

# **COUNCIL MEETING**

## **25th May, 2022**

Present:- Councillor Tajamal Khan (in the Chair); Councillors Andrews, Alam, Aveyard, Bacon, Baker-Rogers, Ball, Barker, Baum-Dixon, Beck, Bennett-Sylvester, Bird, Brookes, Browne, Burnett, A Carter, C Carter, Castledine-Dack, Clark, T. Collingham, Z. Collingham, Cooksey, Cusworth, Elliott, Ellis, Fisher, Griffin, Haleem, Havard, Hoddinott, Hughes, Hunter, Jones, Keenan, Lelliott, McNeely, Mills, Miro, Monk, Pitchley, Read, Reynolds, Roche, Sansome, Sheppard, Tarmey, Taylor, Tinsley, Wilson, Wyatt and Yasseen.

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

## 8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor confirmed that he would continue with the tradition of reporting on his recent activities which would be attached to the Mayor's Letter from July 2022.

The Mayor, on behalf of the Council, wished to send his deepest sympathies and condolences to Councillor Barley and her family. He asked Councillor Z. Collingham to convey the Council's offers of support to Councillor Barley.

## 9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allen, Atkin, Barley, Cowen, Thompson, Whomersley and Wooding.

## **10. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications received.

## 11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

**Resolved:-** That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 13th April, 2022, be approved for signature by the Mayor.

## 12. PETITIONS

The Mayor introduced the report and confirmed the receipt of one petition received since the last Council meeting:

- Containing 66 signatures calling on the Council to install a zebra crossing on Flash Lane in Bramley.

As the lead petitioner Rachel Carter was unable to attend the meeting and address the Council, Councillor Reynolds (Ward Member for Bramley,) read out a statement on her behalf.

**Resolved:-**

- 1) That the report be received.
- 2) That the relevant Strategic Director be required to respond to the lead petitioner, as set out in the Petition Scheme, by Friday, 10th June, 2022.

**13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**14. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Three public questions had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12:

(1) Mr. Tareen - What are the timescales respective to the commencement and completion of the drainage and walkways? We were informed a month ago that the process would be put into motion. As yet we have heard nothing about surveys, planning or budgeting. It's important to all for reasons of safety that this work should be completed by the end of this summer".

Mr. Tareen was not able to attend the meeting and as such, a response would be provided in writing.

(2) Mr. Kapoor stated that he wanted some clarity in regards to is the Muslim burial section in Herringthorpe a landfill site and if so since how long has this been the case ?

Mr. Kapoor was not able to attend the meeting and as such, a response would be provided in writing.

(3) Mr. Ahmed asked why, after serious concerns raised at the Muslim burial Section in Herringthorpe Cemetery which has been acknowledged by the Council and Dignity, are burials still taking place even though as we speak no concerns have been addressed?

Mr. Ahmed was not able to attend the meeting and as such, a response would be provided in writing.

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

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

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

The Leader explained that due to the length of the agenda, he would not be making a statement. Instead he invited questions relating to contemporary issues:

(1) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked a question in relation to the continuation of vouchers for meals during school holidays. He firstly explained how welcome it was but explained that, whilst parents were very grateful for the vouchers and the help they provided, it had been noted that a lot of the time, the vouchers were tied to one particular supermarket. On occasion, this meant some families were not getting the best value as they had to change where they usually shopped. Was there anyway the policy could be looked at to ensure families were given a choice of which supermarket they could use?

The Leader explained that, when the policy had been introduced, there were practical reasons for limiting the vouchers to certain supermarkets such as a supermarket being the closest to the schools where the voucher was issued. This had been considered to be the supermarket most likely to be used. However, the Leader stated that he would be happy to take the matter away and discuss with officers to see if there was any flexibility that could be built in. Councillor Bennett-Sylvester would then receive a written response.

(2) Councillor A. Carter stated that in recent weeks residents had been receiving letters from the Council regarding the Council Tax Rebate payments. The Government was funding the payments for Bands A-D but some households in Bands E-H had also received letters saying the Council was making a discretionary payment. He asked the Leader to explain the rationale behind that and what other options were looked at in terms of how to use that discretionary fund?

The Leader explained that most properties (excluding second homes) in Bands A-D were entitled to a £150 per household via the national scheme. That accounted for over 90% of households in the Rotherham Borough. Around 3,000 houses fell into Bands E-H. The Government had provided the Council with around £650,000 for discretionary funding. That discretionary funding could not be used for payments to properties in Bands A-D. The choice was then whether the Council should create a discretionary scheme for those households in Bands E-H (which would include some difficulties) or simply split the money across the properties, enabling all the households to receive some payment. The second option was chosen as it was seen as an easier solution for the residents. The households in Council Tax Bands E-H would, therefore, be receiving a payment of £90. This meant virtually every property in the Borough would be receiving some payment.

(3) Councillor Miro explained that there had been an accident in Waverley recently. There was significant damage to the cars involved but

no injuries. Residents questioned the lack of roads signs in Waverley and Councillor Miro wanted to raise their concerns and try and avoid future incidents. He asked for further information on the road signs?

The Leader explained that Councillor Beck would provide a written response.

(4) Councillor Reynolds asked why the Council seemed bent on making the same mistakes in Ravenfield as it did in Bramley? He explained that he drove passed the site on the day of the meeting and stated that it was actually in Bramley, not Ravenfield. He asked the Leader to explain where it was and why was it happening. The Council had been made aware of the chaos it would cause and the only alleviation proposed was an 18 inch widening of the little roundabout where the old hotel used to be. He asked what that would achieve with all the extra cars and called on the Leader to heed the warnings of the past. He said 2 wrongs would not make a right and he accused the Council of not listening to the residents of Bramley. The residents of Bramley did not want the development, had never wanted the development but were told they had to have it. Why did the Council not listen, please?

The Leader explained that issues relating to planning should be raised with either the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy or the Chair of Planning Board. However, in answering the question, the Leader explained that Rotherham Council, like all Councils, had to make sites available for development in order to keep a 15 year land supply. If the Council did not do this, the green belt could not be protected and development could take place anywhere. That site, therefore, had to be made available and the Government had to approve those plans. It took the best part of a decade to get through that process but that did not mean that the Leader thought every site was brilliant. However, the Council had to go through the process and allocate space to allow development. If this was not done, the green belt could not be protected. Those were the rules set out by Government.

The Leader said that he knew some Opposition Members had these difficult developments in their Wards and some were playing politics with those developments. The Leader further stated, that if they wanted to change the rules, they were welcome to try. But at the moment, those rules were in place and the Council having the Policies in place was in the best position to defend the green spaces.

In relation to which bit was Bramley and which part was Ravenfield, the Leader explained that there had been a referendum as part of the Community Governance Review. It came to Council and there were lengthy discussions. It was concluded that one side of the road fell within the Bramley Parish and the other side fell within the Ravenfield Parish.

There were two rounds of consultation and it was decided the boundary should remain where it was.

## 17. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING

**Resolved:-** That the reports, recommendations and minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 25th April, 2022, be received.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Sheppard

## 18. OUTCOME OF THE WICKERSLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN REFERENDUM

Consideration was given to the report which explained that Wickersley Parish Council had produced a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish area in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. The Plan had subsequently undergone a successful independent examination and referendum. In accordance with s.38a Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council was required to make (adopt) the Plan as part of the Statutory Development Plan for Rotherham following the successful referendum.

The referendum had taken place on 5th May and the result was 1,455 in favour, 334 against and 22 ballot papers were rejected. Having achieved just over an 80% majority in favour, the Plan was successful. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulation required the Council to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan within 8 weeks of the date of the referendum.

At the meeting, Councillors Ellis, A. Carter and T. Collingham expressed their support for the Development Plan and thanked Wickersley Parish Council for their work. They noted that it was good to see local democracy in action and encouraged others to do the same.

### Resolved:-

- 1) That the outcome of the Wickersley Neighbourhood Plan Referendum, as set out at paragraph 1.5, of the report be noted.
- 2) That the Wickersley Neighbourhood Development Plan be adopted as part of the statutory development plan for the Rotherham Borough.

Moyer:- Councillor Lelliott

Seconder:- Councillor Sheppard

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

Consideration was given to the report that detailed the membership of political groups on the Council, political balance and the entitlement to seats on, and the proposed appointments to Committees, Boards and Panels.

It was noted that Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 placed a duty on local authorities to set out the principles to be followed when allocating seats to political groups and for these principles to be followed when determining such allocation following formal notification of the establishment of political groups in operation on the Council. It was noted further that there was a requirement on local authorities to annually review the entitlement of the political groups to seats on the committees of the Council.

The report stated that the allocation of seats must follow 2 principles:

- a) Balance must be achieved across the total number of available seats on Committees; and
- b) Balance must be achieved on each individual Committee or body where seats are available.

The report stated that there were presently 4 political groups in operation on the Council – the Labour Group (majority), Conservative Group (opposition), Liberal Democrat (LibDem) Group and Rotherham Democratic Party (RDP) Group – with one non-aligned Councillor (members who were not in a political group).

It was noted further that there were 149 seats available on Committees, Boards and Panels, and under the calculation the Labour Group was entitled to 83 seats, the opposition Group 45 seats, the LibDem Group 10 seats, the RDP Group 8 seats. Three seats had been allocated to the one non-aligned Councillor. This included Councillor Bennett-Sylvester replacing Councillor C. Carter on the Improving Lives Select Commission.

At the meeting Councillor Wyatt advised that he should be listed as a substitute Member of the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Burnett thanked Councillor Wyatt for his support on the Improving Places Select Commission during his time as Vice-Chair. Councillor Cusworth thanked all Members involved in the review of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

**Resolved:-**

- 1) That the operation of 4 political groups on the Council and the detail of their designated Leaders be noted:
  - a) Labour Group – Councillor Chris Read (Leader of the Majority Group)
  - b) Conservative Group – Councillor Emily Barley (Leader of the Majority Opposition Group)
  - c) Liberal Democrat Group – Councillor Adam Carter (Group Leader)
  - d) Rotherham Democratic Party Group – Councillor Rob Elliott (Group Leader)
- 2) That the entitlement of the membership of the political groups be

agreed and such entitlements be reflected in Council's appointments of Members to Committees.

3) That approval be given to the appointment of Members to Committees, Boards and Panels, and the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs, as set out below:

**Cabinet**

Leader – Cllr Read

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working – Cllr Allen

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Cllr Cusworth

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health – Cllr Roche

Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy – Cllr Lelliott

Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment – Cllr Beck

Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion – Cllr Sheppard

Cabinet Member for Housing – Cllr Brookes

Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance – Cllr Alam

**Audit Committee – 3L and 2C**

Cllr Baker-Rogers (Chair)

Cllr Cowen (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Mills

Cllr Wooding

Cllr Wyatt

**Licensing Board – 12L, 6C, 1LD, 1RDP and 1I**

Cllr Ellis (Chair)

Cllr Hughes (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Ball

Cllr Barker

Cllr Bennett-Sylvester

Cllr Browne

Cllr Castledine-Dack

Cllr Clark

Cllr Thomas Collingham

Cllr Cooksey

Cllr Haleem

Cllr Hoddinott

Cllr Jones

Cllr McNeely

Cllr Mills

Cllr Monk

Cllr Pitchley

Cllr Reynolds

## **COUNCIL MEETING - 25/05/22**

Cllr Sansome  
Cllr Wyatt  
Vacancy

### **Licensing Committee – 8L, 5C, 1LD and 1RDP**

Cllr Ellis (Chair)  
Cllr Hughes (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Ball  
Cllr Barker  
Cllr Browne  
Cllr Thomas Collingham  
Cllr Clark  
Cllr Cooksey  
Cllr Jones  
Cllr McNeely  
Cllr Mills  
Cllr Pitchley  
Cllr Reynolds  
Cllr Wyatt  
Vacancy

### **Planning Board – 8L, 5C, 1LD and 1RDP**

Cllr Atkin (Chair)  
Cllr Bird (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Andrews  
Cllr Bacon  
Cllr Burnett  
Cllr Cowen  
Cllr Elliott  
Cllr Fisher  
Cllr Havard  
Cllr Keenan  
Cllr Khan  
Cllr Tarmey  
Cllr Taylor  
Cllr Wooding  
Vacancy

### **Staffing Committee – 3L and 2C**

Cllr Alam (Chair)  
Cllr Allen (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Thomas Collingham  
Cllr Read  
Cllr Reynolds

**Standards and Ethics Committee – 4L, 2C, 1LD and 1I**

Cllr McNeely (Chair)  
Cllr Griffin (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Bacon  
Cllr Zachary Collingham  
Cllr Hughes  
Cllr Tarmey  
Cllr Yasseen  
Vacancy

Parish Councillor Dennis Bates  
Parish Councillor Dave Rowley  
Parish Councillor Richard Swann

Independent Members:  
Mrs. Adele Bingham  
Mr. Peter Edler  
Mrs. Mags Evers  
Ms. Kate Penney

Independent Persons:-  
Mr. Phil Beavers  
Mr. David Roper-Newman

**Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 7L, 3C, 1LD and 1RDP**

Cllr Clark (Chair)  
Cllr Thomas Collingham (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Baker-Rogers  
Cllr Baum-Dixon  
Cllr A. Carer  
Cllr Cooksey  
Cllr Cowen  
Cllr Elliott  
Cllr Pitchley  
Cllr Tinsley  
Cllr Yasseen  
Cllr Wyatt

**Health Select Commission – 10L, 5C, 2LD and 1RDP**

Cllr Yasseen (Chair)  
Cllr Baum-Dixon (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Andrews  
Cllr Barley  
Cllr Bird

## **COUNCIL MEETING - 25/05/22**

Cllr A. Carter  
Cllr Cooksey  
Cllr Elliott  
Cllr Havard  
Cllr Hoddinott  
Cllr Griffin  
Cllr Keenan  
Cllr Miro  
Cllr Sansome  
Cllr Thompson  
Cllr Wooding  
Vacancy x 2

### **Improving Lives Select Commission – 10L, 5C, 2RDP and 1I**

Cllr Pitchley (Chair)  
Cllr Cooksey (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Andrews  
Cllr Atkin  
Cllr Aveyard  
Cllr Bacon  
Cllr Barley  
Cllr Bennett-Sylvester – seat gifted to Non-aligned Member from the Liberal Democrat Group  
Cllr Zachary Collingham  
Cllr Elliott  
Cllr Griffin  
Cllr Haleem  
Cllr Hughes  
Cllr Jones  
Cllr McNeely  
Cllr Mills  
Cllr Thompson  
Vacancy

### **Improving Places Select Commission – 10L, 5C, 1LD, 1 RDP and 1I**

Cllr Wyatt (Chair)  
Cllr Tinsley (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Aveyard  
Cllr Bennett-Sylvester – seat gifted to the Non-aligned Member from the Liberal Democrat Group  
Cllr Browne  
Cllr C. Carter  
Cllr Castledine-Dack  
Cllr Thomas Collingham  
Cllr Cowen  
Cllr Ellis

Cllr Havard  
Cllr Hunter  
Cllr Jones  
Cllr Khan  
Cllr McNeely  
Cllr Monk  
Cllr Reynolds  
Cllr Taylor

**Corporate Parenting Group – 3L and 2C**

Cllr Cusworth (Chair)  
Cllr Pitchley (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Browne  
Cllr Burnett  
Cllr Zachary Collingham

**Introductory Tenancy Review Panel – 2L, 1C and 1I**

Chair and Vice-Chair to be drawn from the Improving Lives Select Commission or Improving Places Select Commission

Cllr Bennett-Sylvester  
Cllr Tinsley

**Joint Consultative Committee – 3L and 2C**

Cllr Alam (Chair)  
Cllr Allen (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Clark  
Cllr Hunter  
Vacancy

**Health and Wellbeing Board**

Cllr Roche (Chair)

Cllr Cusworth  
Cllr Thompson (Observer)

4) That approval be given to the appointment of Members to joint committees, as set out below:

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Board**

Cllr Read  
Cllr Allen – Substitute

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Board Rotational Member**

Cllr Lelliott

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Local Enterprise Partnership Board**

Cllr Read

Cllr Allen – Substitute

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Housing and Infrastructure Board**

Cllr Brooks

Cllr Beck – Substitute

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Transport and Environment Board**

Cllr Read

Cllr Beck – Substitute

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Business Growth and Recovery Board**

Cllr Lelliott

Cllr Alam – Substitute

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Audit, Standards and Risk Committee**

Cllr Baker-Rogers

Cllr Barley

Cllr Wyatt - Substitute

Vacancy – Substitute

**South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Cllr Clark

Cllr Thomas Collingham

Cllr Wyatt – Substitute

Vacancy – Substitute

**South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority**

Cllr Ball

Cllr Sansome

## **South Yorkshire Pension Authority**

Cllr Fisher  
Cllr Havard

## **South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

Cllr Baum-Dixon  
Cllr Haleem

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester requested that his vote against the appointment of Scrutiny Chairs involving the Executive be recorded.

## 20. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS ON COUNCILLORS

Consideration was given to the report which had been submitted for information to confirm that all current Councillors serving on Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council had commenced the process to complete the checks on offences and convictions by the Disclosure and Barring Services.

In response to the findings of the Casey Review of corporate governance within Rotherham MBC, the Commissioners identified that all Councillors should be required to be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Services check, as part of rebuilding trust and confidence in the leadership of the authority.

This requirement was also included within recommendations in an Internal Audit report on Elected Member Conduct – April 2016.

The approach adopted in administering DBS checks was to require any Councillor elected following the May 2021 election to undertake a standard check through the Disclosure and Barring Service. Elected Members appointed to Corporate Parenting Panel were also asked to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services check as these Members have responsibility and oversight of issues in respect of Looked After Children.

At the time the report was written, with the exception of 2 checks that were yet to be completed, all other checks had been returned.

## Resolved:-

1) That the report be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Alam

## 21. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ANNUAL REPORT

On 25th April, 2022, Cabinet had resolved to submit the Climate Emergency Annual Report and associated decisions to the next Council meeting for information. Cabinet had resolved to:

1. Note the progress to date towards the NZ30 and NZ40 targets.
2. Note the progress against the actions from the 2021/22 Climate Emergency Action Plan.
3. Agree the approach laid out for continued development of the Council's response to the Climate Emergency, including an updated Action Plan in 2022.
4. Agree that the Climate Emergency Annual Report be submitted to the next Council meeting for information.
5. Agree that developments related to the Environment Bill and the subsequent impact on the waste and recycling strategies be submitted to the Improving Places Select Commission in due course.

The report had also been the subject of pre-decision scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at their meeting on 20th April, 2022.

At its meeting on 30th October, 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency and produced a policy and action plan "Responding to the Climate Emergency". This set out key policy themes of Energy; Housing; Transport; Waste; Built and Natural Environment; Influence and Engagement.

At its meeting on 23rd March, 2020, Cabinet resolved to establish the targets of:

- The Council's carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2030 (NZ30)
- Borough-wide carbon emissions to be at net zero by 2040 (NZ40)

A Climate Emergency Action Plan for 2021/22 was included in the previous Climate Emergency Annual Report on 22nd March, 2021. The report provided an update on progress against actions outlined in the 2021/22 Action Plan, with particular attention paid to baselining work, which would be an important factor in the continuing strategic development of the Council's response to the climate emergency. The report then outlined next steps on this agenda, particularly the ongoing development of a new Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Councillor Lelliott explained that a capital proposal for £6.4million had been approved as part of the budget for Phase 1 of the Heat Decarbonisation Plan. Energy performance upgrades had been delivered to 217 homes in The Lanes, East Dene. Further, more than 22,000 trees had been planted. The Youth Cabinet in Rotherham had questioned Council officers and Cabinet Members on the Climate Emergency as part of the Children's Takeover of the Overview and Scrutiny Management

Board.

In seconding the report, Councillor Roche explained that he had put forward the motion to declare a Climate Emergency in 2019 and acknowledged the progress and work done by Councillor Allen and Councillor Lelliott. Councillor Roche explained that work on the Climate Emergency would be good for public health.

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester thanked Councillor Lelliott for the invite to the Climate Change Working Group which was very constructive.

Councillor A. Carter offered his support for the report but stated that there was a need to move quicker in relation to the actions. He also asked that the Carbon Impact Assessments that accompanied Scrutiny and Cabinet reports be more comprehensive.

Councillor Reynolds stated that he believed the Council were being hypocrites by destroying the green belt in Ravenfield and Bramley.

Councillor Lelliott put on record her thanks to the Member Working Group and the Officer Working Group. It was explained that additional money had been invested to employ additional staff for climate change roles. Councillor Lelliott also explained that lots of green belt had been protected but that the Council had to accept some development or the right to refuse applications would be taken away and given to Government officials.

**Resolved:-**

- 1) That the report be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Lelliott

Seconder:- Councillor Read

**22. THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS - UPDATES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS**

Further to Minute No. 55 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th November, 2018, consideration was given to the annual Ward updates for Greasbrough, Wickersley North and Boston Castle 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.

Councillor Read explained that this item gave Members the opportunity to inform Council about the work that they are doing in their Wards and

communities. It was right that when spending public money and engaging with residents, the highlights be presented and Members be accountable for those decisions. The item allowed Members to talk about what they did most of the time which was directly representing their residents in their communities. When in political debates, this could be lost sight of.

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

Boston Castle

Councillors Alam, McNeely and Yasseen provide an update for Boston Castle Ward:

- There were five priorities for the Boston Castle Ward:
  - o Help communities to be safe and feel safe
  - o Ensure families are supported as we emerge from the pandemic
  - o Support initiatives which bring together new and existing communities in the Town Centre and beyond
  - o Work with communities to improve local green spaces; in particular Clifton Park, Boston Park and Herringthorpe Playing Fields
  - o Support initiatives designed to develop an understanding of, and involve, our diverse communities
- Work had also been done to support Rotherham Social Supermarket who provided food and support to the most vulnerable residents.
- The Community Summit, which had been postponed due to Covid-19, had been re-organised and would allow up to 20 community stakeholders the opportunity to come together and discuss issues which were important to them. The topic for the next summit would be the community recovering from the Pandemic. The topic would change for each summit.
- The 3 Councillors for Boston Castle were returning Councillors and therefore very much involved with residents.
- The diversity of the Ward was noted and celebrated. The community groups reflected that diversity.
- Thanks was given to the Neighbourhood Teams and thousands of residents and businesses whose hard work allowed good things to happen in the Ward.
- The compassion, community spirit and hard work of those residents and businesses made the work of Elected Members possible.
- Many residents were thanked personally.

Greasbrough Ward

Councillor Elliott provided an update for Greasbrough Ward:

- The report for Greasbrough was something to be very proud of.
- The team, Elected Members and Neighbourhood Officers, in Greasbrough had been working hard on all the priorities and plans.
- The local Police Officers attended local meetings and had a positive impact.

- Greasbrough was the perfect example of cross-party working. The Ward and its residents were always the most important.
- Planning ahead was essential. Plans from the last term of office were now coming to fruition and work was underway on plans for the next 4 years.

**Wickersley North Ward**

Councillors Ellis, Hoddinott and Read provided an update for Wickersley North Ward:

- Work focused on cleaner, greener, road safety, parking and life in residential areas.
- Community skips had been successful on multiple streets.
- Blitz days on alleyways where Streetpride staff attended and gave a boost to the community.
- Close work with the local PCSO, particularly on community speed watches.
- There was a particular challenge locally relating to off-road vehicles, specifically around the former Silverwood Pit site. Regular work was undertaken alongside the Police.
- Work was underway on highlighting the importance of the environment and of neighbours keeping connected on mental health.
- Work had taken place over many years on suicide awareness. This work would become even more important in the coming year due to the cost of living crisis. There was an excellent team in place in Rotherham that provided training on raising awareness.
- Neighbourhood Housing Officers were also thanked for their work in dealing with vulnerable residents.
- There had been lots of challenges through the Pandemic and Ward Members had helped residents through that.
- Sunnyside Supplies was a social supermarket and community café that offered support.
- In terms of getting people back out and together, Ward Members were working at tackling the isolation caused by the pandemic. At Sunnyside Supplies, the community café ran every Tuesday and was a good place for residents to meet up. There were amazing volunteers that helped run Sunnyside Supplies.
- A friendship bench had also been funded through the Ward budget along with bingo equipment.
- The Library had re-opened.
- Exciting plans, including bunting, were in place for the Jubilee weekend.

Thanks to all Neighbourhood Officers and local Police Officers were noted.

**Resolved:-**

- 1) That the reports be noted.

Mover:- Councillor Read

Seconder:- Councillor Alam

**23. NOTICE OF MOTION - NATURE CRISIS**

It was moved by Councillor Havard and seconded by Councillor Beck:

**That this Council:-**

Notes we are in the middle of a nature crisis. Almost half of all UK wildlife is in long term decline and 15% of species are at risk of extinction. The climate crisis is only hastening this destruction of the natural environment, damaging habitats and disrupting ecosystems. Yet it is these very habitats that have the potential to lock up carbon and fight back against rising global temperatures. It is essential that we not only protect these spaces, but let them thrive – for the benefit of people, planet and nature. We recognise that the terms Nature, Ecological and Biodiversity can be and are often used interchangeably by people and, for the purpose of this motion, all mean the same thing.

Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta's review into The Economics of Biodiversity, commissioned by Her Majesty's Treasury, highlighted that humanity does not exist in isolation from nature but sits within it. Nature is an asset on which all aspects of our society depends and with biodiversity declining faster than at any time in human history, we are undermining the productivity, resilience and adaptability that nature lends our society.

As we recover from the Covid-19 crisis, the need for nature-rich green spaces where we live and work is clearer than ever and will help health, education and the economy build back stronger. We recognise that the Climate and Nature emergencies are intrinsically linked with each other and also to social justice; and by building a better world to deal with the Climate and Nature Crises we will also be building a better society. We recognise that action must be taken now to remedy this and to put nature into recovery at a local level, not only to benefit Rotherham, but in support of regional, national and international work to do the same.

**This Council therefore notes and recognises that:**

- a) Nature is in long term decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this
- b) A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society
- c) The nature and the climate crises are intrinsically linked and that the impacts of the climate crisis drive nature's decline, while restoring nature can help to tackle the climate crisis.
- d) Local people and groups have recognised the issues and have

declared a Nature Crisis for Rotherham themselves and call on the Council to do so too.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Declare a Nature Crisis for Rotherham.
2. Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to consider commissioning a review into how the Council can support improvements to ensure a more natural environment is enhanced.
3. Ensure our responsiveness on tackling climate change was extended to be complimentary to this separate but well aligned cause.
4. Continue to further our work on enhancing biodiversity by adopting innovative approaches to support wild flowered areas and ecological approaches to grounds maintenance.
5. Note the ongoing significant progress the Council is making through its Climate Change Action Plans for a carbon neutral Council by 2030 and Borough by 2040.

An amendment to the motion from the Liberal Democrat Group had been received. It was moved by Councillor Tarmey and seconded by Councillor A. Carter that the motion be amended as follows:-

**That this Council:-**

Notes we are in the middle of a nature crisis. Almost half of all UK wildlife is in long term decline and 15% of species are at risk of extinction. The climate crisis is only hastening this destruction of the natural environment, damaging habitats and disrupting ecosystems. Yet it is these very habitats that have the potential to lock up carbon and fight back against rising global temperatures. It is essential that we not only protect these spaces, but let them thrive – for the benefit of people, planet and nature. We recognise that the terms Nature, Ecology and Biodiversity can be and are often used interchangeably by people and, for the purpose of this motion, all mean the same thing.

Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta's review into The Economics of Biodiversity, commissioned by Her Majesty's Treasury, highlighted that humanity does not exist in isolation from nature but sits within it. Nature is an asset on which all aspects of our society depends and with biodiversity declining faster than at any time in human history, we are undermining the productivity, resilience and adaptability that nature lends our society.

**[Insert] Bees and other pollinators play an essential role in the Earth's ecosystem being vital for our food crops, gardens, and countryside. Eighty percent of all crops reproduce as a result of the intervention of pollinators. The Government has estimated that this**

intervention is worth approximately £500 million to the UK food economy alone. The number of bees and other pollinator species has been in decline for many years. Substantial scientific evidence exists to attribute this decline to the use of insecticides (such as neonicotinoids), climate change and habitat destruction. Several herbicides in common use (for example, glyphosate) have also been shown to impact biodiversity and may pose a risk to human health. Every river in England is now polluted beyond legal limits and this pollution is mostly caused by sewerage discharge and the run-off of nutrients from farms. 36% of English rivers have been damaged by water companies. Government funding to the Environment agency to monitor river quality and hold water companies to account has dropped 75% in recent years.

As we recover from the Covid-19 crisis, the need for nature-rich green spaces where we live and work is clearer than ever and will help health, education and the economy build back stronger. We recognise that the Climate and Nature emergencies are intrinsically linked with each other and also to social justice; and by building a better world to deal with the Climate and Nature Crises we will also be building a better society. We recognise that action must be taken now to remedy this and to put nature into recovery at a local level, not only to benefit Rotherham, but in support of regional, national and international work to do the same.

**This Council therefore notes and recognises that:**

- a) Nature is in long term decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this
- b) A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society
- c) The nature and the climate crises are intrinsically linked and that the impacts of the climate crisis drive nature's decline, while restoring nature can help to tackle the climate crisis.
- d) Local people and groups have recognised the issues and have declared a Nature Crisis for Rotherham themselves and call on the Council to do so too.

[insert] e) A recent decision by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in granting exemptions for the use of a neonicotinoid pesticide in the UK may have a significant impact on bee populations.

[insert] f) That there are technologies available to improve carbon sequestration, reduce flooding risk and improve biodiversity in our local communities.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Declare a Nature Crisis for Rotherham.
2. Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to consider commissioning a review into how the Council can support improvements to ensure a more natural environment is enhanced.
3. Ensure our responsiveness on tackling climate change was extended to be complimentary to this separate but well aligned cause.
4. Continue to further our work on enhancing biodiversity by adopting innovative approaches to support wild flowered areas, **[insert]** **increase planting of pollinator-friendly plants (for example, blossom producing spring-flowering trees)** and ecological approaches to grounds maintenance.

**[insert] 5. Develop a plan to reduce the use of glyphosate based herbicides on all land that it manages, except where necessary in the control of Schedule 9 plants (under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981), or to prevent damage to council assets.**

6. Trial the use of pesticide-free alternatives in the management of council owned land (as used by other local authorities).
- 5.7 Note the ongoing significant progress the Council is making through its Climate Change Action Plans for a carbon neutral Council by 2030 and Borough by 2040.

**[insert] 7-8 Write to the secretary of state for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, calling on the government to fund research into the effects of neonicotinoids and glyphosate on the environment and human health.**

9. **Write to the chief executives of Yorkshire Water and Severn Trent Water calling for urgent action to address the impact of waste-water discharges on our local rivers.**

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost. However, the Leader **agreed** to:

- Write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, calling on the Government to fund research into the effects of neonicotinoids and glyphosate on the environment and human health.
- Write to the chief executives of Yorkshire Water and Severn Trent Water calling for urgent action to address the impact of waste-water discharges on our local rivers.

On being put to the vote, the motion as submitted was declared as carried by majority.

**24. NOTICE OF MOTION - OFFSHORING UK ASYLUM SEEKERS TO RWANDA**

It was moved by Councillor Baker-Rogers and seconded by Councillor Cusworth:

**That this Council notes: -**

The Conservative Government is proposing to fly UK Asylum Seekers, who cross the English Channel in small boats, to Rwanda, 4,000 miles away at an estimated initial cost of £120 million. This practice of offshore processing UK Asylum Seekers, should their application be successful, would provide them with long-term accommodation in Rwanda.

Rwanda has been accused of human rights abuses on numerous occasions. In January 2021, the UN Human Rights Council was told by Julian Braithwaite, Director General for Europe at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, "We remain concerned... by continued restrictions to civil and political rights and media freedom. We urge Rwanda to model Commonwealth values of democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights." The UK's International Ambassador for Human Rights, Rita French, has since expressed regret that Rwanda has so far largely ignored this advice. In addition, the US Government, in its most recent assessment of Rwanda, stated they had extensive concerns about their human rights practices.

Rwanda had a similar agreement, to offshore Asylum Seekers, with Israel, between 2014 and 2017 that failed. Almost all the 4,000 Asylum Seekers quickly left, to once again, try to travel to Europe. This journey, fraught with danger, left many at the mercy of human traffickers; the very people that the Conservative Government is claiming they are trying to protect UK Asylum Seekers from.

There is further evidence of the failure of detaining Asylum Seekers at offshore locations. In 2013, Australia introduced a policy of transporting Asylum Seekers fleeing war zones to camps in Papua New Guinea and Naura. This process was widely condemned by refugee advocates, human rights groups, and the United Nations. The failure of these camps was marked by numerous major incidents of violence, riots, and even murder, and thirteen Asylum Seekers died. Australia ceased to transfer Asylum Seekers to Papua New Guinea as of the 31st December 2021.

The African Union has also objected to the transportation of Asylum Seekers from European Countries as "burden shifting." As recently as August 2021, the African Union condemned "in the strongest terms possible" Denmark's plans to send Asylum Seekers to Africa for processing.

Introducing offshore processing for UK Asylum Seekers, who only arrive by boat across the English Channel, is discriminatory practice. For those

who arrive by other routes or other countries, such as people fleeing the war in Ukraine, the Conservative Government is not only allowing them to stay but encouraging the British public to house them. The UK has a proud tradition of providing protection for UK Asylum Seekers wherever they have fled from. Only offshoring those who arrive by boat crossing the English Channel, introduces fragility to this proud customary practice.

In summary, the practice of offshoring Asylum Seekers, has been shown on numerous occasions to fail. It is not wanted by the African Union, is discriminatory, incredibly expensive, and puts the very people that the Conservative Government is claiming to protect, at significant personal risk.

**Therefore, this Council resolves to:**

1. Call on the Government not to fly any UK Asylum Seekers to Rwanda.
2. Call on the Government to process all UK Asylum Seeker applications in the UK, through a system that enables right to stay decisions to be made quickly, whilst safeguarding their human rights.
3. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to the Government expressing this Council's support for a national asylum dispersal system, ensuring that every part of the country plays its role, alongside Rotherham, in meeting the needs of those people fleeing persecution.

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

Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked that his vote in support of the motion be minuted.

**25. NOTICE OF MOTION - TREE AND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT**

It was moved by Councillor Baum-Dixon and seconded by Councillor Castledine-Dack:

Over 70% of Rotherham Borough is classified as Green and its many trees and woodland areas have positive environmental, physical and mental health benefits. The Council is committed to planting many more trees to tackle the declared Climate Emergency and is responsible for the care and maintenance of tree stock and woodland areas.

Some residents have raised concerns that certain trees and woodland areas need to be more proactively maintained by the Council.

There are trees in areas of our Borough that are of a disproportionate size and too closely located to residents' houses and gardens. Examples include those on Anston Plantation and The Steadlands, Rawmarsh. Such trees have caused significant issues for residents, including blocking

light and heat, interference with telephone signal, overhanging branches, undue leaf fall in gardens, and damage to properties, fencing and equipment from falling branches and trees. Many are of a type and location that would not be permitted under current planting practices.

Many of these issues present a significant health and safety risk, highlighted during recent storms when several such trees fell, causing damage to properties and crashing into internal rooms. They also cause residents undue stress and anxiety, creating noise in high winds, fear of injury, damage to property and undermining their quality of life. The impact is more acute for many elderly residents, for whom this anxiety is coupled with a fear of slipping on an undue leaf fall and suffering serious injury, compromising their amenity.

The Council's Tree Management Protocol and Guidance currently places a disproportionate emphasis on the arboricultural needs of trees. It does not sufficiently consider the welfare, interests and views of residents living in close proximity and the exceptions to the policy of non-removal of trees are too narrow and inflexible. Residents feel that their needs and views are not given appropriate weight in the decision-making process and the current Protocol allows for these to be ignored, providing an excuse for inaction.

A more proactive Protocol, that gives greater consideration and weight to residents' concerns, would improve their health and safety and quality of life, cut the costs of reactive maintenance, and minimise property repairs and insurance claims. It would also give the public a greater stake in tree management, improving engagement and public confidence and engendering greater support for sensible tree planting in line with the Council's targets.

Therefore, this Council will:

1. Undertake a review of the current Tree Management Protocol and Guidance to ensure that it:
  - a) Follows best practice;
  - b) Maximises opportunities to seek the views of residents living in close proximity to trees and woodland;
  - c) Ensure the Council always acts as a "good neighbour" when dealing with residents in connection with trees and woodlands, undertaking proper consultation, keeping them informed of actions, dealing with issues promptly and circulating the results of any tree and woodlands surveys to proximate residents;
  - d) Provides the flexibility to give appropriate weight to the nature and scale and resident concern and, where sufficient, attribute this equal or greater weight than the arboricultural needs of trees;

- e) Recognises the potential serious impact poorly managed trees can have on residents' quality of life, including through secondary burdens like heavy leaf fall, and provides flexibility to act on this basis;
- f) Provide scope for existing trees and woodland that breach current planting and location practice to be actively managed back in line with this, including pruning, felling, re-siting and/or replacement with more appropriate tree types in full consultation with proximate residents.

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and was declared lost.

## **26. AUDIT COMMITTEE**

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

Mover:- Councillor Baker-Rogers      Seconder:- Councillor Wyatt

## 27. PLANNING BOARD

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

## 28. LICENSING BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

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

## 29. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO DESIGNATED SPOKESPERSONS

There were no questions.

## 30. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

(1) **Councillor Atkin** had submitted a question asking what the opinion of the Council's external auditors was on the sufficiency of the Council's reserves?

As Councillor Atkin was not present at the meeting, a response would be provided in writing.

**(2) Councillor Ball** stated that this Council adopted the IHRA after accusing a member of public of bringing it up due to it being political at the time. The Leader said it would not be adopted unless a complaint had

been made. Can the Leader inform how many complaints have been made regarding anti-semitism between the question asked and adopting the definition?

The Leader stated that that was a caricature of what he had said. There were no complaints received by the Council regarding anti-semitism between the member of the public asking the question and the adoption of the IHRA.

In his supplementary, Councillor Ball asked why the IHRA was not accepted in the first place. He had been to Auschwitz and come back to realise the Council had no definition in place. He asked the Council to adopt it and the Leader had flatly turned it down. Why was that?

The Leader explained discussions were had at the time and at the time of the adoption. There had been other things that had happened in the country at large and it had been adopted by the Combined Authority. That led to the Council adopting it around 6 months after Councillor Ball had asked the question.

**(3) Councillor Castledine-Dack** asked for an update on the master plan for Dinnington?

Councillor Lelliott explained that a draft masterplan for Dinnington was in development and was being informed by the ongoing work to produce a Round 2 Levelling Up Fund bid.

The draft masterplan boundary covered the High Street and immediate areas from St Leonard's Church at the south end of the High Street up to Dinnington Resource Centre.

In consultation with Elected Members and the local community, the masterplan aims to make the High Street more attractive, support local business, and improve visitor experience in order to sustain a vibrant local centre in Dinnington.

The masterplan would serve as a road map to deliver the changes that were wanted and needed in the area and attract any available funding in the future.

At this moment in time the Council were concentrating on and prioritising a successful second round Levelling Up Fund bid which had to be submitted in July.

Once that bid had been submitted it would be all steam ahead on the Masterplan. Work would continue with the Dinnington Ward Councillors to make sure that the people of Dinnington got what they wanted.

In her supplementary, Councillor Castledine-Dack confirmed that that

information had already been fed into discussions between the Cabinet Member and Ward Members for Dinnington. She asked if the Levelling Up Fund bid for the starting point which the Masterplan would then follow?

Councillor Lelliott answered yes and no. The Levelling Up Fund would go in and then the Council would concentrate on and consult around the Masterplan. Ideas for the Levelling Up Fund bid would feed into the Masterplan but the Masterplan would be a comprehensive plan for all of Dinnington that sets aside some of the Levelling Up things but would build on that to be bigger, bolder and better.

**(4) Councillor Castledine-Dack** stated that Outgang Lane in Laughton Common was an extremely busy connecting road between Dinnington and Thurcroft. What was the Council doing to improve the safety of this road?

Councillor Beck explained that he knew this issue was important to Councillor Castledine-Dack as she had raised it with him last week in an email. On that section of Outgang Lane there had been several improvements over recent years, including a roundabout, zebra crossing and pedestrian refuges which had all followed the development of Laughton Common. In the coming days all Members would be emailed to ask for suggestions for concerns around road safety in their own Wards. Councillor Beck encouraged Councillor Castledine-Dack to put this location forward if that was one of her concerns.

**(5) Councillor Castledine-Dack** stated that grass verges on estates like Limelands are [or they were at the time the question was written] extremely overgrown. What planning had the Council done to ensure that our communities remained tidy during the summer months?

Councillor Beck stated that quite a lot had been done. He was sure colleagues in the Chamber would remember the half a million pounds of investment that was brought forward a couple of months ago, investing in the Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Services of the Council. That was a budget that Opposition Members voted against but it did not matter as it went through.

The budget allowed for more grass cutting, increasing eventually to 10 per year, more weed treatment etc.

In terms of Limelands particularly, events had superseded the question as work had been carried out on Limelands the previous week.

**(6) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester** asked could the Cabinet Member please report on the progress of the consultation over the REACH Service and advise on the next steps?

Councillor Roche warmly thanked all those that had submitted

questionnaires and were engaged in the consultation. As many people had been reached out to as possible. The consultation had now finished and had been conducted over a period of 90 days and included face-to-face public meetings; online submissions with assistance from the Library Service and other support sessions; networking group discussions and individual, one to one, consultations. A Members Seminar had also been held with little contribution from some political parties.

The responses and analysis of the consultation would now inform the proposals for a Cabinet report due for submission in September 2022 that will recommend proposals for the building of a new day service to meet the needs of those with a Learning Disability and/or Autism with high support requirements. As part of that, Councillor Roche and some colleagues would travel to Liverpool in the near future to visit a newly opened similar centre and learn from their experience.

The final stages of the process moving towards the final report would be done in co-production with those involved.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester thanked the Cabinet Member for the critical friendship and good discussion they had had on this issue over the past few months. It was explained that the Service had encountered difficulties in relation to the prosecution of the former manager. Carers had pointed out that when the REACH Service was searched for online, it was mainly press reports relating to the abuse trial. They had suggested that with a fresh start should come a fresh name. He asked for Councillor Roche's opinion on that point.

Councillor Roche explained that he was very sorry that those events had taken place but was very pleased that the whistle-blowers felt that they could report the matter to senior officers. Councillor Roche fully understood and sympathised with the concerns raised by the users regarding looking to the future. He thought a change of name was very important and would support such a move.

**(7) Councillor Castledine-Dack** stated that waste bins and dog waste bins were overflowing in Dinnington, especially on estates. The Council said that they could not increase bin numbers due to staffing constraints, but did the solar bins not reduce the need for operatives, thereby allowing for reallocation of operatives to traditional bins?

Councillor Beck agreed. In relation to the substantive issue regarding overflowing bins, as the rollout of the solar bins took place alongside the replacement of the older "other" bins, there was an issue of frequency and where the frequency needed tweaking and how often the bins were emptied needed changing, it was an ongoing matter throughout every year. This was because some locations were used more than others so the Council needed to be able to respond to that.

Councillor Beck encouraged Councillor Castledine-Dack to raise any

specific issues/locations with the Service or himself.

**(8) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester** stated that he had had e-mails and casework responses from officers on Sundays and late weekday evenings. What was the Council doing to monitor and ensure work pressures were not compelling officers to answer e-mails in non-working hours?

Councillor Alam explained that a large proportion of officer roles work included flexible working and, therefore, did not necessarily work a standard 9.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m. day. Hybrid working built upon previous flexible working policies and supported a culture of working wherever, whenever officers wanted to work.

However, Councillor Alam explained that the Council were committed to the health and wellbeing of its officers and promoted this through the Discover Wellbeing Programme. All managers were responsible for managing their staff and took seriously their responsibilities for health and wellbeing. Work was also done with Trade Unions to make sure officers had that balance.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester stated that some officers felt that working from home had impacted their work/life balance. Another issue that had been expressed was the way Elected Members put demands on officers and Councillor Bennett-Sylvester asked if there was any best practice following the conversations with Trade Unions about how Elected Members could best address case work so that officers did not feel any additional pressure to respond outside of normal hours.

Councillor Alam explained that no issues had been raised as yet but he would take the matter to the Trade Union Joint Consultative Committee for discussion.

**(9) Councillor Bennett-Sylvester** stated that many of the estates were built when there was no expectation of working class families owning a car, never mind two or more, leading to several problems from neighbour disputes to affecting the desirability of some properties and streets. What in your opinion could be done to improve the parking situation on council estates where these problems arose?

Councillor Lelliott explained that it was a real challenge and there were no easy answers. There were many streets across the Borough that were very narrow and where there was not much parking.

Where vehicular parking obstructed the safe and free-flow of traffic, waiting restrictions, such as double yellow lines, could be introduced. "H-Bars" could be put across residents' drives to stop them being blocked in.

Where estates suffered from all-day commuter parking then Resident

Only Parking zones could be investigated and consulted upon with residents in those areas. These were subject to an annual fee which could be off-putting but where those could be put in, the Council would do so but it was up to the communities affected to decide whether they want that scheme in their area.

The issue that had been raised could also lead to nuisance pavement parking, and the Council was looking to begin introducing more localized restrictions to prevent this. Beyond that the Council were open to ideas.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Bennett-Sylvester explained that these parking issues did impact the desirability of some areas, particularly parts of East Herringthorpe. He asked whether, if capital were to arise, could off-street parking be an option to make properties more desirable and alleviate some of the problems, particularly with vehicle charging coming in the future?

Councillor Lelliott agreed that she and Councillor Brooks would pick up this matter with Councillor Bennett-Sylvester outside of the meeting.

**(10) Councillor Ball** asked whether the Council would look at implementing a clean air zone for Hellaby with it being in close proximity of the M18 and the very busy A631?

Councillor Beck explained that Councillor Ball had copied him into an email that he sent officers on this matter a few weeks ago. The response was received on 4th May, 2022, which stated that the Council had been monitoring this area since October 2021 and looking at the most recent data available, which was the 3 months from October to December, 2021, the mean monthly measure for Nitrogen Dioxide was below the national standard that would allow for the introduction of a clean air zone in that area.

**(11) Councillor Ball** asked had the aquifer situated on Cumwell Lane been included into the plans for the new development that was going to be situated on it?

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

**(12) Councillor Ball** stated that recently he requested a bin, but he was knocked back for this with an officer stating that "because [he] had received a solar bin they had removed 2 normal bins." Could the council provide a list of how many bins have been removed in each Ward due to the implementation of these solar bins?

Councillor Beck explained that part of the whole ethos around introducing the solar bins was around rationalisation. As such, on occasion, more than one bin had been removed to be replaced with the single solar bins that were being introduced. This had largely been successful. Councillor

Beck was aware that Councillor Ball had raised this a number of times with officers as he had been copied into emails. One of the responses from the Head of Service recently stated that there was the opportunity for Councillor Ball to have bins re-sited.

In his supplementary, Councillor Ball stated that he did not think his question had been answered. He stated that he had been asking for the business plan for solar bins for around a month and had not been provided with it as the officer responsible could not find it as it was before his time in post. Councillor Ball stated that, had he known that the introduction of one solar bin would result in the loss of two "normal" bins, he would have kept the original bins. He asked if he could see the business plan?

Councillor Beck explained that this matter had been dealt with before Councillor Ball had been elected as a Councillor. Members had, over the last 18-24 months, received emails informing them about the plans, in relation to bins, for their Wards. These emails stated which bins would be removed, which bins would be replaced with a solar bin and how many would be removed as a result.

The business case had been gone through but due to timings, Councillor Ball had missed out on seeing that. However, Councillor Beck reiterated that he wanted to work with Members and all residents across the Borough to ensure that they were happy with the approach. Where there were issues, and there would undoubtably be, it was important that they were dealt with. Members did not need to wait for a Council meeting to raise these issues. It was acknowledged that Councillor Ball had raised the issue outside of the meeting.

Councillor Beck explained that officers were trying to accommodate requests and an offer had been made to Councillor Ball to replace the bins and that offer stood.

**(13) Councillor Miro** asked, in view of Mr. Alex Stafford MP getting involved between Harworth and the Waverley Juniors Academy regarding the number of children on the Waverley estate who did not get a place at WJA, could he ask where the Council were at with trying to accommodate those children in temporary classrooms for the academic year starting this September?

Councillor Cusworth explained that the Department for Education (DfE) had made their position clear in that there was no projected shortfall of available places in the wider Planning Area that Waverley Junior Academy sits within for the foreseeable future (up until 2025/26) with approximately 20% surplus capacity currently in place across schools in this area.

Therefore, the Government's views was that it was reasonable to expect parents who failed to secure their preferred school of Waverley Junior

Academy to take up places at one of these other schools and not to expand any schools.

There were 2 immediate challenges; firstly, that the DfE criteria would not permit Government funding for temporary classrooms. And secondly, the consequences of moving children would be immediate and damaging to the other local schools where they had been allocated places. Resolving these twin issues would require special dispensation and funding arrangements from the DfE.

The Council has reached out to Mr. Stafford MP to help facilitate conversations with Ministers and DfE officials to help progress this and which Council officers would support.

Beyond this immediate question, officers continued to work with the Principal Developer, Harworth, in relation to a variation to the current Section 106 funding agreement to bring about an earlier release of funding for the next phase of creating additional permanent primary school places on the Waverley estate.

It should be noted that the developer has met its obligation to provide primary school places aligned to the occupation of 2,000 dwellings in line with the national formula for pupil school place planning. There were currently significantly less than 2,000 dwellings built and occupied at Waverley at this present time.

**(14) Councillor Bacon** asked what was the Council doing to ensure it took a proactive approach in its responsibility to maintain the Borough to a high standard, so it could attract new enterprise and opportunity for residents?

Councillor Beck explained that, as previously mentioned, there had been extra investment of around half a million pounds in the budget as well as the additional funding of £24m to 2024 Roads programme. That built upon millions of pounds that proceeded that to improve the condition of the road network that everyone was benefitting from. It had been a huge success.

In addition, work continued with Elected Members through Neighbourhood working via the zonal working approach, which was where officers in localities worked with local Members to ensure issues were hot spotted and attention could be given to improve the Borough.

In his supplementary, Councillor Bacon explained that his question related to proactive measures. One example was of the pro-Russian Government 'Z' propaganda symbols that had been graffitied around the Town Centre. They were up for far too long. Councillor Bacon had seen one and reported it on Sunday. He asked that surely a more proactive response was required to sustain the appeal of the Town Centre?

Councillor Beck condemned graffiti of any kind and thanked Councillor Bacon for referring this issue to officers. Councillor Beck confirmed that he would follow up the matter to ensure the Council was as responsive as it could be with the resources it had.

**(15) Councillor Bacon** stated that he has received numerous reports of injuries due to potholes on pavements in Aston and Todwick. When could residents expect to see greater priority given to pavement repairs?

Councillor Beck explained that in the coming year, the Council was bringing forward £800,000 investment in repair of footways across the Borough. This was part of the wider programme on roads. There had been huge success in reducing the number of slips, trips and falls on the highway, which included footways, to an all-time low. In 2021/22 there were just 147 claims which resulted in costs of just £80. That was a reduction of over £100,000 over the last 6 years.

In relation to the question regarding Aston and Todwick, Councillor Beck stated that the Aston and Todwick Ward would have 40% of the footways resurfaced in 2022/23. This included footways on 15 roads in Todwick. As a former Councillor for Todwick, Councillor Beck knew that to be around two-thirds of Todwick village. Todwick had, therefore, done quite well out of the Labour Council budget.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Bacon stated that they appreciated the support in Todwick but surely it was too late? There had been injuries and the reason Todwick required so much work on its footways was because it had been allowed to get too bad in the first place. Could a more proactive response be taken?

Councillor Beck was pleased that Councillor Bacon welcomed the policies and initiatives done by the Labour Council.

**(16) Councillor Tinsley** asked, with any new large-scale housing developments, was there any way to encourage or make it a requirement of the developers to install a Community Accessible Defibrillator?

Councillor Lelliott explained that unfortunately, there was nothing in national or local planning policy that would enable the Council to put a requirement on a developer to provide a community defibrillator as part of a planning application.

As anyone who sat on the Planning Board would know, matters had to be material considerations to be discussed. This was not a material consideration but Councillor Lelliott agreed to go back to the Planning Service and encourage them to ask developers at the pre-planning stage to include Community Accessible Defibrillators in their developments. It would be voluntary and a choice for the developer to make.

In his supplementary, Councillor Tinsley stated that the cabinet and

defibrillators usually cost around £800-£900 and when spread as a management charge across developments it would be a cost of pence per house. He asked if he could talk to the Cabinet Member outside of the meeting and get the matter progressed?

Councillor Lelliott replied that she would be happy to discuss the matter outside of the meeting and reiterated that she would speak to Planning Officers.

**(17) Councillor Tinsley** stated that weeds along walls and pavements were continuing to be a big problem around Maltby with some now being over a metre tall. When would the Council get on top of this?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council could get on top of it as soon as Members confirmed the specific locations that were being referred to. It was acknowledged that the weeds were at their longest at this time of year due to the rain and warm weather. The new quad bike had been out and about already which helped weed the pavements and the roads. If there were any specific locations where this did not appear to be taking place, Councillor Beck asked Members to let him know.

In his supplementary, Councillor Tinsley stated that everywhere in Maltby was a problem at the moment. The weeds had gone past the point where they needed spraying, they actually needed pulling out. Councillor Tinsley asked how the Council was going to get on top of this?

Councillor Beck emphasised the need for the help of Members. Issues relating to Street Cleansing and Ground Maintenance in communities did not need to wait to be raised at a Council meeting but needed to be reported to the relevant Service who would respond in good time. If that did not work, Councillor Beck encouraged Members to report matters to him and he would follow them up.

**(18) Councillor Jones** stated that over the last 2 years, the Council had consistently maintained that they did not own the accessway between Droppingwell Road and Grange Landfill Ltd site. He asked if this was correct and could the Cabinet Member tell him who the Council believed did own the accessway?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council had not maintained that it did not own the access. What the Council had consistently maintained was that, whilst it owned the land over which the access ran, it had no responsibility for the physical surface of the road and no duty to maintain access.

The access road to the Grange Landfill site was on land owned by the Council and the owner of the tip had a right of way over the land. The Council had a duty not to obstruct the use of the access way, but it had no duty to maintain the access route in a useable condition. The Council was not, therefore, responsible for the access road itself.

In his supplementary, Councillor Jones stated that there had finally been an admittance that the Council owned the accessway. He also stated following the repeated denials that he had received regarding the ownership of the access road, the Council had produced documents showing that they had contracted the contractor that laid the tarmac on the road on behalf of Millmoor Juniors FC. He asked the Cabinet Member to explain why the Council thought that it could give permission to use the accessway to third parties if indeed they maintained that they did not own the road?

Councillor Beck reiterated that the Council did own the road but was not responsible for its maintenance. Councillor Beck was sure that could be understood to see a situation whereby the people and organisations with responsibility for maintaining the road had sought the counsel of the Council as to how they could go about doing that and discharge their duties in relation to it. If the Council has helped those parties out, Councillor Beck saw no problem with that.

**(19) Councillor Jones** asked if he or any member of the public wanted to hold an event on Council land, maybe a park, could he be advised who would give that permission and what documentation would he be required to provide?

Councillor Sheppard explained that for anyone wishing to host an event on Council-owned land there was an Event Application process which was dealt with by the Council's Events Team. This included events taking place in Town Centres, Parks and Green Spaces and Public Highways.

In his supplementary question, Councillor Jones explained that he would be expected to provide a full risk assessment if he wanted to hold an event on Council-owned land. However, in an email exchange with the Monitoring Officer last week, Councillor Jones was advised that a motion he wanted to submitted for this meeting could not go forward because it was believed that the Council did not hold the power to require anybody to submit a full risk assessment to travel over Council land or use that land. He asked the Cabinet Member to explain what the difference was between a member of the public and a landfill company?

Councillor Sheppard explained that he had not had sight of any of the emails referred to but would be happy to look at them if Councillor Jones would send them onto him. A written response would then be provided.

**(20) Councillor Jones** stated that in 2020, RMBC undertook a risk assessment of the accessway at Grange Park and, as part of that assessment, several mitigating actions were recommended. He asked the Cabinet Member to explain why 2 years later none of these had been implemented?

Councillor Beck explained that it was not the responsibility of the Council

that they be implemented.

In his supplementary, Councillor Jones explained that in 2020, the vehicle movements on the site were light in comparison to today. There were now up to 200 vehicle movements a day. In 2020, when the risk assessment was carried out, Grange Landfill accepted 40 lorry loads of blast furnace slag from the Westgate site yet it was still recommended that several mitigating factors would be needed to make the route safe. Could the Cabinet Member explain if this would be okay in a green flag park like Clifton Park or were the Council waiting for someone to get badly injured before acting?

Councillor Beck explained again that it was not the responsibility of the Council to implement what was found in the risk assessment. The Council was just trying to be helpful as it was Millmoor Juniors and MHH Contracting Limited who had to comply with their duties in respect of Health and Safety and in ensuring matters established in the risk assessment were dealt with and implemented.

The Council had asked to have sight of their own risk assessment and offered to broker any conversations with a view to assisting in the implementation of any of the measures recommended. The Council had not received any response to the correspondence but was just trying to be helpful in ensuring that third parties were compliant.

**(21) Councillor Jones** asked, since 2016, had the Council signed any "Right of access agreements" with Grange Landfill Ltd.?

Councillor Beck explained that the Council granted a number of short licence agreements to MHH Contracting between October 2016 and March 2017.

In his supplementary, Councillor Jones explained that a Right of Access Agreement was something that a Court of Law could consider should the land owner and the person/party using the access not agree on the use of that access. As part of the consideration, the Court must also consider whether the granting of that right of way would inadvertently effect the neighbours of the land and have a detrimental effect on the public's right of enjoyment of the asset. If so, a consultation process must take place. Could the Cabinet Member explain if the Council had consulted as it was also agreed by the Council in a motion in 2020?

Councillor Beck explained that the licensing agreement referred to was granted without prejudice to any legal arguments from either party. It was not the Council granting any longstanding permissions but was simply the Council protecting its own position at the time whilst legal advice was sought. That legal advice stated that they were able to use the access road. Therefore, no licence agreement was necessary.

**(22) Councillor Jones** stated that the Council had maintained they had no way of placing conditions on the accessways use. He asked if the Cabinet Member could confirm if they had investigated using a Court Order for excessive use?

Councillor Alam explained that there were no conditions attached to the use of the access road and, therefore, such action would not be possible.

In his supplementary, Councillor Jones stated that there were now over 200 vehicle movements a day on the accessway. In 1958, a Waste Licence allowed for up to 25 vehicle movements. This remained the case until modification number 7 where it was written in the margin that there should be an increase of up to 40. This was never enacted. There was also a difference in the size of the lorries visiting the site from 4 tonnes to 30 tonnes. Councillor Jones personally classed that as excessive use. He asked the Cabinet Member to explain why the Council had not applied for a Court Order?

Councillor Alam explained that, as previously mentioned, there were no conditions placed on the access road and, therefore, there were no legal actions to take.

### **31. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items for consideration.