

**COUNCIL MEETING
30th October, 2019**

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

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

251. ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The Mayor drew attention to various events she and the Mayoress had attended since the last Council Meeting.

252. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Elliott, R. Elliott, McNeely, Pitchley and Senior.

253. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications received.

254. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 4th September, 2019, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

255. PETITIONS

The Mayor reported receipt of a petition which had not met the threshold for consideration by Council:-

- Containing 1567 valid signatures (2167 signatures in total) calling on the Council to take enforcement action against the reopening of Droppingwell Landfill.

Mr. S. McKenna, on behalf of Droppingwell Action Group, addressed the Council as part of the presentation of the petition.

The petition would be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for consideration.

256. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to report.

257. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(1) Mr. Harron asked how could it be that the petition tabled at the Council meeting on 22nd May, 2019 (a petition from October, 2017 blocked apparently by the actions of the Chief Executive for about eighteen months) had not received a response by 5th September, 2019, yet the petition tabled at the Council meeting on 4th September, 2019 received a response from the Assistant Chief Executive on 5th September, 2019?

The Leader explained the Council would respond to petitions as quickly as practicable, but sometimes this took longer than others. He understood that in this particular situation there had been a simple administrative error that meant a reply had not been sent. Mr. Harron was issued with apology from the Council and he included his own apologies for the process taking so long.

In a supplementary question Mr. Harron focused on the second response he received which was the following day to the Council meeting. That petition was actually asking the Council to suspend the changes to the petition scheme and fully consult with members of the public before implementing the changes. He was curious as to how, having addressed the Council, by mid- morning the next day he had received a response from an officer.

He, therefore, wanted to complain as he believed his right had been removed to go to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. He had been sent a copy of the Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy and there was nothing to suggest he had right of appeal. He, therefore, asked was there a right of appeal and for confirmation when the above Policy was adopted by Council as there was no reference to Elected Members within it.

The Leader confirmed he was not aware of the response specifics to Mr. Harron so would need to check and come back to him. He also advised that if the officer response was not satisfactory then Mr. Harron could take this forward using the Council's Complaints Procedure. The Leader again apologised that a response to Mr. Harron had not been circulated sooner.

It was also pointed out that following feedback and an internal review of support services for governance, improvements had been made to the

back office processes in the administration of petitions which should avoid significant delays in responses being issued by officers.

(2) Mr. Simon Ball was unable to attend the Council Meeting so his question “That just 8 out of the 63 councillors here have been given the power to make nearly all Council decisions. In this undemocratic decision-making system, the other 55 councillors have little or no say, are you happy for this undemocratic way to continue?” would receive an answer in writing.

(3) Mr. Peter Thirlwall asked could the Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee please tell me the outcome of my complaint dated 16th August, regarding the failure of Councillor Brian Cutts to complete his ‘Register of Interests’?

Councillor Clark, as Vice-Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee, explained that it was not appropriate to go into detail about individual cases in this forum, as the rules stated that Council questions should be general questions.

However, it was confirmed that all Members’ interests forms had been appropriately completed including the subject of his enquiry. It was each Member’s responsibility to make sure that their Register of Interests was correct, updated within twenty-eight days of any change and signed.

The Council should be seen to take strong action against any person who did not comply as this was a clear responsibility of being an Elected Member.

In a supplementary question Mr. Thirlwall thanked the Vice-Chair about the need for strong action which he agreed with. However, Councillor B. Cutts was elected on the 5th May, 2015 and two and a half years later he had still not declared his property interests. This had prompted at least five questions at Council on the subject.

Councillor B. Cutts had been mentioned by name so was fully aware of the position and the need to abide by the Code of Conduct. He had also been spoken to by the Monitoring Officer at the time and a seminar for the UKIP Members about the filling in of their Register of Interests had also taken place.

It would appear that outstanding Register of Interest forms were all completed by UKIP Members apart from Councillor B. Cutts who eventually completed it the day before the last Council Meeting.

Despite asking questions this was reported in detail to the Standards and Ethics Committee. Mr. Thirlwall, therefore, asked what incentive did any Councillor have to complete their Register of Interests if there was no penalty for not doing so. An apology was, therefore, warranted to this Chamber and a suggestion that the allowance paid to Members be

removed for the period the updates to the Register of Interests remained outstanding.

Councillor Clark reiterated how it was not appropriate to go into detail in this forum about individual cases. However, she gave her assurance that the supplementary information provided would be raised at the next meeting of the Standards and Ethics Committee and included as an agenda item regarding Register of Interests and how they should be dealt with from a legal perspective by each individual Members.

258. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, that should the Mayor deem it necessary the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that any items involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

259. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT

The Leader clarified that petitions were not normally discussed that emerged with fewer than 2,000 signatures and he did not intend to start a discussion today. However, he wished to thank the protesters who had brought their concerns today. He was aware of the frustrations and difficulties around this big local issue and it was hoped, during the course of this meeting, more information about what the Council had been able to do on their behalf would be shared and further information would be available with the referral into scrutiny.

The Leader wanted to also focus on some good news for the Council. Over the last few weeks the Council had been award “silver” for the Be-Well@Work initiative and was the first Council in the country to receive such an award recognising good practice in workplace health and wellbeing.

The Council had also been accredited the PAS PRO landlord accreditation in resident involvement. The Tenant Involvement Team and Council tenants had contributed to the Council achieving that accreditation. The assessment panel had been impressed with the positive engagement evidenced showing the Council was serious about engagement with tenants to help drive service improvements.

Clifton Park had once again won the Green Flag Award and was the only local authority managed park in England to have been awarded the people's choice every year for the last 4 years consecutively with more than 45,000 votes being cast.

Congratulations were offered to the award-winning Planning Team following the recent publication of Government statistics showing the Service once again as one of the top performers in dealing with planning applications.

Finally, the Bellows Road development in Rawmarsh had been shortlisted for the best shared ownership development (urban) by the Inside Housing Development Awards, which was good recognition for that scheme and the work done by the Housing Service.

The Mayor invited Members to ask questions of the Leader's Statement and none were raised.

260. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th September, 2019, be received.

With regards to Minute No. 50 (Community Energy Switching Scheme) Councillor Jepson sought clarification of whether this scheme was also available to the Borough's community organisations, Parish Councils and local churches who would clearly benefit from saving money.

The Leader believed they could, but would confirm this in writing to Councillor Jepson in readiness for the launch of the scheme at the start of the next calendar year.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

261. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - ADOPTION OF POLICIES TO SUPPORT ELECTED MEMBERS

Further to Minute No. 43 of the Cabinet held on 16th September, 2019, consideration was given to the report which detailed the outcome of a Members' Working Group reviewing carers, maternity and paternity arrangements for Councillors with the aim of encouraging the next generation of women to play their part in politics in Rotherham.

The Working Group's recommendations had formed a policy document proposing amendment to the Members' Allowance Scheme to take account of the adoption of the policy. The logic underpinning the policy was that improved arrangements for new parents would contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of local authority Councils. It was also written with a view to retaining experienced Councillors, especially women, and making public office more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded from it.

Councillors Carter, Cusworth, Hoddinott, Napper and Simpson spoke in favour of the recommendations and wished to place on record their thanks to the Members of the Working Group. This suite of documents would provide support for Councillors not only with caring responsibilities, but those with disabilities and a terminal illness to fully participate.

Resolved:- (1) That the amendment to the Members' Allowances Scheme be amended (Appendix 8 of the Constitution), subject to the receipt of the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

(2) That the policies to support Elected Members in respect of parental leave, disabilities, arrangements for carers and dignity in dying be approved and be adopted, subject to the amendment to the Members' Allowances Scheme.

Mover:- Councillor Watson

Seconder:- Councillor Short

262. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES

Further to Minute No. 46 of the Cabinet held on 16th September, 2019, consideration was given to the report which detailed the responses following the public consultation on the current polling scheme and the Returning Officer's proposals.

The new Ward boundaries had been taken into account alongside disability access and the impact on schools.

Resolved:- (1) That the submissions made in respect of the review of polling districts and polling places for the Borough of Rotherham be noted.

(2) That the adoption of the polling district boundaries be approved.

(3) That the final proposals for polling places be approved.

(4) That the Electoral Registration Officer make the necessary amendments to the polling districts to take effect from publication of the revised register on 1st December, 2019.

(5) That the power to designate polling places in accordance with Section 18B of the Representation of the People Act 1983 be delegated to the Chief Executive, with such power to be exercised only in circumstances where a decision is required at short notice and it is not possible to await a decision of Council.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

263. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - COUNCIL DELIVERY OF NEW HOMES ON ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE SITES

Further to Minute No. 651 of the Cabinet held on 21st October, 2019, consideration was given to a report detailing the scheme to provide 171 high quality, mixed tenure homes, developed for gateway sites which were key to the delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan and sought authority for the necessary budget and delegated authorities to officers.

The sites sat at strategically important, highly visible gateway locations in the town centre, adjacent to other sites with the potential to accommodate further housing development. The delivery of 171 new homes across these sites would provide a significant contribution towards Rotherham's housing growth requirement, with further multiplier effects as anticipated above.

Development funding on these sites would come from the Housing Revenue Account with some external funding from the Sheffield City Region Housing Fund. The Sheffield City Region detailed business case had been recommended for approval with the decision to be taken in November. It was hoped that positive news would then be heard from New Vision Homes England who were also keen to support the Council's plans in this regard in terms of delivery.

The Capital Programme was also to be presented to Council meeting in terms of the formal process with a view to starting on site early in the New Year.

It was pointed out that, with regards to concerns about the erection of hoardings adjacent to Wellgate Old Hall, this building was to be retained and Rotherham's history secured and complimented.

Resolved:- That the inclusion of the scheme in the Capital Programme be approved.

Mover:- Councillor Beck

Seconder:- Councillor Lelliott

264. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - ADOPTION OF A REVISED STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)

Further to Minute No. 67 of the Cabinet held on 21st October, 2019, consideration was given to a report outlining the consultation that had taken place on a draft revised Statement of Community Involvement Unit (SCI). Under Article 3 of the Constitution, the SCI formed part of the policy framework.

The SCI set out how stakeholders could influence new planning policy documents covering Rotherham, how information would be communicated and the ways in which individuals and organisations could comment on planning applications.

The Council's current SCI was adopted in June, 2015, however, following adoption of the Local Plan Sites and Policies document in June 2018, this effectively completed the current cycle of Local Plan production in Rotherham. It was an appropriate and timely point to review and revise the current SCI and fulfil the duty of reviewing the SCI within the five years required.

Resolved:- (1) That the current Statement of Community Involvement (2015) be withdrawn

(2) The revised Statement of Community Involvement (2019) be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Lelliott

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

265. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUNCTIONS - TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CABINET

Consideration was given to a report proposing that the Terms of Reference of the Cabinet be amended to include provision for that body to determine major changes to the method of delivery of Council services.

The amendment was designed to ensure that there was Member level decision making in respect of any significant service changes to aid transparency and democratic oversight. This would give the assurance about the way that services were delivered and allow for debate should proposals arise.

Resolved:- That the Terms of Reference of the Cabinet be amended to include provision for the Cabinet to determine major changes to the method of delivery of Council services.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

266. MEMBERSHIP OF POLITICAL GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL, POLITICAL BALANCE AND ENTITLEMENT TO SEATS

Consideration was given to the report which detailed how, in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the Proper Officer was required to notify the Council of any change in the political balance of the Authority or the operation of new political groups under the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. Since the last meeting held on 4th September, 2019, the Proper Officer had received notification of a change in the political balance of the Authority.

There were 2 political groups in operation on the Council – the Brexit Party Group (11 Members) and the Labour Group (48 Members) – with 4 non-aligned Members, who were not in a political group.

There were 149 seats available on committees, boards and panels and under the calculation the Labour Group was entitled to 114 seats and the Brexit Party Group entitled to 28. This left 7 seats which could not be given to members of the political groups and should be allocated to the 4 non-aligned Councillors. Details of the vacant seats and nominations were circulated at the meeting.

The Council also had 2 seats on the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, one of which was appointed to on 22nd May, 2019. The current vacancy must be filled by a member of the Brexit Party Group or a non-aligned Member and be appointed to by the Council.

Councillor Brian Cutts had been nominated by the Brexit Party Group to serve on the Police and Crime Panel, whilst Councillors Read and Watson of the Labour Group nominated Councillor Short to the same role.

Councillor Read recalled the reasons why the Council in October 2018 had determined that Councillor B. Cutts had not been a suitable representative to serve on the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, after a finding from the Standards and Ethics Sub-Committee that he had breached the Member Code of Conduct.

Councillor Read reminded Members that the decision had been reached unanimously following the finding of the Standards and Ethics Sub-Committee. By virtue of his failure to meet the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct, Councillor B. Cutts was uniquely unqualified to represent the Borough.

He further referenced the Council's contact with the Home Office and their advice about rejecting Councillor B. Cutts' appointment. As it would appear no suitable Brexit Party Member could be appointed, it was proposed that a non-aligned Member be appointed to the Police and Crime Panel.

It was, therefore, proposed that Councillor P. Short resumed his place on the Police and Crime Panel. He had previously represented the Council and the UKIP Party Group, as it was last year, so was eminently qualified to take that role again.

Councillor Cutts addressed the meeting requesting a copy of the correspondence with the Home Office and further asked if the Legal Department would assist him with sending his own report.

Councillor Cowles in response considered it unfair of the Leader to say that the Home Office rejected Councillor B. Cutts when in actual fact they were not prepared to intervene in this particular issue preferring for the matter to be resolved locally.

COUNCIL MEETING - 30/10/19

Councillor Jepson was in support of Councillor Short as he had previously done an excellent job for the Council so was more than happy to support his nomination.

Resolved:- (1) That the operation of 2 political groups on the Council and the detail of their designated Leaders be noted:-

Labour Group – Councillor Chris Read (Leader of the Council)
Brexit Party Group – Councillor Allen Cowles (Leader of the Majority Opposition Group).

(2) That the entitlement of the membership of the political groups and non-aligned Members be agreed and such entitlements be reflected in Council's appointments of Members to Committees.

(3) That the appointment of Councillor McNeely to the Planning Board and non-aligned Members to committees, boards and panels, as detailed below, be approved:-

Licensing Board	Vacant
Licensing Committee	Vacant
Planning Board	Councillor P. Short
Standards and Ethics Committee	Councillor N. Simpson
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board	Councillor C. Jepson
Health Select Commission	Councillor P. Short
Improving Lives Select Commission	Councillor N. Simpson
Improving Places Select Commission	Councillor C. Jepson
Introductory Tenancy Review Panel	Councillor P. Short

(4) That Councillor Short, a non-aligned Member, be appointed to serve on the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Watson

267. **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - RAVENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

Consideration was given to the report which detailed receipt of a petition from Ravenfield Parish Council requesting a Community Governance Review.

The petition asked for the Review to be undertaken with a view to altering the existing boundary of the Parish of Ravenfield. It proposed that the boundary between Moor Lane South and Lidget Lane should be moved south to a line stretching from the southern border of site LDF0774 (Rotherham Local Plan) running from Moor Lane South eastward to Lidget Lane (identified as a red line on the map attached to the petition).

The request was made due to the change of use of LDF0774 to residential and the inevitable increase in population. Residents of the new housing would live in the community of Ravenfield and use Ravenfield village facilities. The current boundary would create an anomalous situation and be harmful to community cohesion.

In order to start the required Community Governance Review, the Council would need to agree Terms of Reference for the Review and, as part of the Review, to carry out statutory consultation.

In considering the request Members were of the view that such a review did enthuse local residents and their views on the proposals should be sought. However, this piece of land was still undeveloped and whilst there was a clear boundary, this may not be as clear once the land was built on.

This view was also the same for other Members who believed this request was a little premature when local residents should eventually choose whether they wanted to be part of the Bramley or Ravenfield parishes.

However, in noting the comments this was a legal process that needed to be followed following the request for a Community Governance Review.

Resolved:- (1) That a Community Governance Review of the Parish of Ravenfield be undertaken.

(2) That the Terms of Reference for the Review in respect of the Parish of Ravenfield, set out at Appendix 3 of the report submitted, be approved.

(3) That a further report be submitted on the outcome of the consultation undertaken as part of the Review.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Read

268. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY UPDATE

Councillor Steele, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, introduced the first update for 2019/20 on the latest work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Select Commissions - Health, Improving Lives and Improving Places as set out in detail as part of the report.

Councillor Carter believed the opposition should scrutinise executive functions of this Council and could not support the update due to there being a Labour Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Members were in disagreement with Councillor Carter's view and challenged his own involvement in the scrutiny process given his reluctance to nominate himself to any membership. They regarded the role of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to be

robust and critical to the scrutiny processes in Rotherham, which were highly regarded and held up as good practice in the region.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

Mover:- Councillor Steele

Seconder:- Councillor Cowles

269. CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER'S TAKEOVER CHALLENGE SCRUTINY REVIEW: YOUNG CARERS

Consideration was given to the findings and recommendations of a spotlight review undertaken by the Rotherham Youth Cabinet, together with the Rotherham Young Carers Council, regarding improving access to leisure opportunities for young carers in Rotherham.

Many young people provided a significant number of hours of care each week which may impinge on both their school and social lives. Given the value of respite from caring for all carers, it was vital that young people were able to have access to leisure activities and to have fun.

Financial considerations need to be taken into account as many families with young carers were on low incomes. Access to discounted or free activities was important either through developing a new offer or building on what was already in place. Concessionary travel to activities was another aspect to consider.

The recommendations focused on:-

- An improved offer of discounted access to leisure activities for young carers.
- Clear eligibility criteria.
- Support to travel to activities.
- Good promotion and publicity.
- Identification of young carers and support.

Resolved:- (1) That the report and recommendations in respect of Young Carers be noted.

(2) That the response of Cabinet be reported back to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Rotherham Youth Cabinet.

Mover:- Councillor Steele

Seconder:- Councillor Cowles

270. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th November, 2018, consideration was given to the annual Ward updates for Sitwell, Swinton and Valley as part of the Thriving Neighbourhood Strategy.

The Strategy signalled a new way of working for the Council both for Members and for staff and covered every Ward in the Borough delivered through Ward Plans developed with residents to address local issues and opportunities. Ward Members would be supported by the neighbourhood team and would work with officers and residents from a range of organisations to respond to residents.

Councillors Cowles, Short and Julie Turner, on behalf of the Sitwell Ward, gave an update on their Ward priorities and welcomed the opportunity that the Thriving Neighbourhoods had given to Members and listed a number of initiatives that had taken place in the Ward, including:-

- Fly tipping on Doles Lane and erection of steel barriers allowing access to all those who enjoyed open spaces.
- Anti-social behaviour hotspots in and around a disused bus shelter on Cowrakes Lane.
- Funding for the Parish Cricket Club to purchase an all-weather wicket.
- Joint funding with Boston Castle Ward Members CCTV and barriers on the Duke of Norfolk estate.
- Special award by the Police Crime Commissioner for the proactive work by residents with establishing a WhatsApp group with over 150 residents.
- Speed surveys with the Council and Police.
- Deployment of illuminated speed signs around the Ward.
- Addressing isolation and loneliness and funding coffee mornings.
- Building bird boxes with the pupils of Newman School for residents.
- Proposals to run an integrated shopping project with students from Newman School.
- Liaison with the Council, Yorkshire Water and the Environment Agency following concerns about the cleanliness of the water flowing through Whiston Brook, the capacity of the sewage system and the maintenance schedule for the pumping station.
- Funding at Whiston Worrygoose School for a fence to prevent litter being thrown into the school's wildlife area.
- Tables, chairs and play equipment for the Methodist Church Toddler Group.
- Spring bulb planting party on the 3rd November, 2019 where 5,000 spring flowering bulbs will be planted within the Ward.
- Water butts for the Whiston Allotment Society on its 3 sites.

In addressing the Council, Councillor Cowles was happy to support some of the many Ward projects, but expressed some concern about the delay from the request to authorise funds to the projects being implemented.

Councillors Cusworth, Sansome and Wyatt, on behalf of the Swinton Ward, gave an update on their Ward priorities and welcomed the opportunity to thank the Neighbourhood Working Group, staff and

COUNCIL MEETING - 30/10/19

volunteers and listed a number of initiatives that had taken place in the Ward.

Ward Members responded positively to the Thriving Neighbourhoods agenda as it enabled them to engage with residents in a much more meaningful way. With access to the devolved budget priority could be given to important issues, but it was not just about money it was also about the time given. As a result the community were benefiting from:-

- Successful defibrillator and cabinet projects throughout the Ward as a result of excellent partnership and fund raising efforts
- Community skips and litter picking and the partnership working with Streetpride, Don River Catchment Group and the joint working with the Hooper and Rawmarsh Wards.
- Plans for a fancy dress litter pick on the lead up towards Christmas.
- Social media sharing pages.
- Support from volunteers and in particular an ex-soldier who was restoring the pathways and clearing streams at Horsefair Park.
- Wildlife and pond restorations.
- Community clear ups.
- Victoria Cross Centenary Celebrations.
- Better utilisation of the library for surgeries and meetings and funding of special events.
- Supporting the South Yorkshire Active Travel initiative and the significant impact on parking around schools.
- Brookfield Academy's Travel Working Group Gold accreditation reducing the number of children travelling to schools in cars to 10%.
- St Thomas' School achieved Bronze working towards Silver and Queen Street Primary were working towards their Bronze.
- Partnership and community involvement in the walk to school events and the launch of the park and stride car parks.
- Attendance at award presentations and funding of scooters, portable bollards, slow traffic signs and contributions to the funding of school crossing patrols.
- Resident engagement at Charles Street Community Centre, Potteries Court and Highfield Court.
- Befriending work and visits to residents with Polly, the dog.
- Loneliness and isolation agenda and the programme of regular guided walks advertised on social media.
- Operation Shield and actions to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the area.
- Quarterly Neighbourhood Policing meetings and opportunities for residents to raise concerns.
- Involvement with persistent reoffenders and integration into local communities.
- Speeding and utilisation of fully trained community volunteers to carry out speed checks in local hotspots.
- Crime prevention bid initiative submission.

Councillor Reeder had nothing to contribute to the update as a member of the Valley Ward as the Thriving Neighbourhoods Agenda had not worked for her. She did not feel she now lived in a cleaner, greener environment.

Councillor Albiston, on behalf of the Valley Ward, gave an update on the Ward priorities in which she had been involved across a number of diverse community areas. Some of the communities were the most deprived in the Borough and found to be challenging with the political make-up of the Ward itself. Officers have been very patient and diplomatic in their approach to neighbourhood working and working with Members that took into account the different political backgrounds.

Potentially residents of the Valley Ward had lost out when compared to other areas in terms of working together. However, despite the differences a number of successes have been achieved and worked on, including:-

- Developing and renovating the neighbourhood centres into successful community hubs.
- Making environmental improvements to improve community safety and wellbeing.
- Enhancing facilities and activities for children, young people and families.
- Creating interest in voluntary sector groups.
- Sporting activities in Valley Park.
- Solar powered vehicle activated speed signs.

Councillor Albiston ended her report by saying neighbourhood working should not be about Councillors' pet projects or a series of photo opportunities, but a long-term commitment to bring people together, it was about building community assets and addressing the issues that mattered to the people that lived there with resources targeted to those areas that needed them most. It was a mistake that areas like Valley, that really needed to be targeted, did not get the level of resources that they deserved.

Responding to some of the points made, Councillor Watson had not experienced difficulties with some of the internal processes for commitments, but would look into this further. He was aware of some issues with demand for speed activated signs, but this had since been resolved. He further emphasised how the Thriving Neighbourhoods agenda was for supporting communities and not individual Members.

Resolved:- That the Ward updates be received and the contents noted.

Mover:- Councillor Watson

Seconder:- Councillor Read

271. NOTICE OF MOTION - CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY

Proposed by Councillor Roche and seconded by Councillor Allen:-

This Council:-

In the most recent State of the UK Climate 2017 report, trends show that the UK climate is continuing to warm and that sea levels continue to rise:

- We will be experiencing summers that are 2.5°C warmer,
- Our winters will be milder with the average temperatures being 2.2°C warmer
- There may be a 16% decrease in summer rainfall making our summers much drier but more variable
- Winters will be wetter with an average of 14% more rainfall
- Mean sea levels around the UK have risen by about 16 cm since the start of the 20th Century.

The IPCC Special Report on Global Warming published in October 2018 states that we have just 12 years to act on climate change if global temperature rises are to be kept within the recommended 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The government has set a target date of 2050 for Britain to produce “net zero” carbon emissions. All governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts of climate change, and local authorities that recognise this should not wait for their national governments to change their policies.

In recent years, Rotherham Council has been reducing its carbon emissions by about 3% per year. Recent statistics from the energy switching website migrate.co.uk suggest that over the last 10 years Rotherham has seen the fifth biggest reduction of our emissions overall amongst 21 local authorities in Yorkshire & the Humber.

Nationally to date over half of the Councils in England have declared a climatic emergency as has the National Government. Rotherham has previously developed a climate change strategy but now is the time to reassess our objective for the years ahead.

This Council notes that there are significant opportunities to reduce RMBC’s carbon emissions over the coming years:

1. The proposed development of a district heat network from Templeborough Power Plant, powered by sustainable biomass
2. The proposed introduction of a community energy switching scheme, moving properties including council homes onto 100% renewable sources of electricity

3. The recent installation of electric vehicle charging points, including for Council vehicles, and future re-provision of the Council's fleet of vehicles
4. Encouraging external providers of Council services to reduce their carbon emissions as part of our Social Value Policy
5. The proposed planting of fifty million trees across the country, including potentially some in Rotherham, as part of the "Northern Forest"

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Join other local authorities in declaring a climate emergency
2. Create a Members Working Group to propose an informed target for the Council's carbon reduction by 2025 and to review it every 5 years thereafter, and to develop a "Carbon Action Plan" towards these goals, and that this Working Group should report back to the Council no later than March 2020
3. Develop a strategy for RMBC to play a leadership role in promoting community, public and business partnerships in reducing carbon emissions
4. Mandate officers to lobby Government for additional resources to support this strategy where these are required
5. Pledge to produce, in January of each year, a Rotherham Climate Emergency Annual Report, detailing the Council's progress against the Carbon Action Plan
6. Pledge to ask our partner organisations across Rotherham to support us by making clear commitments to dealing with this climatic crisis

Require all officer reports from April 2020 to Cabinet and Full Council to contain Impact assessments in relation to Climate change.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

272. STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

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

Mover:- Councillor Clark

Seconder:- Councillor Vjestica

273. AUDIT COMMITTEE

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

Mover:- Councillor Wyatt

Seconder:- Councillor Walsh

274. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

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

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Seconder:- Councillor Mallinder

275. PLANNING BOARD

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of the Planning Board be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Sheppard

Seconder:- Councillor Williams

276. STAFFING COMMITTEE

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Alam

Seconder:- Councillor Read

277. LICENSING BOARD

Resolved:- That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Board Sub-Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee be adopted.

Mover:- Councillor Ellis

Seconder:- Councillor Beaumont

278. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS

(1) Councillor Carter referred to some residents telling him they had to wait for almost two hours before their call to 101 was answered. He asked were there any plans to introduce a call-back function for the 101 service?

Councillor Sansome confirmed this was in place

The Call Back Assist (CBA) was a new functionality that was delivered with the new system.

In terms of implementation, it was delivered in a phased way across the 4 groups that worked within Atlas Court. This commenced in June, with supervisors gaining some understanding of how the system worked. The

roll out then continued across all the groups who switched the system on from 7.00 am to 7.00 p.m.

When the roll out was first implemented there were a few teething problems and for a short period it was switched off whilst the issues were investigated and a fix was then put in place.

The CBA function had had a phased introduction over the summer period and allowed callers to choose the option of leaving their details and either the telephone number they were using to call, or an alternative contact number. The system would then retain the callers place in the 101 queue and recontact them. In the event that the caller did not answer the initial call back, the system would call a second and a third time before removing the number from the 101 queue.

The Call Back Assist system did not extend into a period of anti-social hours for a call back.

The system had now been running across the floor since the end of August and worked on a set of call routing rules. However, the supervisors were able to switch the system on and off based on operational demand.

The average answered wait times for 101 for the last three months were:-

- August 2019 - 14 minutes and 33 seconds with an average abandoned wait time of 10 minutes and 5 seconds.
- September 2019 - 13 minutes and 43 seconds with an average abandoned wait time of 10 minutes and 35 seconds.
- October 2019 - 8 minutes and 42 seconds with an average abandoned wait time of 8 minutes and 31 seconds.

Whilst this did not alleviate the frustration for those members of the public who have found themselves waiting longer, it did show that such long waits were an exception rather than the norm.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter understood now there was no covert function place at the beginning of August. However, he asked were there plans to introduce the service on a 24/7 whether this would enable any caller wishing to use call-back assist to remain on the 'log' and then called back the day after.

Councillor Sansome would seek to obtain this information and provide feedback in writing.

279. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN

(1) Councillor Simpson asked could the Council support his national petition to limit the sale and use of Fireworks to around 5th November (along with New Year's/Chinese New Year and Diwali festival.)

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed that if Councillor Simpson could send her a copy of his petition she would be happy to have a look at it.

(2) Councillor Simpson referred to “Fast 4’s unlicensed taxi driver fine” and asked was it about time the idea of taxi dashboard photo ID was implemented?

Councillor Ellis thanked Councillor Simpson for raising this matter. The successful prosecution of Fast 4 and the significant fine of £1,300 showed how seriously the Council took taxi licensing and that the Council would act robustly if drivers and operators did not abide by the rules.

In 2015, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, set what was generally accepted to be the highest standard with regard to taxi and private hire licensing in the UK. Many of the standards have subsequently been adopted by other local licensing authorities. Rotherham had even been cited as best practice in revised national guidance.

However, the Council was not complacent. Following a review of the current Policy, Cabinet would be considering a report, proposing to consult on a revised Taxi Licensing Policy.

The current Policy required all drivers to wear an identity badge on their person. However, feedback from both taxi users and drivers was that this was often not as visible as it could be to passengers. As part of this review the Cabinet would be considering the most appropriate information for internal display.

In a supplementary question Councillor Simpson confirmed he had spoken over two years ago to the National Taxi Association about displaying information. However, being a taxi user himself he only considered it right that identification should be on display for safeguarding purposes rather than being clipped onto a jacket. A passenger could then clearly see the identity of their driver.

Councillor Ellis reaffirmed that the policy currently dictated that all drivers must wear their personal licensed identification. However, she urged Councillor Simpson to include his comments as part of the consultation.

(3) Councillor Cooksey indicated that when carers have a respite package from Adult Social Care she understood it had to be re-assessed every year. This causes unnecessary stress for the carer so asked would the Council reconsider?

Councillor Roche confirmed there was a requirement under the Care Act to review support plans at least every 12 months and this was to make sure that eligible needs were still being met.

A more detailed reassessment would only take place if there were changes or circumstances that had arisen and a new support plan was needed. This was not intended to be a stressful experience, but one that provided reassurance that needs were being met appropriately whilst discharging the Council's statutory duties.

In a supplementary question Councillor Cooksey explained this concern had been said to her anecdotally, but understood that in some other authorities the respite package could roll over rather than being re-assessed in circumstances where someone was terminally ill or had a long term condition.

Not only was there a financial cost to the process, but also in manpower and the re-assessments did cause undue stress to carers, so asked if it was correct that other Local Authorities could roll over assessments if circumstances had remained in the same.

Councillor Roche reiterated it was a requirement of the Care Act for an annual assessment, but would check with senior officers to determine if national statutory guidelines were being followed with assessment rollovers.

(4) Councillor Wyatt was very pleased to hear that Rotherham's Archives Service was granted accreditation status by the national body. He asked could the Cabinet Member provide the Chamber with some further details about the award and what benefits this would be for residents and visitors?

Councillor Allen explained the National Archive Service Accreditation was the UK-wide standard for Archive Services, assessed and awarded by a partnership of bodies including The National Archives and representatives of the professional and national archive bodies in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It was a national benchmark and quality standard which had only been awarded to 153 of the 2,500 Archive Services across the UK.

Rotherham was presented with the award on 21st October, 2019 and the Director for Research and Collections spoke warmly about the Rotherham Service.

This was a genuine achievement for the Archive Service and a recognition of the dedication of staff who were thanked for their hard work given the submission was described as one of the best organized.

There were benefits for Rotherham's residents and visitors as they would be able to engage with high quality records from family history and local heritage to the industrial past and parks, urban landscapes and waterways. The accreditation provided a quality mark for the work that the service delivered with schools and local community groups, using the

collection to better understand Rotherham's shared history and the forging of new partnerships.

The Service received a number of national inquiries and demonstrated to potential donors, partners and fundraisers that Rotherham had a Service that was a trustworthy recipient of artefacts and records. Again the National Director of Research and Collections reported the importance of Archives Services meeting standards.

Archives mattered as they were a collective memory allowing society to hold institutions to account, to explore collective and personal identities to underpin research, to connect generations with stories from the past, to the present and to the future and inspire innovation and creativity.

(5) Councillor Buckley asked, with the emphasis on environmental issues and in particular the desire to reduce carbon monoxide emissions and promote the use of electrically powered cars, would the Council consider the installation of a vehicle charging facility in the car park adjacent to the new Library facilitated by Brinsworth Parish Council and RMBC?

Councillor Allen confirmed that the Council was allocated a grant, as part of the Clean Air Zone Early Measures Fund, to install 28 electric vehicle charging points in Council-owned public car parks.

Unfortunately one of the criteria from national Government for the installation was that the sites were fully owned by the Council. This meant there was a responsibility on the owner of the site for the electricity charges incurred as part of any installation and, therefore, sites not in Council-ownership had not been able to be prioritised.

Unfortunately, the site in question was not owned by the Council, but the Council was providing support to Brinsworth Parish Council on how it may move forward with an electric vehicle charging point installation.

(6) Councillor Hague referred to the Environment Agency saying Watsons Tip was inert and asked did the Council intend to challenge this assertion?

Councillor Hoddinott clarified the Council's position and their opposition to this tip 2 years ago when it passed unanimously a motion condemning the granting of the licence by the Environment Agency. The Council was supporting local residents given the decision to allow retipping and was aware of the environmental and community impact.

The Council and Councillors were doing all they could to raise its concerns about Droppingwell Tip and the Cabinet Member had met regularly with the Action Group. A further meeting had taken place with the Environment Agency and many of the questions raised today were raised with them.

It was recognized that all concerned were fighting against the law on this one and Sarah Champion, M.P. was raising this in Parliament. The Cabinet Member having raised this with the Minister had received a disappointing response as there was unwillingness to address really what was a unique position Rotherham found itself in. In terms of the question raised, the Environment Agency's own website acknowledged that the site was not inert.

In a supplementary question Councillor Hague referred back in 2016 when on site the Environment Agency said that this tip was not inert. However, test drilling indicated that with the smell of marzipan there were various contaminants within the site. This would indicate there was cyanide in the material that was unsealed with 3 old mine shafts underneath.

When it rained water percolated through the material down into the mine shafts and ultimately into the watercourse. This Council had the power to go onto that site under the Environmental Protection Act 1995 and undertake drilling operations to find out what was in that site so asked why were the Council not doing it.

Councillor Hoddinott did not dispute the concerns around the tip site, but pointed out it had been in operation since 1929. The contaminants on site were a concern and it was for Environment Agency to be monitoring regulation themselves. This was mentioned to them this week and questions raised about the groundwater and the monitoring of that site. It was a necessity that they did this.

(7) Councillor Hague asked was the Cabinet Member aware of what toxins were in Watsons tip?

Councillor Hoddinott before responding pointed out that Councillor Hague had had plenty of opportunities to ask officers about the detail. However, if he had important information he should pass this to the Cabinet Member to pass onto the Environment Agency rather than grandstanding.

Councillors and officers have spent hours and hours going through documentation to look at every avenue to stop this tip operating. With regards to the drill holes, the Cabinet Member would take this back to officers, but offered her reassurance that the Council would try absolutely everything it could, but ultimately rather than blaming the Council it was the Environment Agency that had decided the tip could open by issuing the tip operators a permit. This had been done with no consultation with local residents or the Council and it was their decision to remove the permit. The Council would continue to challenge and lobby the Government for them to take action.

(8) Councillor Hague asked did the Council intend to take enforcement action against the operator of Watsons tip for breach of planning?

Councillor Hoddinott explained that if there was a breach of planning, the Council would take action.

The Cabinet Member had spoken to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning and if Councillor Hague had additional information that would be useful please could he forward this on. The Council had looked at details of the 1958 planning permission which had very few restrictions and very few conditions on such things like operating hours. Consideration had also been given to the agreement in 1994 and the public inquiry in 1992. The current position from Planning was the site did not require any further permission and actions on the site could take place under the original permission.

In a supplementary question Councillor Hague made reference to the site's topography. The 1958 planning permission set out tipping heights which had been exceeded. It was documented by the Secretary of State's Inspector that this was overturned. A letter dated 19th January, 1996 from the Head of Planning to a local resident told them that operators were in breach of its planning. If this was correct why was the Council not taking enforcement action against this operator for breach of planning. The Council could take out an injunction and did not have to wait for works on site to start.

Councillor Hague had spoken to Planning on many occasions, but if it was documented this site was in breach of planning was enforcement action going to be taken against the operator for a planning breach.

Councillor Hoddinott explained that planning was a separate process within the Council and it was up to the Planning Board if they wanted to take action. She urged Councillor Hague to share any information he may have rather than everyone getting frustrated, aggravated and blaming each other. If there was something the Council could do it would have taken action years ago and the passing of the motion then indicated every effort was being made to stop tipping operations.

In terms of the particular planning issue it was known that Phase 1 was over tipped. However, there was an accepted variation in January 1994 around the restoration capping this scheme which was regularized. This did not mean that Phase 2 could also be filled to that level, but had to sit within the 1958 permission. If Councillor Hague had other documentation from 1996 then he was asked to submit this to the Planning Department so it could be considered.

Councillor Hague asked if he could have a copy of the variation agreement as he had not got a copy nor had he seen it. He again expressed his concern about the Secretary of State's acceptance of fill heights, but pointed out this had no bearing on the planning permission.

The fact that the Council accepted the Secretary of State's report meant nothing in planning terms and did not mean that the operation was not in breach of this planning. He again asked if the Council was going to take legal action and stop blaming the Environment Agency when the Council could stop the operation of this tip.

Councillor Hoddinott responded expressing her own concern about the need to make an argument to the Environment Agency. She was willing to sit down with Councillor Hague and talk through his concerns, but was concerned that his frustrations would not make this possible to work together. She did point out, however, that the 1994 amendment did recognise the position, but if Councillor Hague had different advice or if he had a different opinion to the advice that the Council had, he could submit a complaint.

(9) Councillor Hague asked had a variation been issued against the existing 1958 planning permission to facilitate the compliance to tip on phase 2?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed notification of the intention to start the restoration/capping scheme was submitted to the Council in January, 1994 and was accepted as a variation to the 1958 permission which was and still remained extant. Since 1994 there have been no subsequent variations.

(10) Councillor Hague asked did the Council intend to take legal action against the Environment Agency for their abuse of their own permitting procedures in issuing a permit for Watsons Tip and did the Cabinet Member believe it was not in the interests of the public purse to pursue legal action against the Environment Agency or the tip operator?

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed that action would be taken where it was in the public interest. However, legal advice had been taken on a number of matters relating to this site, but the Council would lose legal privilege with the disclosure of any information relating to legal advice or potential action in the future. The Council was, therefore, not in a position to give any further information at this stage.

The Environment Agency should have consulted with the Council. However, you could see from the latest letter from the Minister he did not think to do so would materially have changed the outcome and they would have been given the permit which was extremely disappointing.

Had the Environment Agency consulted it would have enabled the Council to bring up lots of issues currently being dealt with. One of the concerns and real issues was because the operators were working off a 1958 planning permission. The permit would normally rely on such things and this was why there were calls for regularisation around the operating hours of this tip which was a concern for residents.

COUNCIL MEETING - 30/10/19

In a supplementary question Councillor Hague asked if the Cabinet Member could elaborate on the legal advice.

Councillor Hoddinott expressed her concerns about the sharing of legal detail which may jeopardise any case in the future and advised Councillor Hague to carefully think about what information he may share.

Councillor Hague pointed out the Council could take legal action and referred to the Environment Agency acting unlawful if the issuing of a permit.

Councillor Hoddinott was seriously concerned about information shared and how Councillor Hague may be jeopardising any chance the Council may have in making a case. She expressed her disappointment in his actions.

(11) Councillor Hague asked was the Cabinet Member aware of the unstable nature of Watson's tip?

Councillor Hoddinott had visited the site several times and there were concerns about slippage that had happened down the side of the tip. She had raised this with the Environment Agency who were saying they had had engineers out on site and they were satisfied that it was stable. Again this week the Council had shared evidence to question that judgement and the Environment Agency had gone away to relook. This was a real concern as any disturbance could be disastrous.

Councillor Hague did not wish to ask a supplementary question and also wanted to withdraw his submitted questions from number twelve to fifteen.

(16) Councillor Carter asked could Councils tender bus services out to bus companies and which services, if any, did RMBC currently tender out to bus companies?

Councillor Lelliott explained that the Council did not tender bus services.

Most bus services were operated on a commercial basis by privately owned bus companies, and these services were registered with the Traffic Commissioner.

The SYPTE subsidised, through a tender process, around 30 services in Rotherham during off peak periods, mainly in the evenings or on Sundays. This was generally to ensure that areas of the Borough have a limited service during these periods where a commercially operated service would not be feasible. The value of these tendered services represented circa £1.384M per annum.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked would the Council consider tendering or a change of the route for some bus services that currently go through Brinsworth.

Councillor Lelliott advised that South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) would assess the requirement for a subsidised service should an area of the Borough not be serviced by a commercially registered service. In these circumstances a tender may be issued by the SYPTTE (but not the Council directly) for a bus company to operate a non-commercially viable service. As had been mentioned in previous meetings, Councillor Carter was advised to speak to the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and lobby to get the services that he required in his Ward.

(17) Councillor Carter stated that RMBC was the freeholder for a substantial amount of community land (for example, Crowgate playing fields in Anston) that was leased to or maintained by the parishes and asked which sites have these arrangements and did the Council have a policy to promote asset/freehold transfers of such land to the community bodies that maintained them for the benefit of residents?

Councillor Lelliott explained the Council had an adopted Community Asset Transfer Policy, which had recently been updated and approved by Cabinet. The updated Policy would be available to view on the Council's website in November, 2019.

A core principle of the Policy was to empower community organisations to deliver their own solutions to meet local needs.

From 2007 to date 26 Council-owned assets had been let to community/third party organisations for use by the wider community.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked if he could please be sent a copy of the updated Policy when it was publically available and with all the asset transfers was there the presumption the Council would transfer these assets when it was a Parish Council.

Councillor Lelliott misunderstood what Councillor Carter was asking, but confirmed that the Policy would shortly be available on the website. However, she would also send over a list of the completed lease applications for information.

(18) Councillor Carter reported that Carole from Brinsworth had been in touch having had difficulty renewing a blue badge for her husband who had reduced mobility following a stroke and asked how could it be fair that under this Labour administration frustrations, delays and unjust rejections of applications have become commonplace?

Councillor Lelliott confirmed that on the 30th August, 2019 the Department of Transport implemented new regulations for the Blue Badge Parking Scheme providing Councils with a new model application system. This required applicants to provide more description information on their health conditions. The Council was an administrative authority, but it was the Department for Transport that set out the policy.

There were delays caused by the changes to the rules made by Central Government

To mitigate the adverse impact this might have on existing Blue Badge holders, the Council had implemented a discretionary arrangement. Providing a customer had applied for a new badge before their current one expired, they could continue using their existing badge in Rotherham as though it had not expired (until they either received a new badge or they were informed that their re-application had not been successful).

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter sought clarification on the policy protocols for the Blue Badge Scheme and asked what evidence was required for those who had hidden disabilities.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed there were guidelines to follow much like any other application and documentation such as medical letters. It was a long process and more paperwork for the applicant to complete. A copy of the DfT guidelines relating to the Blue Badge Scheme would be sent over to Councillor Carter.

(19) Councillor Carter explained there was land that was owned by RMBC and leased to organisations such as grass verges, parks and recreation facilities, community buildings and Drew from North Anston wanted to know what the Council's policy was on collecting the so-called 'peppercorn rent' (e.g. £1/year) specified in such leases and asked did the cost (including staff time) of processing payments outweigh the income generated?

Councillor Lelliott explained leases were granted by the Council at peppercorn rents (as opposed to commercial rents) when they were considered to provide some form of wider community benefit.

This may be, for example, that the leaseholder was able to deliver services from the land/building that benefited both the Council and local communities.

The leases for a peppercorn or nominal amount usually went on to state "to be paid if demanded". Where leases stated this, the Council's position was that it did not collect these small nominal rents as it was not cost effective to do so.

In a supplementary question Councillor Carter asked what level of threshold for these peppercorn rents was in place and how many of these rents have been collected in the past 5 years.

Councillor Lelliott did not have the information to hand so would provide an answer to the question in writing.

(20) Councillor Jepson asked if the Cabinet Member was able to update him regarding the 6 bungalows that were to be purchased by the Council from Duchy Homes at their Penny Piece Lane, North Anston development, have they now been purchased and if so when, have tenants been allocated, when would they be completed and what was the total cost to the Council including any adaptations?

Councillor Beck explained that on 19th November, 2018, Cabinet approved the purchase of 6 bungalows on Penny Piece Lane, North Anston, from Duchy Homes, to add to the Council's housing stock.

The homes were due to be completed and handed over to the Council in January 2020 and shortly after this the homes would be allocated via the Housing Register from Key Choices.

The total cost was £592k, of which a 25% deposit had already been paid and the rest would be paid on completion.

In a supplementary comment Councillor Jepson referred to information indicating some of the properties were shown as being sold when the site was nowhere near completion and he was concerned that Council had paid money, but would be waiting some considerable time.

(21) Councillor Jepson explained that, following its recent Ofsted report, Anston Park Junior School was again rated as 'requires improvement'. This followed full and monitoring reports in 2015 and 2017 which also rated it as 'requires improvement' and asked was he also concerned about this latest one and what help and assistance was the Local Authority able to offer the school to improve the situation.

Councillor Watson explained Anston Park Junior School was a maintained school.

There had been significant turnover of staffing during the last academic year which had now been resolved. All 3e Y6 teachers left the School mid-way through the year following challenges from the leadership team.

The School was the first in the Authority to be inspected under the new framework; the emphasis on subject leadership was difficult for them because of the number of new staff who had only recently (within the previous 2 weeks) been allocated a curriculum area and so were unable to discuss it in sufficient depth – no allowance was made around this from Ofsted.

For the past year the School had had a Steering Group, which had included representation from the Council. RoSIS had allocated a National Leader for Education to support the School with termly visits who could identify any bespoke support the School needed which would feed into the Steering Group.

COUNCIL MEETING - 30/10/19

Reading the report in detail it talked about the leadership recognizing that the outcomes had not been good enough. However, there was now only four bands within the Ofsted inspection regime, but it was with a little bit more work the school would improve and was going in the right direction.

(22) Councillor Jepson referred to the Chesterfield Canal Members Steering Group which had not met since 17th January, 2019, and asked had any progress been made with regard to future meetings of the group and could the Cabinet Member also confirm that the Council was still fully committed to supporting the Trust in its restoration of the canal as well as developing its future use.

Councillor Allen explained the Chesterfield Canal Members Steering Group took place following the Kiveton Waters Stakeholder Group. The sequence of these meetings was important as the Kiveton Waters Group updated the Chesterfield Canal Members Group.

The Kiveton Waters Stakeholder Group last met in July and was due to meet again in September, but this was cancelled due to lack of availability. The next meeting was due for mid-November and officers were awaiting confirmation of the preferred date, based on the availability of the different partners.

The Council remained committed to supporting the project. The lead organisation was the Chesterfield Canal Preservation Trust and the Council would continue to work alongside other partners such as the Canals and Rivers Trust.

This commitment was further evidenced by the recently published Cultural Strategy – Things to Do, Places to Go – which was endorsed by Cabinet on 10th June, 2019. The Strategy outlined in one of its 7 Game Changers - “Adventures in Rother Valley” its commitment to “the development of the historic canal network”.

(23) Councillor B. Cutts asked could the Cabinet Member give him an outline of the current position of the Guest and Chrimes Building and the future expectation?

Councillor Lelliott reported that Guest and Chrimes was a privately owned listed building which was subject to a fire. This caused substantial damage to the building. Following the fire, several inspections and visits were carried out by Building Control to ensure that appropriate demolition, to make the building safe, was carried out. The site had been made secure with permanent fencing around the full perimeter of the site.

As the Council did not own the site Councillor Lelliott offered to put Councillor Cutts in touch with the owner’s for him to get information from them.

280. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items for consideration.