how they seemed to have forgotten lots of Wards including his own which had a large Academy and an industrial site where you could pick your own bottle of urine from the verge side. He asked who decided the location of these bins and could the Cabinet Member provide the business model for this?

Councillor Beck explained solar bins were not suitable for all locations. They were expensive and the best value from them were in high-footfall areas and commercial centres. The areas identified for them to be installed reflected this. Once installed there would be 61 solar litter bins outside of the Town Centre in the following locations:-

- Maltby Town Centre
- Parkgate
- Swinton
- Dinnington
- Swallownest
- Kiveton
- Wath

Aside from solar litter bins, it had been acknowledged that litter bins across the Borough needed to be improved. Many were old and damaged and some were simply in the wrong places. With that in mind the Council had also allocated budget to refresh every litter bin in the Borough across the next 2 to 3 years. This would result in all of the litter bins in Hellaby and Maltby West being replaced over that period. The Service would begin consultation imminently with Ward Councillors on this programme and as part of that process the location of existing litter bins would also be reviewed.

In a supplementary question Councillor Ball had asked the Cabinet Member himself to come and view for himself the bottled evidence located on Hellaby Industrial Estate, but asked why after highlighting this had this area been overlooked with increased capacity bins and left again to the litter pickers to have to pick up this disgusting habit.

Councillor Beck had recently visited the area and had not seen evidence of what Councillor Ball was referring to. He confirmed he would raise this with officers and this situation would be monitored and consideration given, as part of the bin replacement programme, for litter in that area.

**(16) Councillor Reynolds** asked why at the Rotherham Show had charities been charged the commercial rate for their pitch instead of a discounted rate that had been applied at previous shows.

In response the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion advised that the income from trade stalls constituted a vital component of the Rotherham Show budget that had made it possible to deliver a show of the scale and quality of this year's event. The Cabinet Member advised that delivering the show in 2021 had presented some unique challenges, with costs rising significantly due the event being delivered over 3 days rather than 2 in order to enable social distancing, a range of Covid secure measures such as increased cleaning, sanitation stations and additional stewarding due to staff self-isolating. The Cabinet Member advised that in such circumstances a single price for stalls had been seen as most appropriate.

The Cabinet Member advised that despite the single price for stalls, charity pitches had remained at approximately 30% of overall representation. The Cabinet Member noted his thanks to all of the staff who had contributed to the delivery of such a successful event.

As a supplementary question Councillor Reynolds asked why charities were being made to pay the same rates as businesses.

In response the Cabinet Member stated that there had been excellent representation from local charities at the show and noted the different reasons for attending the show including fund raising and profile raising of the charities who had been in attendance. The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Reynolds that the Council did want to retain a strong presence from local charities at the show and would bear this in mind when reviewing pricing for next year's show.

**(17) Councillor A. Carter** stated that residents in Brinsworth were frustrated with the external appearance of some shop fronts in the village and asked how the Council could work with these businesses to improve the situation.

In response the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy advised that whilst the shops within Brinsworth were privately owned, the Council would always seek to provide whatever support it could to local businesses who were seeking to invest and improve the local environment and shopping areas. The Cabinet Member stated that the Council had supported a large number of businesses during the pandemic through a variety of Government grants. The Cabinet Member added that although the Council was limited in the direct financial support that could be offered from the public purse to private companies, the Council would always encourage businesses to contact the RiDO team to register interest should there be any future grants available for improving shop frontages.

As a supplementary question Councillor A. Carter asked what enforcement activity could be carried out by the Council to improve the facades and to tackle the problem of waste being left outside shops.

In response the Cabinet Member advised that Enforcement Officers would be able to look at the situation regarding the waste and litter, and that Business Support Officers would also be able to discuss the issues with the shop owners in order to identify any further possible solutions.

**(18) Councillor C. Carter** stated that parking was a problem outside many schools in Brinsworth, making the walk to school less safe for children, and as such would the Council commit to carrying out more regular parking enforcement around schools in Brinsworth.

In response the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy advised that the Council enforced school keep clear 'zigzag' restrictions by means of a CCTV van and had undertaken patrols and parking enforcement in Brinsworth on a number of occasions. The Cabinet Member noted that so far during 2021 the schools in Brinsworth had been patrolled on 6 occasions resulting in 4 penalty charge notices being issued. The Cabinet Member also advised that it was possible for Councillor C. Carter to look to apply for additional road safety infrastructure to be installed and that she should speak with the Neighbourhoods Team for further information.

As a supplementary question Councillor C. Carter asked when the Council would commit to carrying out more parking enforcement activity in Brinsworth.

In response the Cabinet Member referred Councillor C. Carter to her previous response and noted that as there were in excess of 200 school entrances in the Borough where such restrictions were in place, patrols could only be undertaken on a periodic basis. The Cabinet Member assured Councillor C. Carter that a series of patrols in Brinsworth on consecutive days was planned for the near future.

**(19) Councillor Miro** asked that, as part of enhancing road safety around the Rotherham area, would the Council commit to reducing the speed limit to 40 mph on Brinsworth Road in Catcliffe, especially in view of it running through the village and being close to 2 schools in its area.

In response the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment stated that the Council had committed to the consideration of speed limit reductions and that 3 speed surveys had now been completed on New Brinsworth Road. The Cabinet Member noted that these would now be assessed in accordance with Department for Transport's requirements prior to a decision being made on what interventions, if any, would be required with any potential future traffic calming measures being subject to the relevant statutory consultations and on the availability of appropriate funding. The Cabinet Member noted that work would be ongoing over the next 2 months after which a decision could be taken on an appropriate course of action for measures to address the concerns about speeding traffic, at which point public consultation would take place prior to any changes being made.

There was no supplementary question.

**(20) Councillor Baum-Dixon** noted that trees had been shown to enhance mood, self-esteem, and lower blood pressure and that studies had shown that people are more likely to walk or cycle to work if the streets are lined with trees, living longer, and feeling better as a result. Councillor Baum-Dixon asked whether the Council recognised the physical and mental health benefits of having more trees in the Borough along with their positive environmental impact.

In response the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion advised that the Council absolutely recognised and valued the physical and mental health benefits of exposure to trees and green spaces. The Cabinet Member noted that this had been acknowledged within the Council's recently adopted Tree Management Protocol and Guidance that sought to support the good management and protection of the Council's existing tree stock. The Cabinet Member advised that following £150,000 capital investment from the Council, 200 additional trees would be planted between October 2021 and February 2022 in consultation with Ward Members to ensure that they were planted in locations that brought both mental health and environmental benefits to local communities. The Cabinet Member noted that this investment had been supported by a further £50,000 of revenue funding to appoint an officer to support local engagement and planting programmes across the Borough. It was noted further that that this additional funding had already unlocked a further £82,600 in match funding from National Grant Funding Programme which would enable the planting of a further 370 trees this planting season, with a further bid for £150,000 to further increase tree planting having been submitted.

As a supplementary question Councillor Baum-Dixon asked how the Council planned to address the concerns of residents of Edinburgh Drive and Newthorpe Way in North Anston regarding the size of the trees in the Anston Plantation and how they were impacting on the wellbeing and amenity of residents.

In response the Cabinet Member advised that the Council's new Tree Management Protocol had been introduced to address such situations as described by Councillor Baum-Dixon. The Cabinet Member requested that Councillor Baum-Dixon send him further details so that further enquiries could be made.

**(21) Councillor Tinsley** asked with the streets in Maltby strewn with litter and road edges being turned into weed gardens, when would the Council get on top of this and was the main problem that zonal working simply was not working?

The Cabinet Member for Transport and Regeneration acknowledged that further investment in the Street Cleaning Service was needed in the last budget and additional funding was agreed to clean a number of high-speed main roads, for additional staffing resources and to undertake

enhanced maintenance of cycle routes. The additional resources meant that a team now visited Maltby at the weekends, when previously the Service was limited to weekdays.

This resource had also enabled the Service to complete a number of days of enhanced cleansing in many areas and the Service would continue to do so once the grass cutting season ends and over the winter period.

Whilst it had been a challenging year for the Service, with warm wet weather and staffing affected by Covid and Covid restrictions, the aim of the zonal working model was to deliver a more flexible workforce with greater ownership over local areas. The intention was to empower the local team to take responsibility for neighbourhoods and to be more engaged with Local Councillors and residents and, therefore, more responsive to their local priorities. Previously the Service was static and could not respond to changing demands or changes to local priorities.

Councillor Tinsley was urged to engage actively with the local zonal team and to work with them to identify areas of concern so that they could be prioritised and improved.

In a supplementary question Councillor Tinsley referred to an RMBC paper prior to the introduction of zonal working where it was noted that the introduction of zonal working could result in a deterioration of the street scene. This was now the case in Maltby and he asked as well as the extra funds to street cleansing that were promised when would the improvements be seen.

Councillor Beck confirmed that additional funding resources had been made available which had been affected by the pandemic and the implementation. It was hoped that improvements would soon be evident and that the priority area action could be continued.

**(22) Councillor A. Carter** explained everyone was shocked to see the incident at Brinsworth Academy earlier this month with a student being hospitalised. He asked what work did the Council believe needed to be done to reassure parents that their children would be safe from harm when going to school?

Councillor Cusworth stated that everyone was horrified by the incident that Councillor Carter refers to and our hearts go out to the victim of the attack and his family. The Cabinet Member was glad that Brinsworth Academy had taken the incident very seriously, the perpetrators of the attack had been permanently excluded from Brinsworth Academy subject to statutory timescales and a criminal investigation was underway.

A range of support and interventions had been organised as part of the multi-agency response to the incident including community engagement and 'in school' support including appropriate use of social media, inclusion and diversity and pastoral support for students. The school had also

commissioned Remedi which facilitated a restorative approach to conflict within schools to strengthen community cohesion by engaging families with the school. This offer was presently being facilitated to all year groups.

School Leaders also continued to meet and liaise with community members and representatives and further meetings were also scheduled.

In a supplementary question Councillor A. Carter had received concerns by parents and local residents about the school. He asked if this was considered a “one off” incident or could this point towards a culture where lesser incidents of this have not been taken seriously and it could be the leadership of the Academy. He asked did the Cabinet Member believe this needed to change moving forward.

Councillor Cusworth considered it remiss of her to discuss matters of this nature in the meeting, but was happy to facilitate a further discussion with Councillor Carter.

**(23) Councillor Tinsley** asked with RMBC experiencing HGV driver shortages, could the Cabinet Member give him a breakdown for the last 2 years of RMBC’s HGV permanent staffing levels which were required to run services, and the actual number of HGV driver staff that we had for those 2 year periods?

Councillor Beck explained that at any point time there were expected to be 51 HGV drivers with a small number being agency. There was budget for 51 drivers and currently there were 45 drivers against that requirement.

The Council was working on a plan to improve the position. This included training a number of internal staff to drive HGVs, which was already underway, and reviewing approaches to recruitment of drivers and the pay and conditions of HGV qualified staff. The Council was continuing to deliver the Waste Service and Garden Waste Service which were now fully operational and the resilience was strong.

In a supplementary question Councillor Tinsley asked for the driver numbers over a 2 year period and if the Council relied totally on agency staff rather than looking at retention and recruitment.

Councillor Beck confirmed the Council did not rely on agency staff and the service had sufficient resource allocation for a full establishment of 51 drivers. This was an ever-changing position which could not be shown accurately over a 2 -year period.

**(24) Councillor Ball** referred to Beat the Street which seemed to have been a big success in various parts of the Borough, He asked if the Council were looking at expand this to the Wards that missed out so that all children got a chance to participate?

Councillor Roche welcomed the success of this initiative put forward by the Health and Wellbeing Board developing a range of activities to encourage people to be more active and healthier, but it was a pity that the external grant was not enough to cover the whole Borough. The location was based on where it was considered it would have the best impact in budget. In turn this was part of a highly successful move to look at the wider implications by the Health and Wellbeing Board looking at the best range of activities to encourage people to be more active and, therefore, more healthy.

Beat the Street ran a successful 6 week ‘game’ in Rotherham ending on the 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2021, with excellent engagement from 52 schools as well as wider participation from organisations and individuals in the Borough. A final report and evaluation of the programme had been received from Beat the Street.

To offer wider opportunities for participation in similar activity, the Council have worked with Beat the Street as part of its summer activities programme. This delivered short term pop-up trails within the Borough linked in closely to the Olympic and Paralympic Games and included Beat the Street Activity Trails at the following parks:-

- Clifton Park Olympic Trail – 8<sup>th</sup> August
- Rosehill Park Olympic Trail – 22<sup>nd</sup> August
- Thrybergh Country Park Paralympian Trail – 29<sup>th</sup> August

Through the summer holidays the Beat the Street Rotherham branding and Facebook page had been used to promote wider ideas for summer holiday activities, the Great Big Rotherham To Do List, the Change for Life summer 10 Minute Shake Up campaign, the Rotherham Show and other local and national events and campaigns, which all cover the whole Borough.

In a supplementary question Councillor Ball believed those communities beyond the M18 corridor and its children appeared to be forgotten and they had to face a 30 to 40 minute cycle ride to take part in Beat the Street activities. He stood under the banner “Where Everyone Matters” and he asked if the Cabinet Member could promise this to the children over the border of the M18.

Councillor Roche reiterated that he had spoken to the Senior Officer and expressed his wish to see this extended to all Wards, but it was pointed out the budget to deliver this initiative was limited.

The Officer took on board the wishes to see a whole range of activities that improved health across all Wards. He was working with the campaign organisers to see if this could happen in the future.

(25) **Councillor Barley** confirmed residents in her Ward and across Rotherham had been pleased to welcome families to Manvers who were relocated to the UK from Afghanistan under the ARAP scheme. She asked please could the Cabinet Member tell her the best ways local people could support these families and how many families Rotherham Council expected to accommodate and support on a longer-term basis?

The Leader confirmed there had been numerous enquiries relating to offers of help, donations and support. By far the most useful thing people could do was to donate money, which could be done through The Red Cross who were running a national campaign to target funds where they were needed.

The Council were not encouraging people to donate physical items but, if necessary, this could be done at the libraries in Wath, Dinnington, Maltby, Mowbray Gardens and at Riverside house in the Town Centre.

People were asked not to go to the hotel to try to donate items as it was short on space and being run as a functioning business for other guests, but to use the libraries instead. The most useful things were likely to be new or good quality clean clothes, especially warm clothes, coats and trainers as the colder months approached.

The Council had already pledged to take (2) Afghan families on the ARAP scheme and work was underway to find suitable housing so they could soon be welcomed to Rotherham. This number was under review in light of the developing Government policy.

In a supplementary question Councillor Barley confirmed one offer of support she had received and passed on which was in relation to jobs and asked if this was something the Leader would consider when offering accommodation in the long term.

The Leader explained that in the longer term consideration would be given, but with the temporary nature of the accommodation, the difficulties with Central Government and support from the DWP and the National Insurance number registrations this would take some time to deliver.

(26) **Councillor Tinsley** asked that with the advert for expressions of interests to take over the day-to-day running of Maltby's Coronation Park having now passed, and with current checks on the potential interested party underway, would RMBC services that were usually undertaken on the Park by RMBC be measurably redeployed elsewhere in Maltby?

In response the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion stated that Maltby Town Council had requested and had been successful in their application to take over the running of Coronation Park as a Community Asset Transfer and as such they would now be responsible for the management and maintenance of that Park. The Cabinet Member advised that the

costs to the Borough Council related to the maintenance of the Park were minimal and largely comprised of staff time and as such there would not be a reduction in costs. The Cabinet Member advised that the Council would be able to utilise the time of rangers and grounds maintenance saved differently across the Parks that remained the Council's responsibility including Cherry Tree Park in Maltby.

As a supplementary question Councillor Tinsley noted his concern that residents in Maltby would be paying twice for the delivery of the same service and asked for assurance that the resources transferred away from the maintenance of Coronation Park by the Borough Council would be measurably deployed elsewhere.

In response the Cabinet Member assured Councillor Tinsley all available resources would be used across the Borough to deliver the maximum benefit for residents.

**(27) Councillor Ball** asked that as the Council had called a climate emergency, "a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action" why was it when he had been driving past the Hellaby depot were there no electric vehicles in sight and all the cars and lorries that he could see were still powered by fossil fuel.

In response the Cabinet Member for Transport and Regeneration advised that the Council had declared a climate emergency and had committed to the Council's carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2030 and for Borough-wide carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2040. The Cabinet Member advised that this commitment had included a commitment to change the Council's fleet to electric or other sustainable fuels, and that work was currently being carried out to look at the best options on how to achieve this.

The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Ball that in the meantime that the Council was focussed on identifying sustainable vehicles whenever a vehicle was replaced and that the first tenders for electric vehicles were currently being evaluated which would result in 3 electric cars being used in Children's Services.

There was no supplementary question.

**(28) Councillor Ball** asked whether the charging points at the Hellaby Depot could be made available to all staff and visitors to the depot in order to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles instead of being for "private use" so that these units did not remain idle.

In response the Cabinet Member for Transport and Regeneration noted that the charging points at Hellaby Depot had been installed for the priority-use of operational fleet vehicles. The Cabinet Member advised that it would be investigated whether this infrastructure could be made available for staff and visitors to charge their vehicles whilst at the Depot,

but noted as the Depot was an operational site, private vehicles had only limited access to the car park on health and safety grounds, and therefore the focus remained on the fleet.

As a supplementary question Councillor Ball asked what could be done to make the electric vehicle charging points across the Borough more accessible.

In response the Cabinet Member advised that he would be happy to discuss the situation in more detail with Councillor Ball outside of the meeting.

**(29) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester** noted that the family and friends of Sam Haycock, through their campaign group “Sam’s Army Mission” had expressed concerns over the accessibility and usability of water safety equipment at local country parks and had asked that following his and other tragedies over the summer what measures had been taken to review water safety procedures at Council Parks.

In response the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion noted these tragic incidents and that his, and all Members’ thoughts were very much with the families and all of those who were affected.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council’s message had always been, and remained, that people should not swim in open water other than as a part of safe organised activities as there were many hidden dangers involved including cold water shock. The Cabinet Member advised that the Council had taken a number of actions in relation to water safety over the summer months, working closely with partners in South Yorkshire Police and the Fire Service. The Cabinet Member advised that the Council and its partners had:

- Delivered a programme of engagement across the summer months to highlight the dangers of open water swimming and prevent it from happening. Joint operations and events took place in July and August, many of which were directly aimed at young people. Both the Police and Fire Service maintained patrols across the summer months at open water sites to prevent swimming from taking place.
- Delivered a raft of community and media messages from leaflets through to social media campaigns.
- Reviewed signage at all Council-managed open water sites across the Borough, leading to the replacement of any damaged signs, none of which were at the Ulley site.
- Reviewed CCTV coverage to deter vandalism of throwlines and signage, leading to the purchase of 3 new cameras, which are currently being installed.

- Proposing parking restrictions near to the bridge over Ulley Parking which is currently in public consultation.
- Reviewed throwline provision and purchased a number of new ones which are in the process of being installed.
- Reviewed all risk assessments associated with all our open water areas.

The Cabinet Member assured Councillor Bennett-Sylvester that the Council remained committed to identifying measures to prevent any further incidents in the future and would continue to work with partners to do so.

In asking a supplementary question Councillor Bennett-Sylvester noted a discussion that he had had with Sam's father Simon at a recent event on water safety and asked whether the Cabinet Member would meet with Mr Haycock to discuss what more the Council could do to improve water safety measures.

In response the Cabinet Member stated that he would happily meet with Mr. Haycock and that he and the Council were fully committed to do everything possible to prevent another tragedy like Sam's.

**(30) Councillor Tinsley** noted the nearly £500,000 that had been spent this year on solar bins that would be rolled out across the Borough with 11 having recently been installed in Maltby. Councillor Tinsley asked how much each bin had cost and what savings that these bins would bring compared to having 11 normal litter bins.

In response the Cabinet Member Transport and Environment advised that the solar bins were relatively expensive, in that they cost £2,700 per bin. The Cabinet Member noted however that because the cost was a capital cost it was repaid over the lifetime of the units, so the actual annual cost was much lower.

The Cabinet Member advised that for the additional cost, the new solar litter bins had many benefits over standard bins. These benefits included that the solar powered compactor reduced the volume of litter by up to 90% so that each bin could hold more litter before requiring emptying with the bin then sending a message to the Service to say when it was full and needed emptying.

The Cabinet Member advised that initial trials had clearly indicated a significant reduction in the amount of emptying of bins that was required. The Cabinet Member noted that traditional litter bins in the Town Centre that had required emptying every day were now only having to be emptied twice a week which equated to around 35 hours of staff time every week, the equivalent of one extra member of staff. The Cabinet Member advised

that this had meant that valuable staff time had been freed up to undertake other work to help keep communities cleaner.

As a supplementary question Councillor Tinsley asked that given the high unit cost of the bins whether it would have been better to buy bigger bins that were only slightly more expensive.

In response the Cabinet Member advised that the solar bins that had been purchased were already much bigger than standard bins. The Cabinet Member reaffirmed the benefits that he had described regarding solar over standard bins.

**65. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items of business.