

**COUNCIL MEETING  
20th July, 2022**

Present:- Councillor Khan (in the Chair); Councillors Allen, Atkin, Aveyard, Bacon, Baker-Rogers, Ball, Barker, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, Bird, Brookes, Browne, Burnett, A. Carter, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, Clark, T. Collingham, Z. Collingham, Cooksey, Cowen, Cusworth, Elliott, Ellis, Griffin, Havard, Hoddinott, Hughes, Hunter, Jones, Keenan, Lelliott, McNeely, Monk, Pitchley, Read, Reynolds, Roche, Sansome, Sheppard, Tarmey, Taylor, 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>

**32. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that he had held his Civic Service and Parade with local dignitaries, representatives, family and friends. Many of his events during his first 2 months in office had been associated with Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This included events organised by B:Friend Charitable Organisation, Aughton Junior Academy, Lime Tree Nursery and Rotherham Markets. Events included a street party in Wath, a garden party at Rotherham Hospital, and the Big Jubilee Lunch Garden Party at Clifton Park. The Mayor also visited Kimberworth Park Club 50+ and the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. The end of the Jubilee celebrations was marked by the Mayor lighting the beacon at Boston Castle and attendance at Sheffield Cathedral for a county-wide service of celebration.

Other events since Mayor Making included attendance at:

- Civic Services for other new Mayors
- A Citizenship Ceremony, honouring citizenship of new British residents
- The Thomas Rotherham College Art Exhibition
- The Rotherham Children's University Graduation event at Gullivers
- BME Young People and Carers CIC Celebration Event
- Laughton School Sports Day
- Brinsworth Academy Art/DT viewing and Summer Fayre
- Hairspray the Musical
- Rotherham Rep's Performance of Stepping Out
- Gillian Banks Theatre School Variety Show
- Get Up to Speed with Culture and Leisure Event
- Pakistan Muslim Centre in Sheffield.
- Harthill and District Garden Association's Village Garden Trail
- The Weekend of Discovery at Ulley Country Park
- Greasbrough Gala
- Brinsworth Parish Council Village Fete

- The official opening of the Women's Euros exhibition at Clifton Park Museum
- The RUFC Exhibition opening at New York Stadium
- The opening of the Euros Fan Party
- Anston Cricket Club Garden Party
- The Mayor's Cup at Grange Park Golf Club

The Mayor also supported local businesses by meeting with representatives of AESSEAL UK and supported the civilian and armed forces at the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue's 69<sup>th</sup> Recruits Graduation Ceremony and Armed Forces Day in Rotherham.

The Mayor had attended many local charity engagements so far with organisations such as Crossroads Care; South Yorkshire's Community Foundation; Rush House; Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice; Voluntary Action Rotherham. The Mayor had also attended the Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust's 2022 Proud Awards.

**33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alam, Barley, Baum-Dixon, Fisher, Hague, Haleem, Mills, Miro and Wyatt.

**34. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications received.

**35. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS**

**Resolved:-** That the minutes of the meetings of Council held on 20th May and 25th May, 2022, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Allen

**36. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

**37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**38. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

One public question had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12:

- (1) Waverley Community Council - The Waverley Community Council would like to know how RMBC will update its monitoring demographics going forward as the current calculations did not foresee the current demand?

The Clerk from Waverley Community Council was not able to attend the meeting and as such, a response would be provided in writing by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

**39. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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

**40. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT**

The Leader stated his statement by acknowledging the families in Kiveton and Maltby who had lost their homes in fire during the previous days heatwave which was the hottest weather ever seen in the Borough. Council services and other partners were working to provide support to help those affected rebuild their lives. The Leader acknowledged the efforts of those members of the Council directly involved with supporting the emergency response and thanked the emergency services who had been working so hard in the heat to prevent even worse disasters. A major incident had been declared across South Yorkshire as the fire service, police and others were stretched by incidents across the area. The Leader stated that this was a reminder of not just the climate crisis faced and how it was not just some distant far-off challenge affecting other people, but also a reminder of how individual actions matter. He urged communities not to take risks with fire, keep themselves safe and do their bit to help the emergency services.

The Leader then focused on some of the great events that had been seen across the Borough recently including the Women's Euros which had put Rotherham on the map for all the right reasons, showing off the New York Stadium to an international audience. The Women of the World Festival took place in Clifton Park and the Leader had also celebrated Eid with the Mayor in the Town Hall.

The Annual Social Value Event was held at Gullivers Valley which gave the Council and private sector partners time to reflect on the progress made to create more jobs and apprenticeships for local people. More than £7m of social value commitments had been made since the policy was introduced 3 years ago.

The Leader confirmed that the Member Survey had been sent to all Elected Members to complete. Only 30 out of 59 Members had responded as yet so he encouraged those that had not provided comments to do so by getting in touch with the Head of Democratic Services or the Head of Neighbourhoods.

With regards to the comments on Social Value, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester stated that residents were seeing some of the benefits in Dalton and Thrybergh from the Chesterhill development. Most people would physically see it in the new bench that has been put in Thrybergh Country Park. That development alone has created local apprenticeships and supported existing ones. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked, roughly, how many apprenticeships the Council's Social Value Policy has helped create and support?

The Leader confirmed that he did not have that information available during the meeting and as such, a written response would be provided.

Councillor A. Carter echoed the Leader's comments regarding the fires and the work done by the emergency services. He wished to place on record the Liberal Democrat's sympathy with those that had lost their homes. Councillor A. Carter asked a question regarding Doncaster Sheffield Airport and whether action would be taken to safeguard its future? The Liberal Democrats believed that the Council should be doing everything it could to ensure South Yorkshire kept a commercial airport for the foreseeable future.

The Leader explained that the potential closure of Doncaster Sheffield Airport was the single biggest economic blow faced across South Yorkshire for some time. The Leader had met the previous week with the Mayor of South Yorkshire and other South Yorkshire Council Leaders to discuss the potential response. He believed this was the correct avenue to go down to make representations to Government. A meeting between the Leaders and the owners of the airport was taking place during the Council meeting to discuss the proposals. Leaders wanted to do everything they could to keep the Airport and maintain the benefits that the Airport brought. Given the scale of the numbers that the owners were talking about, the Leader believed Central Government would have to step in. The Leader hoped that the situation was not one of a private developer attempting to lever in public money to support their business or to extort public money in order to maintain that business. He urged the owners to get involved with the discussions that were taking place. The Leader would not promise to write a blank cheque.

Councillor Ball wished to echo the comments regarding the work of the emergency services during the heatwaves in the day prior to the meeting. He particularly thanked the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service who had been the first to respond to the calls in Maltby as other Services were that stretched. He also thanked Dronfield Fire Station. Councillor Ball asked if conversations could be held about who Elected Members could call in these situations. He noted that himself and Councillor Tinsley had been on the ground in Maltby and had tried every number they could but there was no specific contact number at that time. Councillor Ball thought it was worth a conversation for all Elected Members to have to get that contact number circulated? He also thanked Councillor Hoddinott for answering his calls on the matter.

Councillor Ball also referenced climate change and noted the large amounts of plastic in the Council Chamber. He stated that everyone had to start doing the small things and that there should not be this amount of plastic.

The Leader thanked Councillor Ball for his question and for the calls that he had made. It was confirmed that the emergency number would be circulated to all Members after the meeting. In relation to plastic, there was a commitment to phase out single-use plastic in the Council. Discussions were ongoing about whether removal of single-use plastic was the most carbon friendly way of providing packaging due to the energy that went in to providing alternatives. However, that was a wider discussion to be had and the Council were committed to doing less with single-use plastic.

#### **41. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS**

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester referenced the Cabinet Minutes of 16th May, 2022, Minute No. 150, in relation to the school holiday voucher support. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester had asked a question at the Council meeting about this matter and it had been confirmed that the Council provide the funding but that it is up to the schools to design the schemes. Had there been any feedback from schools/SEND clubs in relation to broadening the choice for parents of where they can shop.

The Leader did not have that information and confirmed that a written response would be provided.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester also referenced the Cabinet Minutes of 20th June, 2022, Minute No. 10 and asked the Cabinet Member for Housing about Housing Strategic Acquisitions. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked if there had been any serious looks at acquiring leaseholder properties that had been bought from the Council? There had been anecdotal evidence from people in Dalton and Thrybergh that the only people that got to buy these properties are private landlords which continues the cycle of privatisation of ownership. Could the Council look at this in the future and investigate the issues leaseholders might be having that leave them open to buybacks from the Council?

Councillor Brookes confirmed that she would look into the matter and asked Councillor Bennett-Sylvester to send her any information on the matter.

Councillor Ball asked about Coronation Park which he raised at the last Cabinet Meeting. He stated that he had attended the Park that week and there had never been as much glass. Councillor Ball asked what help could be provided for Coronation Park at this moment in time because it was dangerous? Children could not play there, dogs could not be walked there. Nothing could be done in the Park without a risk of harm.

Councillor Beck explained that the Council would support him as much as they could in turning round Coronation Park as there was a role for the Council. However, there was also a role for the police. It was not the Council's fault that every Monday morning the Park was generally in the state that it was. There was an issue of anti-social behaviour there which had been acknowledged by all and needed to be gotten on top of. Councillor Beck would be happy to facilitate site meetings/pull the relevant people together. The frequency of bin collections had been increased in the Park. However, it was acknowledged that work needed to be done together to resolve the issues.

Councillor A. Carter raised the Council Tax Rebate Scheme and stated that the matter had been reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board a number of weeks ago. That review had found that a significant number of residents who had received cheques for the rebate had not yet cashed them. Councillor A. Carter stated that the Council had let those residents down as they had not received those much needed finances. He asked if any progress had been made and what the latest figures were?

The Leader explained that he would have checked the latest figures if he had been given notice. However, the clear majority of those cheques had been cashed and residents have taken that money. The Leader accepted that, for some people, the specific measure of using a cheque, had been a challenge and some of those people had missed out on some of that money because of the way they had needed to cash that. It was regrettable. The Leader, however, stated that if Members looked at the way the system was set up, comparing it to systems across the country that required applications, those residents impacted would not have even got applications in by the time Rotherham had sent cheques out. The 30 something councils that were using Post Office vouchers had also encountered issues in that it was a further month before those could be sent out and it relied on residents having access to a Post Office in order to receive that money. The Leader accepted the criticism about the problems some residents had had with cheques but reiterated that there was no great mechanism that would get money into all the pockets of those who need it easily. The Council did well to get the money out to residents quickly. As time passed by, the Council would chase up the people who had not been able to cash their cheques, would be able to issue reminders and possibly reissue cheques as well as bringing residents in to be able to physically hand over cash. Further, the Council could credit the money against Council Tax accounts where those people had tax outstanding. The fear was that those who needed it the most were probably the most likely to struggle to get it but that would have been the case no matter what system had been used.

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 16th May and 20th June, 2002, be received.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Allen

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

**Resolved:-** That the amendments to the nominations of Members to serve on the Committees, Boards and Panels as listed in the Mayor's Letter for the July Council Meeting be approved.

Mover:- Councillor Allen

Seconder:- Councillor Read

The agreed nominations were:

**Standards and Ethics**

Parish Councillor Alan Buckley – to be added

Parish Councillor Monica Carroll – to be added

**Mayoral Combined Authority Transport and Environment Board**

Councillor Beck

Substitute - Councillor Lelliott

**Mayoral Combined Authority Audit and Standards Committee**

Councillor Ball

Substitute - Councillor Barley

**43. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINY REVIEW ON EXTERNAL FUNDING**

Councillor Lelliott introduced the report which had been presented to Cabinet in June 2022. All recommendations from the review had been accepted by Cabinet at that meeting and were in the process of being actioned. Councillor Lelliott thanked all those that had worked on the review.

**Resolved:-** That the Council notes that Cabinet approved the response to the Scrutiny Review Recommendations – External Funding.

Mover:- Councillor Lelliott

Seconder:- Councillor Read

**44. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE OUTCOMES FROM THE SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT REVIEW ON SUPPORT FOR YOUNG CARERS**

Councillor Cusworth introduced the report which had been presented to Cabinet in June 2022. All recommendations from the review had been accepted by Cabinet at that meeting and were in the process of being actioned. Councillor Cusworth confirmed that an update would be provided at the Health Select Commission the week after Council on the

progress made with the actions. In seconding the report, Councillor Roche highlighted the transition for young carers into adulthood and echoed his support for the recommendations.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked what was being done to allow young carers to be children and enjoy their childhood? Councillor Cusworth explained that the Council were working with Barnardos to ensure that all young carers got a childhood. This included looking at access to leisure activities. Work was also ongoing with schools as the work Barnardos did started with 8 year olds but it was widely acknowledged that there were young carers younger than this. As such work, was ongoing with schools to help identify those children and support them where possible.

Councillor Thompson asked what the plan was to get the children on the waiting list for the support they needed as quickly as possible and if additional funding was required to ensure that all young carers received the right care at the right time, would that be made available now?

Councillor Cusworth stated that she would speak to officers outside of the meeting and provide a written response.

**Resolved:-** That Council note that Cabinet approved the response to the recommendations, as summarised in the Cabinet report at Appendix 1 and detailed in Appendix 2.

Mover:- Councillor Cusworth

Seconder:- Councillor Roche

**45. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE OUTCOMES FROM THE SUB-GROUP ON POST-CSE SUPPORT SERVICES**

Councillor Read introduced the report which had been presented to Cabinet on 16th May, 2022. All of the recommendations from the review had been accepted by Cabinet and were in the process of being actioned. In introducing the report, Councillor Read expressed his thanks to the sub-group for the review and acknowledged that it had taken longer than expected. The Council continued to try and provide the best support possible.

In seconding the report, Councillor Cusworth acknowledged the significant progress that had been made but confirmed that Scrutiny would continue to monitor the matter.

In response to a question from Councillor Bacon regarding Action C, it was confirmed that the action plan had been considered by the Improving Lives Select Commission and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board before being accepted by Cabinet. As such, it was not for Cabinet to change the recommendations. However, the Leader confirmed that he would have no objection to widening the discussions to include the Improving Lives Select Commission, but that was not a matter for him to decide. Councillor Pitchley, Chair of Improving Lives Select Commission,



confirmed that all Members were welcome to join discussions and any future sub-groups on this matter.

Councillor T. Collingham asked what support was available to young carers and for how long was that support available? The Leader explained that it completely depended on the individual situation. The initial pathway was time limited but the Council would also endeavour to offer as much support as they could as and when survivors required it.

Councillor Z. Collingham asked a question in relation to Action E which was about listening to survivors and the research at Sheffield Hallam University. He asked if it was an ambition of the Council to go beyond that research and organise independent engagement sessions with survivors, to keep it an on-going conversation about how survivors are finding services?

The Leader explained that it would be a changing picture over time. The situation the Council was in 5 years ago was not the situation the Council would find itself in now which would not be the situation the Council found itself in in 5 or 10 years' time. The Leader stated that the piece of work that Sheffield Hallam University was doing was very important and that was an independent verification of Adult Services doing what needed to be done and what were survivors saying about that within the safety of a private conversation with a third party organisation. The results would be an important indicator and could result in changes going forward. The Leader did not believe that that work was completed and was, therefore hesitant to pre-judge where it was. It was confirmed that once received, the results would be analysed and the Council would work out the best way forward.

Councillor Clark stated that this was the longest piece of work she had done as a Councillor. She asked if the Sheffield Hallam University research had been requested but no response received and also whether an all Members seminar would be held by the author of the report once it had been delivered?

The Leader confirmed that it was his understanding that the piece of work had not yet been concluded but he was confident that the report would be provided once it had. It was agreed that an all Members seminar would be held when the results were provided.

**Resolved:-** That Council note that Cabinet approved the response to the recommendations, as summarised in the Cabinet report at Appendix 1 and detailed in Appendix 2.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconded:- Councillor Cusworth

**46. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE OUTCOMES FROM THE REVIEW GROUP ON THE ROTHERHAM COMMUNITY HUB**

Councillor Roche introduced the report which had been presented to Cabinet on 20th June, 2022. All recommendations from the review had been accepted by Cabinet and were in the process of being actioned. In moving the report, Councillor Roche thanked those who had worked on the Community Hub throughout the Pandemic. In seconding the report Councillor Sheppard also recorded his thanks to the officers and volunteers involved with the Hub.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester and Councillor Yasseen praised the work of the Community Hub and noted the work of the local community.

**Resolved:-** That Council note that Cabinet approved the response to the recommendations, as summarised in the Cabinet report at Appendix 1 and detailed in Appendix 2.

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Seconded:- Councillor Sheppard

**47. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2021/22 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report which explained that the Cabinet had considered a report detailing the proposals to update the Capital Programme for 2021/22 and the recommendation to note the Financial Outturn for 2021/22. On 11th July, 2022, the Cabinet had recommended that the report be presented to Council and that Council note the updated financial position as detailed in Appendix A to the report and approve the updated Capital Programme.

The report presented to Cabinet (Appendix A to the Council report) explained that the Revenue Budget 2021/22 was approved by Council on 3rd March, 2021. A budget of £235.7m was set for General Fund services; this excluded schools' budgets and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The 2021/22 Budget was supported by the use of £7.5m from the Budget and Financial Strategy Reserve. However, given the availability of the £14m of Covid Funding covering the majority of the Council's Covid related costs, the use of this reserve had not been required. The Council had also been able to deliver a final outturn position of a £2.4m underspend, not through delivering fewer services but by being able to apply more Government funding to the outturn position than had originally been planned.

This was a helpful outturn position that included a positive trend of necessary cost reduction within some of the Council's key services including an increase of £2.4m into the Budget and Financial Strategy Reserve along with some planned savings for 2022/23 already being achieved. It placed the Council in a more robust position heading into the 2022/23 financial year, more able to mitigate against cost pressures and

the financial challenges that were not evident at the time of setting the 2022/23 Budget such as the war in Ukraine, the significant rise in energy prices and inflation and to be more able to manage the impact rather than needing to consider making cuts in services.

The budgeted transfer from HRA reserves was reduced by £2.1m following the revenue and capital outturn positions. Cabinet also noted the carry forward of the combined schools balance of £3.794m in accordance with the Department for Education regulations as well as the reduced DSG deficit following receipt of Safety Valve funding.

The total of Corporate Reserves balances at the Financial Outturn 2021/22 was £65.8m, which was £6.1m more than the £59.7m estimated in the Budget and Council Tax 2022/23 report. The Budget Report 2022/23 planned for £7.1m use of reserves in 2022/23. Based on the 2021/22 Outturn position, that would leave a total of £58.7m Corporate Reserves at the end of the new financial year.

The Capital Programme 2021/22 totalled £144.347m split between the General Fund (£92.171m) and (HRA) £52.176m. As at the financial year end 31st March, 2022, the Capital Programme had expenditure of £104.9m, with underspend and slippage of £39.4m.

The Capital Programme 2022/23 had been reset at £285.283m split between the General Fund (£211.221m) and HRA (£74.062m). These programmes were higher than previous programmes due in the main to the following:

- Significantly increased government and external funding to support Town Centre redevelopment and Infrastructure programmes. Such as the Town Centre Fund, Future High Streets Fund and Transforming Cities Fund. Whilst this is positive, these resources are heavily time restricted and present a significant challenge for the Council to deliver.
- Slippage into the 2022/23 financial year from 2021/22 due to delays caused in part to the pandemic, inflation impacts and challenges from demand on suppliers in the sector, adding greater pressure on delivery to 2022/23.
- The Housing Growth Programme within the HRA programme, presents the ambition of the Council to expand and improve housing supply but also represents a sizeable challenge for delivery.

The 2022/23 programme had increased overall by £40.509m from the position reported to Cabinet in February 2022. The movement was based on the latest profiles of expenditure against schemes following the 2021/22 outturn position, factoring in slippage from 2021/22 of £36.930m and new grant funding of £3.579m. The total slippage from 2021/22 was £38.983m, £36.930m moving into 2022/23 and a further £2.053m re-

profiled across 2023/24 to 2025/26. Additional information on the Capital Programme was contained in Appendices 1 to 4 of the report submitted.

In introducing the report, the Leader confirmed that the Financial Outturn was slightly better than expected as more money had been received from the Government than expected. It was reported that Capital projects were under pressure nationally and the Capital Programme had been adjusted to reflect that. However, there were no fundamental changes.

Councillor Z. Collingham asked if it was possible for the data in relation to the percentage of Capital Programme expenditure that had been delivered against the budget could be provided for previous years (prior to 2020/21?) The Leader confirmed that he would speak to officers and provide a written response.

Councillor T. Collingham highlighted that Regeneration and Environment were particularly behind in delivering planned capital expenditure due largely to delays with the Parkway, Ickles Lock Project and Pothole Funding Allocation. Councillor T. Collingham appreciated that costs went up and that could result in financing deals but asked if there were any lessons to learn about the project management and planning ahead for the timely use of Pothole Grant Funding?

The Leader explained that the challenges with the Parkway Widening Scheme were mainly due to the size of the project. The Leader understood that there had been some slippages due to delays in different phases of the Scheme which moved the numbers around but the expectation was that it would be completed broadly on schedule. In relation to the Pothole Funding Allocation, the Leader explained that it was a late allocation from Government which took several months to get through the system to Rotherham, hence it was difficult to spend in the allocated time. This was because there were only so many employees working on potholes based on the agreed budget and it was then difficult to put into effect an immediate expansion of works. It was expected that this would smooth out over the next year. The challenge across all projects was having enough project management capacity; some was bought from the private sector and the rest was provided in-house.

Councillor Burnett raised that Regeneration and Environment had overspent by £3.1m with over half of that funding Home to School Transport. The Outturn response mentioned improvements that were underway that would go some way to reducing those costs. Councillor Burnett asked what those improvements were and how big of an impact where they expected to make?

The Leader explained that additional money had been provided as it was acknowledged that it was inadequate last year. Further, a review had been ongoing for a number of years in the way that the service was delivered. The Policy had been changed 3 or 4 years ago with an emphasis on moving away from providing a door-to-door service (single

use taxis or minibuses) which was an expensive way of providing the service and could be quite deskilling. This was because some of the children using the service would become independent travellers and need to know how to use public transport. This meant taxis and minibuses were not helping their development. However, it was acknowledged that it was a very reassuring service for families when a taxi turned up every morning. Moves were being made towards more independent travelling or grants to allow families to sort their own arrangements. There had been some learning about the cost implications and the Council were continuing to work through that process.

The other aspect of the increased cost of Home to School transport was the fact that around 10% more children were now eligible for the service each year which was a real challenge. Work was going on between Children and Young People's Services, who were responsible for the assessment and making sure the child was catered for, and Regeneration and Environment who were responsible for providing the transport. The work included trying to match up those services in an efficient way. However, it was expected that the budget would have to continue to rise for the foreseeable future to address the demand.

Councillor Bacon stated that the outturn response acknowledged the principle of using the Council's reserves to manage or mitigate difficult times yet the Cabinet continued to add to reserves during a budget surplus, a war and an international cost of living crisis. He asked how much more difficult did times need to get?

The Leader reiterated that the Council's finances were in a stronger position at present than expected which was a good thing for the Council and Council Tax payers. However, the current in-year forecast was for an overspend of around £7.5m which would easily wipe out that, the money that the Conservative Group wanted to spend on Council Tax support during the budget setting process plus some. Further, the Cost of Care exercise was saying that, to continue the current provision of Adult Social Care, would cost an extra £4.5m in the next year. That totalled around £10m with nothing changing whatsoever and if that continued, the reserves position would be unsustainable within 3 years. If that happened, the Government could intervene which has been seen at councils across the country.

The Leader did not accept that everything was fine and, therefore, the money could just be spent. The Council would continue to take sensible decisions on behalf of the Council Tax payers of Rotherham, run a sustainable budget and it would not get into the financial difficulties other councils had. That included providing services to those that needed them the most and being on the side of social justice.

Councillor Tarmey stated that, unlike previous years, the picture presented was one of an underspend and increasing reserves. He asked if the Leader agreed that it was time to review spending plans as a result

of the favourable position the Council found itself in? The Council had not managed to spend all of the funds on Capital Projects due to the pandemic but he asked if there was an opportunity to be doing more, modestly, for local communities as was suggested in the Liberal Democrat budget amendment earlier in the year?

The Leader stated that he did not think the Council were in a position to do that for the reasons outlined in the previous answer. However, the issues raised would be reviewed as part of the budget setting for 2023/24 when looking at what things cost, what resources were therefore available and the impact of that on Council Tax and the Council's services. With inflation being 10% at the time of the question, the Leader could not give any guarantees.

Councillor A. Carter stated that he believed the outturn report showed that in the midst of a pandemic and cost of living crisis, the Council had not been able to help the residents who needed it the most or keep the capital projects moving forward. The report also showed in paragraph 2.1 that, despite the one year underspend surprise, after years of overspending, that the Council had not learnt its lesson in that an overspend of more than what was saved in the previous year was anticipated for the forthcoming year. Councillor A. Carter said it was very disappointing that he was worried about the state of the finances.

Councillor Wooding stated that, in light of the inflation crisis which he believed was not being covered sufficiently, every single day the Council was losing £25,000 of reserves in real value. With everything considered, he asked what steps were being taken to assess the real risk of inflation to the reserves and the fact that social value was being withheld from residents?

The Leader explained that the Council continued to undertake a robust treasury management position which had saved in excess of £7m a year, each year for the last 3 or 4 years. The officers had taken a responsible position as inflation rose and as interest rates rose to protect the Council's financial position against that. If the Council were simply sitting on assets, the Leader stated that Councillor Wooding would have been right, the assets would be depreciating in value. However, because officers were being proactive, it protected against those risks.

**Resolved:-**

1. That the updated financial position as detailed in the report be noted.
2. That the updated Capital Programme as set out in paragraphs 2.83 to 2.86 of the report to Cabinet on 11th July, 2022, and Appendices 1 to 4 be approved.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Allen

**48. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022**

Consideration was given to the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22. The report, circulated with the agenda, highlighted a number of examples where Scrutiny had led to meaningful outcomes, such as:-

- Work with Rotherham Youth Cabinet
- Town Centre Masterplan Implementation
- Budget and Financial Scrutiny
- Equalities Outcomes
- Scrutiny of Mental Health Services
- Access to Health Services work
- Health Inequalities work
- Review of Post CSE Support
- Spotlight review of Rotherham's Cultural Strategy
- Domestic Abuse Work and Youth Reoffending
- Safeguarding
- Markets Review
- External Funding Sources Spotlight Review
- Work on Housing Energy Efficiency, Roads Maintenance, Fly-tipping, Bereavement Services, Rough Sleepers, Housing Policies. Tree Services, Town Centre Regeneration and Recycling

In introducing the report, Councillor Clark, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, thanked the officers who had helped write the report and noted the change of format. She highlighted the range of activities carried out by the Board and the 3 Select Commissions and noted how Scrutiny linked with the Council's priorities. The work and commitment of all Members involved in Scrutiny was praised.

**Resolved:-** That the report be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Clark

Seconder:- Councillor T. Collingham

**49. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM RAWMARSH EAST 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 Rawmarsh East 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 were supported by the Neighbourhood Team and worked with officers and residents from a range of organisations to respond to residents.

Update reports had been provided as part of the agenda. However, each Ward Member was invited to speak.

Councillor Sheppard and Hughes provided an update on Rawmarsh East:

- There were 4 Ward Priorities:
  - o Improving the physical environment
  - o Facilities and activities for children and young people
  - o Explore opportunities to improve the Health and Wellbeing of local residents
  - o Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
- Work had been carried out on problem parking on the grass verges on Green Lane
- For Remembrance, the area was decorated with over 3,000 lamppost poppies
- The Friends of Rawmarsh Cemeteries Group was being developed and work had continued with the Friends of Rawmarsh and Parkgate Greenspaces
- It was hoped that the Towns and Villages Funding works would be completed in time to enhance events planned for 2023 such as the Parkgate 2000 year commemorations
- A consultation event was due to take place in Sandhill Park to discuss improvements
- Work continued with Rawmarsh Library with lots of activities planned
- The Summer Reading Challenge was being done again for 2022.
- Partnership working continued with community centres
- Work was ongoing to combat loneliness and isolation
- Funding had been secured for new play equipment
- Neighbourhood walkabouts continued to take place to combat crime and anti-social behaviour. Ring doorbells had also been installed for some residents to aid with this.

**Resolved:-**

- 1) That the report be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Sheppard

Seconder:- Councillor Hughes

**50. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM RAWMARSH WEST 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 Rawmarsh West 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 were supported by the Neighbourhood Team and worked with officers and residents from a range of organisations to respond to residents.



Update reports had been provided as part of the agenda. However, each Ward Member was invited to speak.

Councillor Bird provided an update on Ward activity:

- There were 4 Ward Priorities:
  - o Improvements to the local community
  - o Facilities and activities for local people
  - o Ensure Rosehill Park was a well used resource and was accessible to all ages and abilities
  - o Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
- Councillor Bird thanked neighbourhood and housing officers for their work.
- The Friends of Rawmarsh Green Spaces had visited schools
- Further funding had been secured for additional lighting and a new CCTV system.
- A new walk had been established which would be signposted.
- There were many events planned in Rosehill Park for the school holidays.

Councillor Z. Collingham placed on record his thanks to Councillor Thompson for her work in Rawmarsh West Ward.

**Resolved:-**

- 1) That the report be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Bird

Seconder:- Councillor Allen

**51. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**Resolved:-** That Council received and considered minutes and recommendations of the Health and Wellbeing Board and confirmed the minutes as a true record.

Mover:- Councillor Roche

Seconder:- Councillor Cusworth

**52. LICENSING BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE**

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

Mover:- Councillor Ellis

Seconder:- Councillor McNeely

**53. PLANNING BOARD**

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

Mover:- Councillor Atkin

Seconder:- Councillor Bird

**54. STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

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

Mover:- Councillor McNeely

Seconder:- Councillor Griffin

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

There were no questions.

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

**(1) Councillor Whomersley** stated that RMBC confirmed they have 30 Electric Vehicle Public Chargers. He asked, in the month of April 2022, what number of these chargers were open to public usage?

Councillor Beck answered: all of them.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Whomersley asked what the cost of those public charges were or was there a cost?

Councillor Beck explained that he would have to speak to officers and provide a written response.

**(2) Councillor Whomersley** stated that it is estimated that in the UK, almost 30% of all cars on the road in 2027 will be electric. That is just over 9 million. Currently RMBC have 30 public chargers. To avoid gridlock, what is the plan to increase the number of charges in Rotherham within the next 5 years?

Councillor Beck explained that as of May 2022 the total public provision in the Borough was 89 fast charging bays and 59 rapid charging bays. This was amongst the highest in the region, when expressed as charging sockets per 100,000 population. A further 6 rapid chargers were due to be installed in the next 9 months as part of a South Yorkshire-wide project at 3 locations at Drummond Street, Constable Lane and Douglas Street. The completion of this project would mean that nowhere in the Borough would be more than 5 miles from a Council operated public charging socket.

A further application has been submitted to the Government for £1.6m of funding to install 32 charging points on Drummond Street carpark. This will include 4 rapid and 8 ultra-rapid chargers, and, crucially, a solar power canopy to provide renewable energy to the chargers. Finally, in the budget – which Councillor Whomersley voted against – Cabinet had allocated a capital funding allocation of £173k to fund a pilot of a residential charging hub, and work is ongoing to identify the best location

for this. There was a lot happening and the Cabinet were also wanting to do more so that it what they were doing.

**(3) Councillor Ball** asked how many home electric charging points had been added to new builds in an effort to combat climate change?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council did not have any easily identifiable way of saying how many properties had EV charging points in the Borough. However, in June 2020, the Council adopted a Supplementary Planning Document which stipulated that for a development of 10 or more dwellings, a vehicle charging point had to be provided. Since then, through Planning, we know that there have been in the region of 1,600 homes that have been granted planning permission with electric charging facilities since we tightened Planning rules in relation to this. As more and more planning projects came forward and developments of a certain size proposed, they should have more electric charging points installed as part of the construction.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Ball asked whether these would be moved onto a 3-phase system to future proof?

Councillor Beck explained that he did not know the answer to that question and as such, a response would be provided in writing.

**(4) Councillor Griffin** stated that the Women's Euros had been one of the biggest things to come to Rotherham for a number of years. He recognised that they were still ongoing, but was the Cabinet Member able to give some assessment of their success so far? And did he believe there will be a legacy for the town, especially in respect of women's sport?

Councillor Sheppard explained that the Women's Euros had been a fantastic event for the town with 3ee Fan Parties and matches delivered to date and the quarter final to follow on Saturday.

Match 1 welcomed France and Italy to 8,541 spectators (the game actually sold out); with more than 3,000 people who enjoyed Fan Party activities across the Town Centre.

Match 2 saw 8,173 people attend for the Belgium v France game. The Fan Party took place again in the town centre with an estimated audience of 6,500 enjoying music, dance, food and sport.

Match 3 on Monday (France v Iceland) had an attendance of 7,392 and a great number of fans (especially from Iceland) in the fan zones.

As well as the games themselves there had been a huge amount of other activities linked to the tournament, including schools' engagements, a volunteer's programme, exhibitions and events at Clifton Park and the Museum and through Libraries to provide a legacy of Women's sport.

19 females had undertaken their "Introduction to Football" Coaching qualification.

18 girls had undertaken Referee Awards. These new referees would be used within school competitions and also local clubs. That was over quadruple what would have been aimed for.

5 people had qualified as Soccercise deliverers to help engage with a new audience and bring basic football skills into fitness classes.

New Shields had been funded for girls' school competitions so schools would be able to continue the legacy of the women's Euro's for the next 10 years during each competition.

3 young females attended the National FA Leadership Academy.

Additional participation figures were held by the Youth Sport Trust and the FA. Councillor Sheppard stated that it really had been a fantastic event so far.

**(5) Councillor Hoddinott** asked would the Cabinet Member thank all those involved in bringing the Women's Euros to Rotherham and contributing to a wonderful event?

Councillor Sheppard stated that he fully agreed that all those involved in bringing the Women's Euros to Rotherham did indeed deserve a big thank you. It had been such an uplift to the town and anybody who had been walking through the town centre, even on non-match days, would have seen the extra buzz and colour about the place. We were one of only 10 host towns or cities so it was a real achievement to have 3 group games that had already been played and the Quarter Final here on Saturday was still to come.

As well as the football itself there had been so many other activities as part of this event, such as:-

- Specific Sporting themed shows at Rotherham Theatre
- A schools programme focused on positive role models, sports and hobbies
- 22nd May launch event at Clifton Park
- Fan Party Zones in the Town Centre on the day of the games
- A specific exhibition, Grass Roots to Glory, at Clifton Park Museum celebrating Women's football and especially the history in Rotherham which would run until October.
- Lots of volunteers have supported the fan parties, with many more supporting the town centre dressing programmes such as Knit Off to Kick Off.

Councillor Sheppard thanked all those that had volunteered and supported the events so far. The trees in the town centre have been adorned with colourful knitworks so thanked all the volunteers from Knit Off To Kick Off groups.

Finally, Councillor Sheppard mentioned the positive impact of the Women's Euros not only for the town but also for the people and especially the children and young people. Seeing so many children and young people at the matches, with smiling faces and for many probably the first time they had been to a football game was absolutely fantastic. The atmosphere created was wonderful and the enjoyment and sheer spectacle of seeing world class football on a world stage coming to Rotherham was brilliant.

In her supplementary question, Councillor Hoddinott stated that it was amusing that Rotherham had been updated to a Host City given that it was a town but it showed the status of the competition. Councillor Hoddinott thanked the Cabinet Member for mentioning the volunteers and celebrating what they had done. Over 100 volunteers had helped to make this happen alongside the staff and have been advocates for Rotherham. Councillor Hoddinott asked if the Council recognised that?

Councillor Sheppard explained that so many people had been hosted in Rotherham, not just from other areas within England, but from France, Belgium, Iceland, Italy and the Netherlands. The work done by the volunteers had been fantastic, especially in the trying circumstances of the heatwave. Councillor Sheppard thoroughly backed Councillor Hoddinott's request to celebrate the volunteers and would look into what could be done.

**(6) Councillor Baker-Rogers** stated that imminent cuts to bus services were going to leave residents of Thrybergh with no 116 service in the evenings and no buses on Sundays. She asked what action the Council would be taking to prevent this totally unacceptable reduction in services occurring?

Councillor Beck agreed that it really was worrying that as many as a third of South Yorkshire's bus services could be lost before the end of the year if the Government funding was to end as was the threat. If it did happen, it would be a cumulation of at least a decade of underfunding and missed promises on funding public bus services in South Yorkshire and across the country.

Councillor Beck explained that the cuts to services, such as the 116, were a result of commercial decisions taken by operators due to the reduction in fare income as Government support was withdrawn after the pandemic. Back in March, the representations made by the previous South Yorkshire Mayor and the Leaders of the South Yorkshire Councils helped to persuade the Government to extend that funding until October. However,

whilst they continued to make that argument, at the moment the Government was saying there would be no more money.

Rotherham, alongside its colleagues across South Yorkshire, had already pumped £1.7m into protecting bus services between April and October 2022, and in the week following Council, the MCA would consider a plan to commit up to a further £5.5m to protect non-statutory school bus services.

Councillor Beck stated that the local resources would fall short of what was needed to keep all local services afloat in October, which was why the Council was lobbying the Government to extend the emergency Covid funding over the next 3 years and keep the buses running until bus use was much more like the level it was at before the pandemic. This was important as it affected all communities. Some of the worst case scenarios were horrifying. Councillor Beck stated that the Government needed to provide the money to aid buses to support the Climate Change agenda and encourage residents to get out of their cars.

**(7) Councillor A. Carter** stated that 2 months after Mayor Coppard's election (on a promise to improve bus services) residents were seeing drastic cuts to buses in Brinsworth leaving those who relied on public transport cut off. He asked whether the administration agreed that this was unacceptable and that the Mayor should get to work using the powers available to him to stop bus cuts from happening?

The Leader stated that, if by those powers available to him, Councillor A. Carter meant franchising powers, he could assure Councillor A. Carter that the Mayor was at work on that; he had a commitment to that and work was funded and underway. But to be clear, there was no Mayor anywhere in the country who could make bus companies run buses were they did not want to run them. The Mayor of Greater Manchester could not do that, the Mayor of London could not do that. When contracts were being offered, which was what a franchising system was, companies were still required to take them on. Nobody could force them to do it. The Leader was clear that the problem was not just a failure of regulation but a lack of resources. When bus usage was down 30% on pre-Covid level, bus operators were only able to fill that gap for so long and the Government was needed to step in and fill that gap.

Councillor Beck had already referred to the £7million of South Yorkshire resources that were being put in to avoid some of the worse case scenarios. On a South Yorkshire footprint, there was not the level of resources needed over the medium term to get bus services back up and running.

The Leader advised Councillor A. Carter to support Labour's campaign to get the Government to give the money needed to support residents.

In his supplementary, Councillor A. Carter agreed that the Government should be doing more to fund local buses. He also stated that the Government did not seem to expect local roads to make a profit so he was not sure why they expected buses to make a profit on some of the rural routes. Councillor A Carter expressed his appreciation for the work being done on residents' behalf to lobby the Government. He hoped the Members from all parties could support that fight. He asked if, given the scale of cuts being seen across the Borough and particularly in Brinsworth, did the administration regret the decision not to commit Council funding to help ensure that bus franchising throughout South Yorkshire could potentially happen quicker in the Liberal Democrat Motion from earlier in the year?

The Leader stated that he did not regret the decision as they had moved ahead on the franchising plan as quickly as the agreements and arrangements could be put in place in South Yorkshire to do that. That was not an issue of resourcing but was a matter of trying to make sure that all parties at the table were in agreement. That was the position that had been got to and it was appreciated that other parts of the country had got their quicker but South Yorkshire was there now and the Mayor was quite clear about his position of re-regulating buses. Over the coming months and years, the Leader expected that to play out.

**(8) Councillor Whomersley** stated that, unfortunately, waste bins continued to be a problem in the Borough. The bin on the park next to Hangman Lane, Dinnington, was unemptied for 6 weeks. Sadly, this was piled high with dog waste bags. What was the current issue and what is being done to sort out this unacceptable problem?

Councillor Beck explained that the bin in the park next to Hangman Lane was the responsibility of Thurgroft Parish Council. Officers had contacted the Parish Council to make them aware of the issues that had been raised.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Whomersley stated that he had spoken to Thurgroft Parish Council on Monday (18th July, 2022) and they stated that they had spent 2 weeks trying to speak to someone at RMBC but had not had any response. He asked Councillor Beck if he could expediate that?

Councillor Beck stated that the inference there could be that they were not taking notice of what RMBC thought was the position. RMBC were led to believe that it was not their bin but officers would try and resolve it because one way or another, it needed someone to empty it.

**(9) Councillor C. Carter** asked whether the Cabinet Member would commit to improving lighting and installing CCTV around the Brinsworth Road/Broadway junction where continued anti-social behaviour is affecting residents?

As Councillor Alam was not present at the meeting, a written response would be provided to Councillor C. Carter.

**(10) Councillor Ball** asked, yes or no, has any of the Cabinet or fellow Councillors paid a visit to Rwanda?

The Leader answered no.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Ball stated that after being goaded by a Councillor who brought this motion to the Chamber asking Members if they had been to Rwanda to see for themselves, it was rather surprising to learn that they had not been either. This was despite the Head of the Commonwealth going, the Prime Minister going plus the Home Secretary. The motion offered no solution to the problem so Councillor Ball suggested that all of those that passed the motion email him with their address and name, and he could then contact the Home Office offering their house to an unverified person where it was not known where they had come from. Councillor Ball asked the Leader if that was something he would be filling in?

The Leader responded by saying that if he was Councillor Ball, he would not try reliving the experience of that motion as it did not work out very well for him. The Leader stated that the situation Councillor Ball described was exactly the Government's policy with regard to Ukrainian refugees. Following comments made from Councillor Ball that those refugees had passports, the Leader asked if we were doing this solely on documentation now? Did it matter about people's lives or were we just checking documents? Was that the country we had become?

The Leader stated that it used to be the thing about Britain that it was the place where you did not need paperwork, paperwork was what those foreigners did on the continent. He asked if that was what we had gone to?

The Leader came back to the issue on Rwanda by stating that, in yesterday's The Times, "that lefty rag", it said that in May last year, Joanne Lomas, the UK High Commissioner to Rwanda, warned that the country should not be pursued as an option for this for various reasons. She warned that the country had been accused of recruiting refugees to conduct armed operations in neighbouring countries. In an internal memo she said that Rwanda had a heavy handed security system meaning it was a risk to migrants if they did not follow rules and a poor Human Rights record regarding the conventions it has signed up to. The advice to the Home Secretary on 13th April, 2022, was that the agreement was unenforceable and there was a very high risk that the £120million that the Government had paid to the Rwandan Government would be lost to fraud. The Leader stated that the High Commissioner to Rwanda had said it was a bad deal.



The US State department had said that there were significant Human Rights issues including arbitrary killings and torture in Rwanda. The Leader stated that the American Government, not known for being soft liberal types, thought it was a bad idea.

The Leader quoted the daughter of a Civil Rights campaigner in Rwanda who had said that there was no hope migrants would be spared abuse; that was the view from experts within the country. The Leader then quoted that Chief Inspector of Borders in the UK who had said that he had seen no evidence that it acted as a deterrent.

The Leader stated that it was quite clear that this was a bad policy that had come about because the Conservative Government had taken the resources out of the asylum system so that they were now processing half the number of claims now then they were 5 years ago. The system was broken because the Conservative Government had broken it and innocent people would get hurt as a result.

**(11) Councillor C. Cater** asked what the Council's approach to trimming hedgerows on Council owned and Council maintained land during bird nesting season was?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council maintained its hedgerows in accordance with the relevant legislation that governs this area of work and all local authorities had to work under that. The Council therefore concentrated on the maintenance of the hedges and shrubs between August and February to avoid harming birds, their eggs or the nests. However, the Council did on occasion have to prune hedges, shrubs and other vegetation between February and August, especially if health and safety or accessibility issues needed to be addressed. If works were needed in this period, then attention was given to minimise any harm to birdlife and other wildlife.

In her supplementary, Councillor C. Carter stated that she had been contacted by a resident who was concerned that some hedgerow near them had been cut during the season. As such, Councillor C. Carter asked if she could have a copy of the policy on hedgerows and hedge management and further detail on what training was provided to the operators to ensure that they were aware of the policy?

Councillor Beck explained that he would ensure that the policy was provided. It was something that the Council was very sensitive to. There was a particular case that Councillor Lelliott was involved with where a vociferous resident who would like a long stretch of hedgerow maintaining and pruning back but the Council had insisted that this work could not be done at the moment. Councillor Beck was reassured that the proper processes were being followed but if things were going wrong he would like to know about it.

**(12) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester** asked for a comment on the circumstances around the demise of the one time popular Rotherham Walking Festival and the possibility of it being revived?

Councillor Sheppard explained that the Rotherham Walking Festival led by the Council was last held more than 10 years ago and due to the passage of time he did not have formal information as to why it ceased. However, Councillor Sheppard was happy to receive any information Councillor Bennett-Sylvester may have on the festival and why it stopped. The Council had no plans at present to revive this festival.

In his supplementary, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester stated that in its heyday, this was a very popular tourist event to bring people into Rotherham and one of the best resources Rotherham had was its countryside. Could it be looked at by a working party within the tourism framework as it was incredibly successful and could be useful in terms of creating those good habits in terms of promoting walk ways, walking to school etc? It was very successful and would be a great way of bringing people back into the Borough.

Councillor Sheppard stated that it sounded like a great festival and something he would have loved to have been a part of had he been in the area at the time. He agreed to pick up the matter outside of the meeting with Councillor Bennett-Sylvester and local ramblers group.

**(13) Councillor Aveyard** stated that he was pleased to see Meadowbank Road pedestrian crossing was approved at Cabinet recently. He asked if the Cabinet Member could outline how the Council was supporting road safety improvements across the Borough moving forward?

Councillor Beck thanked the current and previous Ward Councillors for this area for working tirelessly to get the much needed crossing on Meadowbank Road. Councillor Beck was pleased to approve this crossing as one of 5 crossings that would be installed over the next few years which was part of the wider Road Safety Programme with over £2m just for road safety improvements across the Borough. The works would include road crossings as well as a range of other interventions, some of which had already been done and some which would be done over the coming few years.

Councillor Beck stated that the £2m was money that the opposition voted against at the budget, and it had been an entirely political decision from the Labour group to provide funding over and above the measly grant funding received from Government.

It was confirmed that the Meadowbank Road crossing would be installed later in the financial year and Councillor Beck hoped that, through the local Road Safety Programme, Members had submitted their proposals so that many more improvements could be provided across the Borough.

**(14) Councillor C. Carter** asked if the Cabinet Member agreed that the Council should introduce an “adopt a tree” scheme for any new trees planted to ensure that trees which were vital for tackling the climate emergency thrive?

Councillor Sheppard explained that the Council operated a number of engagement programmes that helped local people to play an active role in supporting the environment and he would be happy to speak to Councillor C. Carter to find out more about this scheme.

In her supplementary, Councillor C. Carter stated that it was excellent that many new trees have been planted on Bawtry Road, Brinsworth. However, these trees had been suffering in the recent heat and residents had contacted Elected Members to say that the trees were a bit worse for wear. Brinsworth Members were in discussions with officers about introducing an adopt a tree scheme for Brinsworth and it would be good to see that become the default across the Borough when any new trees are planted. Councillor C. Carter asked how could it be ensured that such a policy was put in place when so many new trees were planted?

Councillor Sheppard explained that the important thing was to get as many of the trees that had been planted to survive through to maturity to do the job that was required which was to green up the landscape and help combat climate change. Councillor Sheppard would take the matter back to officers for discussions.

**(15) Councillor Ball** asked how many air/ground source heat pumps have been installed after signing the Climate Emergency Motion?

Councillor Lelliott explained that the Council was committed to installing air/ground source heat pumps before the Climate Emergency was declared. The Council had already installed ground source heating at Moorgate Crofts and Breathing Spaces, and air source heating at Harthill Community Centre, Rother Valley Country Park, Aston Customer Service Centre, Rawmarsh Customer Service Centre and the Ann Rhodes Centre in Brampton.

Within the housing stock there had been 2 residential properties that had had air source heat pumps installed, with a further 14 coming through the development programme – 10 in the East Herringthorpe small sites scheme, 3 from the Thrybergh small sites scheme and one from an acquisition at Welling View in Kimberworth.

The Council had developed a Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP) which focussed on operational buildings with heating systems that were at end-of-life, and decarbonisation surveys had been carried out on eligible buildings to inform what works were needed.

In the adopted budget there was £6.5million set on one side for the Decarbonisation Plan to be spread out across the year. The Council was working on this and at the end of it, the Council would have a full site survey so moving forward, external funding could be applied for. The matter would be brought to the working group where Councillor Ball would be able to give his input.

In his supplementary, Councillor Ball stated that it had been 993 days since the Council declared the Climate Emergency and he stated that things needed to be done faster on this. The Council had to do the small things and start growing. The numbers provided were minimal and it had to be rolled out on all the housing stock. It should be the standard. The Council should not be putting gas boilers in that were burning stuff, it had to be the standard. Councillor Ball asked Councillor Lelliott if that was something she would be looking at?

Councillor Lelliott explained that of course she agreed that everything should be the standard. The Council had the deadlines of 2030 and 2040 within their climate agenda. £6.5million had already been committed from the budget to move forward with this issue and Housing colleagues were working on the matter as well. Once their plans were done and the Decarbonisation Plan was done, external funding would be available.

Councillor Lelliott stated that it was a national crisis and the fires/burning houses and fields from the recent heatwave demonstrated this. The Climate Emergency was a commitment of the Conservative Government but there had been talk about them stepping back from that. Whilst the Government was committed to it and the Council was committed to it, the Government had never put their money where their mouth is. Councillor Lelliott called on the Conservative Government to stop fighting amongst themselves, show the Council the money and help the Council to get to where it needed to get to in relation to climate change.

**(16) Councillor Tinsley** asked why privately owned vans were not allowed into the household recycling centre on Lidget Lane, Bramley?

Councillor Beck explained that the policy that the Council had required private vans to have a permit to access any of the 4 Household Waste Recycling Sites. This policy was in place to prevent businesses operating without the correct license or contracts in place to dispose of commercial waste. Household Waste Recycling Centres across the Borough existed to benefit residents, and this kind of policy operated in many other parts of the country.

In his supplementary, Councillor Tinsley stated that he did not believe that Lidget Lane was one of those 4 sites referred to that accepted permits for vans so why could Lidget Lane not accept permits and also did the Council class car derived vans as vans or cars because quite a lot of residents were being turned away?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council did turn people away from 3 of the Household Waste Recycling Sites because sometimes the vans were too large to access them so they were always directed to Carr Hill at Greasbrough, provided they had a permit, where it was a larger site and could handle the capacity of larger vehicles. If the relevant permit was in place, residents should not be being turned away but if they had no permit, they would be quite rightly turned away.

Household Waste Recycling Sites existed for the benefit of household waste, the clue was in the name. If there were any specific instances where residents had been wrongly turned away, Councillor Beck would be happy to receive details and look into those.

**(17) Councillor Hoddinott** asked, with the cost of living crisis getting worse, what actions had the Council taken in reminding schools about the statutory need to keep uniform costs down for families?

Councillor Cusworth thanked Councillor Hoddinott for the hard work she had done on campaigning for statutory guidance from the Government to give teeth to the legislation intended to reduce the cost of school uniforms for parents.

Councillor Cusworth stated that the Council had championed the updated advisory position with all schools to make sure that all considerations including cost were factored into school uniform policies in Rotherham.

In the Autumn term, 2021 the Council had raised with schools the impact that uniform costs had on families and the updated position from the Government. This also included the investment the Council had made in supporting families with children going up to high school with uniform costs.

It was noted that the financial position of many families had worsened in the past year. The Council had committed £130,000 (£65,000 this year and £65,000 next year) to help with school uniforms for children transitioning to another school. The money for the school uniforms was with the schools and would be issued to parents by them. The Council had made sure that the vouchers were not too prescriptive as it was important that families could go to supermarkets and get those uniforms rather than branded uniforms. A number of schools had already looked at ways that uniform could be swapped. Councillor Cusworth highlighted that some Ward Councillors had set up School Uniform Banks. It was sad that these were needed but good that they were available to those that needed them.

Where individual concerns have been raised around Multi-Academy Trust uniform policy in Rotherham, then direct discussions had been held with academy leaders to share concerns. We will continue to raise with schools the need to keep uniform costs down. Councillor Cusworth stated

that it was Labour MP Mike Amesbury's Private Members' Bill that brought forward the uniform law, however, the impact was yet to be seen.

The Council would continue work on this matter, especially as it was going to be a tough time for families and would continue to offer other support.

**(18) Councillor Ball** asked what was the current policy on "working from home" for Members of the Council?

As Councillor Alam was not present at the meeting, a written response would be provided to Councillor Ball.

**(19) Councillor Hunter** asked that, given there was currently a 10 months wait just to get an appointment with the Housing Adaptions Department, how long did the process take to job completion?

Councillor Brookes explained that Councillor Hunter was right to highlight that there was currently a delay with non-urgent Community Occupational Therapy assessments which was having an impact of the progress with adaptations. In the worst case, where extensive works were required, this could mean that some people were waiting for 13/14 months from start to finish. Clearly this was not what the Council wanted from a jointly commissioned service between itself and the NHS but Councillor Brookes stressed that urgent cases could be and were dealt with more quickly than that. Urgent cases were assessed within one week. Secondly, a recovery plan was in place to get the backlog down and any further escalation.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Hunter stated that this was far too long a time and as such, asked if an early intervention unit could be established to go into services like this at an early stage to see what the problems were so that they did not get to the stage where they were now?

Councillor Brookes explained that that was more or less what had happened with this situation in terms of the recovery programme. In terms of identifying the problem, in part it was due to vacancies that were unfilled for various reasons but four of those had now been filled.

**(20) Councillor Ball** asked, are we, as a Council, currently referring people to South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service for a home assessment when they were asking for assisted bin collections, if so, how many?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council was working with South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) to identify "at risk individuals" and ensure that information could be shared appropriately. Due to the Covid pandemic, this work stopped in March 2020 as both the Council and the Fire Service worked to support residents through the Covid pandemic. Councillor Beck had asked officers to get in touch with the Fire Service to resurrect this piece of good work.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Ball stated that it was an excellent way of capturing people as the Council had the data and all it had to do was shift it over to the Fire Service who could then go out and do their assessments. Councillor Ball asked if the matter could be urgently addressed because the referral rate would shoot up and someone could be saved from a terrible accident?

Councillor Beck agreed.

**(21) Councillor Z. Collingham** asked whether the Council owned or operated any CCTV or other recording equipment manufactured by Hikvision or Dahua and, if so, what, and where was it located?

As Councillor Alam was not present at the meeting, a written response would be provided to Councillor Z. Collingham.

**(22) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester** stated that his Ward was among the 225 areas across the country that were recognised as "left behind neighbourhoods" in research by OCSI. He asked if the Cabinet Member would give an opinion following last weeks media coverage on "left behind" areas what was needed to help those identified in Rotherham to catch up with the rest of the town never mind country?

The Deputy Leader gave her opinion and explained that, as an Elected representative of one of the 3 Wards identified by the research as being "left behind", she was as equally passionate about closing the gaps that had been highlighted. The Deputy Leader explained that it was not only her opinion, but the opinion of many others, that these Wards would not be in the position of "being left behind" if they had not had to endure over a decade of targeted austerity.

The Deputy Leader explained what she believed was necessary to level up the neighbourhoods: time, because none of the changes could be done overnight; energy to keep going, because some of the issues could be so disheartening; tenacity to stick with it when it was hard; and most of all, money to put into ideas that were already out there.

The Deputy Leader stated that in her opinion, there were 2 key things that needed to be done. These were to continue to collect and improve on the quality of information and statistical information about what the gaps were in all neighbourhoods and to use that information to guide the focus of the work. The second thing was about looking for new solutions to old problems as some of the issues had been around for many years. This should be done through community engagement such as providing for neighbourhoods local meeting places and civic infrastructure. Neighbourhood hubs had been established but some were not used and needed improving. There was also an issue around digital connectivity with those hubs as well.

The Deputy Leader stated that it was, therefore, fortunate that a start had already been made on these things. All Elected Members had the opportunity to work to bring about necessary change, not only in the 3 neighbourhoods referred to, but across the Borough. This could be done through the role of community leaders. The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy, which had just been updated, set out the Council's aspiration and clear statement of intent for the neighbourhoods. The language used already talked about how no one and no place would be left behind. The Strategy also aligned closely with the Council Plan which stated the aims for all neighbourhoods and how those aims would be achieved.

The Neighbourhood working model was the envy of some authorities, and to bring about the changes that were necessary to close those gaps, the neighbourhood working resources needed to be targeted towards supporting Elected Members in their community leadership roles.

The Deputy Leader stated that political differences should be put aside to care for local communities and concentrate on the local circumstances that were holding neighbourhoods back and work with the communities to bring forward, locally, appropriate actions.

In his supplementary, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester referenced the empowerment of local communities and people on the ground not having the confidence to demand the services; demand that they were looked after in the way that certain other neighbourhoods were. He thanked Councillor Baker-Rogers as this had been very much part of their Ward plan and the work that they had done so far. However, it would take time to build that and it was a hell of a job to do. In the meantime, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked what could be done in terms of making sure that whenever any policy was looked at, such as the Climate Emergency, that narrowing the gap between communities was something that was looked at, for every single report too?

Councillor Allen explained that if this was Planet Allen, every report that went to Cabinet or any other arena such as Scrutiny, as was in place now with something about equalities and climate change, there would be something in there about neighbourhoods and closing that gap. Unfortunately, it was not Planet Allen and as such, it may take a little longer to get to that, but Councillor Allen took the point. The Council needed to be focusing more on what was needed in the neighbourhoods. The refresh of the Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy would provide the framework and tools to start to move on that.

**(23) Councillor Ball** stated that RMBC have yet to find the missing "business plan" for the solar bins despite mentioning it. It had been 3 months of asking, where was it?



Councillor Beck stated that he understood that officers had now provided Councillor Ball with a copy of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC), which was the business plan, for the Litter Bin Replacement Programme which related to solar bin installation. The project had now been completed.

In his supplementary, Councillor Ball asked Councillor Beck to thank officers for providing the case only that morning?

Councillor Beck explained that he himself had been copied into an email before that that included the SOC that was being referred to. The Council were not hiding on this, it was very proud of what it had done with the solar bin installation. The project had been through every process and scrutiny and level of oversight that anything else would go through. It started out as a pilot in Rotherham Town Centre and was so successful it was rolled out across the Borough and residents were now benefitting from that. The project would have gone to Cabinet Budget Working Group that was held to give proper scrutiny to these types of investments and it would have gone to scrutiny as part of the Capital Programme Investments. Finally, it would have been approved by Council as part of the Capital Investment budget. Councillor Beck stated that it was not his fault that the majority of this happened before Councillor Ball was elected.

**(24) Councillor Tarmey** asked if the administration would commit to introducing a dedicated fund for projects associated with tackling hotspots of anti-social behaviour on our road network?

As Councillor Tarmey was not present at the meeting, a written response would be provided to Councillor Tarmey.

**(25) Councillor Tinsley** asked how many petrol vehicles does the Council own and roughly how many litres of petrol have these vehicles consumed in total over the last year?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council currently operated 19 petrol vehicles on the fleet. The total volume of unleaded fuel for the 6 months period since 1st April was 11,147 litres and, therefore, anticipated usage was around 22,000 litres for 12 months.

In his supplementary, Councillor Tinsley asked if there were any plans in the future to replace those? He also asked if alternate fuels such as BioLPG where the Council could have probably saved £1 per litre on that 22,000 litres which could be £22,000?

Councillor Beck explained that there was a comprehensive fleet replacement programme and strategy that was due for its first draft at the end of 2022. This would include various asks and commitments to improve the carbon emissions that were emitted by the Council's fleet. This was part of the on-going Climate Emergency work that was ongoing across the Council. It was not known yet what the fleet replacement strategy would say but it was known that electrical vehicles cost a hell of a

lot more than the contemporary petrol and diesel vehicles that were currently operating. The commitments had to be balanced against other priorities.

**(26) Councillor Baker-Rogers** asked whether, in accordance with the Council's Supported Volunteering Policy, were Officers who are Trustees of charities, entitled to paid leave to attend Trustee meetings?

As Councillor Alam was not present at the meeting, a written response would be provided to Councillor Baker-Rogers.

**(27) Councillor Jones** stated that at the last Council meeting Councillor Beck said, in relation to a question about Grange Park, "RMBC own the road but not the surface so they have no obligation to maintain it." He asked Councillor Beck to explain why RMBC thinks it has the right to give access over that surface?

Councillor Beck explained that the quote in the question was absolutely correct and that he stood by what he had said at the last meeting. In reference to what the Council thinks, Councillor Beck stated that the Council actually knew that they did not have to maintain the accessway there, it just owned the land. The Council did not have responsibility of maintenance because of the shared access that existed there.

In terms of the access, it was subject to a long established access that the third parties have over that piece of land. Those were rights that they have had for many a year.

In his supplementary, Councillor Jones stated that the surface itself was actually entirely owned by Millmoor Juniors FC. The claim of a historic right of access was something that Councillor Jones believed the Council's Legal Services should challenge. Councillor Jones believed that there were only 3 options open to the Council: one being that the operator be required to drive across the embankment at the side which gave access across the land but not the surface; two being that operator be encouraged to continue using that surface and therefore being an accessory to them breaking the civil law of trespass and any documentation being used against the Council; or lastly, attempt to buy the surface off Millmoor Junior's. Councillor Jones stated that he believed that the starting price for this was around the £20million mark. He asked Councillor Beck which of the 3 options he would prefer?

Councillor Beck explained that his understanding of this over the past years was that the Council had exhausted all options in regard to how it could prevent the activity that was going on at Droppingwell Tip. That was the position of the Council and that had always been clear. The Council were dealing with some very old permits in relation to the permit that was being operated under as well as some historic access rights that they had over the Council's land. As much as the Council wanted to, and had tried

to, there was nothing further that they can do about that, irrespective of the options that Councillor Jones had presented.

**(28) Councillor A. Carter** asked what the Council's policy towards closing or merging underused Council garage sites was?

Councillor Brookes explained that the overall policy that was in place regarded the consolidation of garage site use and rationalisation of where they were clustered. The Council looked at the sustainability of the site where demand was subject to a waiting list as there was vast differences in use across the Borough. Some sites were very popular and had long waiting lists, others there was no demand at all and they were in a state of disrepair. Some were at risk of becoming or were already blights on the area. When the site was rationalised, there was a policy there to consult with Ward Member and garage tenants before any decision was made. There was also a Garage Site Decommissioning Procedure guide to the process for if that did happen and to support any garage tenants affected.

In his supplementary, Councillor A. Carter welcomed that there was work ongoing in some aspects. In Brinsworth and other Wards there were sites that needed consolidating. Councillor A. Carter asked for a copy of the Policy and he also asked what sites were now being used for? He suggested the new Council Housing stock could be put there to stop people having to leave Brinsworth to get affordable housing.

Councillor Brookes agreed to share what she could.

**(29) Councillor Ball** asked how many electric vehicles did the Council currently have on the road at this current time?

Councillor Beck explained that there were 2 electric vehicles on the fleet currently. The vehicles were used within the Town Centre and were Bradbury electric vehicles for litter picking and general waste collection.

In his supplementary, Councillor Ball stated that it had been 993 days since the Climate Emergency had been declared and asked if the Council could look forward to 4 vehicles in another 1,000 days?

Councillor Beck explained that the fleet replacement programme was being drafted and the Council had been very clear about decarbonising the fleet of the Council. Moving forward, the Council would look to do that but had to balance that against the key priority of setting a sustainable budget.

**(30)** This question had been withdrawn.

**(31) Councillor Tinsley** stated that DEFRA, who has published a code of practise for litter and waste, had advised lead times for the removal of the litter depending on the severity of the build-up. He asked whether the Council had statistics to show when litter was reported in Maltby with a Grading of C and D? Had it met the clearance lead times or not?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council had specific targets for litter and waste removal driven by an existing grading system which focussed on removing hazardous or offensive waste the quickest. Councillor Beck stated that this was not the same as the Defra system. For example, offensive graffiti or hazardous fly tipping could be removed within 24 hours. There was a combination of different targets for other types of waste ranging from 1 to 7 days and the Service generally met those targets.

The Council was piloting a new approach to the grading of areas for cleanliness, which would be aligned to the new guidance referenced by Councillor Tinsley, thanks to the recent investment of £0.5million for Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing Service which was sure to be a success.

In his supplementary, Councillor Tinsley stated that he did not hear any statistics to say if the Council was meeting those targets or not. He asked if the Council was aware that if they did not meet those targets, they would be subject to a Litter Abatement Order because it was clear those targets were being missed in Maltby? Councillor Tinsley stated that no targets were being met which was clearly down to zonal working not working or Labour not working.

Councillor Beck explained that sadly, everyone lived in a society where people littered and the Council could not be there every time a piece of litter was dropped. However, it was the Council's role to ensure that they picked that litter up as fast and as diligently as possible according to the targets that were in place.

Councillor Beck stated that if the Council had the £200million back that had been lost over the last 10 years of Conservative Government austerity, it would be able to pick up a hell of a lot more litter, a hell of a lot more quickly.

**(32) Councillor Jones** asked the Cabinet Member to explain why RMBC was actively not engaging with Town centre businesses and local organisations when planning town centre events?

Councillor Lelliott explained that the Council's Events Team did actively engage with town centre businesses across a range of events from the annual Christmas Lights Switch On to the most recent Women's Euros Fan Parties. For major events the team attended briefings with businesses as well as visiting any specific areas or businesses that may be affected.

In his supplementary, Councillor Jones stated that in 2019, the Council organised one of the most successful Armed Forces Day events by working with town centre businesses. This was done through a Voice Meeting that both Councillor Jones and Councillor Lelliott attended. The footfall in Rotherham was increased by over 10,000 people in one day, bringing in much needed trade. Councillor Jones stated that this year, traders were ringing him in the week leading up to the event looking for information and posters. Police Officers were also ringing Councillor Jones to find out why they had not been involved in any of the town centre planning. This basically left the town centre with no policing plan 2 days before the event. Councillor Jones stated that this had carried over to the Women's Euros. The Social Value Policy had been passed by the Chamber following a Labour motion calling on the Council to support local businesses when allocating contracts. He asked the Cabinet Member to explain to him why, in the current Women's Euros events, local businesses were not even asked to bid for contracts such as the fast food and drinks or entertainment etc at the fan zones?

Councillor Lelliott stated that the Voice meetings would be set back up. In terms of the fan zones, it was confirmed that the Council did engage with businesses, especially the ones in the fan zone areas. Businesses received a letter, 170 emails were sent to businesses and there were follow up face-to-face meetings with the businesses, asking them to get involved. They were asked to be part of the celebrations, they had the opportunity to do that. Officers did go out, both from an events perspective and from the RiDO side. Councillor Lelliott stated that the Council could only engage so much, the businesses had to want to take part.

Also, in terms of the town centre and getting businesses involved and engaged, a Town Centre Manager would be employed in the Neighbourhoods Team to work across Cabinet to make sure that the Town Centre was at the forefront.

The Euro's and associated fan zones that had been brought to Rotherham by Councillor Allen were a marvellous opportunity to get Rotherham on the map for the right reasons and for businesses to get involved. Councillor Lelliott hoped that there would be more opportunities like this and that businesses would come and get involved. The Council would always support them to do so.

**(33) Councillor Tarmey** asked that, given the excellent financial health that the Council finds itself in, would the administration commit to further increasing spending on the maintenance of 'street scenes', grass verges and the development of a rolling programme of street tree maintenance and replacement?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council were already on with this. There had been significant investment, the biggest revenue investment of the budget was in Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing Services. Councillor Beck was confident this was making an impact out in communities. This comes after years where millions of pounds had been taken out of that particular Service so the Council was playing catch-up. Moving forward it was a priority of the Council; it was in the Year Ahead Plan. More equipment such as mini-sweepers had been invested in and the administration was looking to do more to make sure the staff in those Services had all of the equipment that they needed.

Councillor Beck stated that he did not share Councillor Tarmey's confidence that there was a lot of money to spare to use as this year was going to be entirely different to the previous one. An overspend of £7.5million had already been forecast for the year end and things had to be managed as they moved forward.

In relation to Street Tree Maintenance, Councillor Beck confirmed that Councillor Sheppard was dealing with it in relation to the motion that was presented to Council in April. It was known that this was a priority for the people of Rotherham as it was raised all the time. Residents could be reassured that the Council was listening.

In his supplementary, Councillor Tarmey asked if the administration would commit to further funding?

Councillor Beck explained that such decisions were not made in Council meetings like this one. Any suggestions had to be subject to due process through the many different processes that were in place for budget planning. This would be presented in early 2023 for the 2023/24 budget. Cabinet would look at what they could do in relation to the financial envelope that they had. However, there were significant pressures and the Cabinet had to be cognizant of those with all decisions moving forward.

**(34) Councillor Tinsley** stated that with the review of the Living Wage Foundation hourly rate being undertaken in September, how soon would staff at RMBC be expecting to wait until they receive the increased rate in their pay-packet?

As Councillor Alam was not present at the meeting, a written response would be provided to Councillor Tinsley.

**(35) Councillor Bacon** asked after recent reports that raised concerns over fan parks for the Women's Euros were taking away from local businesses - what's to make us believe this Labour administration really is on the side of our local businesses?

Councillor Lelliott explained that the very fact that the Labour administration had gone out to get the Euro's to come to Rotherham and the town centre, to allow businesses to show what Rotherham had to offer, showed that the Labour administration was working for the town centre businesses and businesses in general.

Councillor Lelliott confirmed that work had been done with businesses, they had been informed of where the fan zones were going to be, letters had been sent out and the Council wanted them to be involved. A lot of businesses had been involved and some had reported that it had been absolutely excellent for them. Consultation has been ongoing throughout the fan zones; officers had been calling in to see businesses to see if there are any problems or to see if there was anything more they could do.

Councillor Lelliott stated that if anyone could sit there and say it was not a good idea to bring the Euro's to Rotherham, they were greatly mistaken.

In his supplementary, Councillor Bacon stated that he was not sure if he was mistaken because shop and café owners said they were stunned by the decision to bring in burger vans. Councillor Bacon stated that he was not sure if anyone knew it, but it was key for businesses to have confidence to stay here, hence why so many had left. He asked whether it gave confidence to existing businesses as he did not believe it did?

Councillor Lelliott gave the advice that Councillor Bacon should not believe everything he read in the Advertiser, despite the Conservative group putting most of it in. The Council worked to support businesses and would always work to continue to support businesses. The administration would continue to support building a better and thriving Rotherham town centre for businesses and the good people of Rotherham. Funding had been secured through the Towns Deal and the Council had committed its own money for the redevelopment of it. The Council was working on its housing to repopulate the town centre; work was ongoing on the markets development for traders to come and work.

Councillor Lelliott stated that to say that this administration was not committed to working and supporting businesses, was absolutely deluded. All of the work with the Masterplan had gone towards doing that and the administration would continue to do that with the house building and other projects. Councillor Lelliott stated categorically and absolutely that they were there to support businesses and if businesses were struggling, the RiDO team and business advisors could go out and talk to them. If there were any businesses that Councillor Bacon wanted to send Councillor Lelliott's way that felt like they were not being supported, she would be more than happy to send officers out to see them.

**(36) Councillor A. Carter** stated that on 18th and 19th June, there was a junior football gala held at Phoenix Sports Club in Brinsworth where there was a lot of dangerous parking. He asked how did the Council and Police monitor and ensure that events such as these do not result in dangerous road conditions for local residents?

Councillor Beck explained that where vehicles were blocking access to private properties or parked dangerously, these would be a matter for the Police to action and enforce where necessary. In terms of events or how events are organised and ensure they were done to the relevant legislation around health and safety and in recognition of the local highway network, there were officers within Culture and Licensing who could assist with issues of that nature.

In his supplementary, Councillor A. Carter asked if the Council would commit to engaging with the Phoenix Football Club to ensure that, in future, events were done in a way to mitigate the impact on residents?

Councillor Beck explained that officers had a good track record of engaging with local organisations/groups on how they organised and managed the events that they hold. The best example of that was recently around the Jubilee events that the Council supported all across the Borough in many different ways. Councillor Beck was confident that through the work that was done to support events they could ensure they go successfully as possible.

**(37) Councillor Tinsley** stated that Ward housing hubs generated money from HRA and these were used for improvements that would benefit Council property estates. Had there been any consideration that with Selective Licencing areas that a similar fund could be made to benefit or improve these areas which are usually in deprived areas?

Councillor Brookes explained that the answer was no as Selective Licensing funds could not legally be used for anything above and beyond the operational costs. The Council could not generate any revenue for Selective Licensing.

In his supplementary, Councillor Tinsley stated that that was a shame as the areas were really deprived and tended to get into a vicious circle of litter and fly-tipping and issues with landlords so something like this would have really benefited them. He asked Councillor Brookes if there were any other schemes that could be looked at?

Councillor Brookes explained that she was open to any and all schemes that Councillor Tinsley may have and he was welcome to send those to her.

**(38) Councillor Z. Collingham** asked what steps had been taken to provide communities with access to a clear process, written guidance and template risk assessment for temporary road closures?



Councillor Sheppard explained that there was information on the Council's website that outlined the process and provided guidance. However, since the question Councillor Sheppard had looked at it and thought it could be clearer. He would, therefore, be working with officer's to amend the information so it was clearer for future events.

In his supplementary, Councillor Z. Collingham stated that the answer was reassuring. What was less reassuring, however, was that he had been to the Council's website and had been unable to find it. He asked if the Cabinet Member could tell him where it was as he had looked under events, putting himself in the shoes of someone who was looking to have a temporary road closure and apply to the Council but he was not able to easily find the process, timescales or information about waiving the cost for Remembrance?

Councillor Sheppard explained that he would meet with Councillor Z. Collingham to go through the process.

**57. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items to consider.