

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

14th February 2022

A Council meeting of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council was held on Wednesday 14th February 2022 in the Town Hall and live streamed

Present

The Mayor (Councillor R. Tromans)

Councillors R. Baxter-Payne, B. Beetham, D. Brown, J. Clarke, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, L. Downs, K. Evans, C. Golby, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, L. Hocking, J. Kennaugh, K. Kondakor, A. Llewellyn-Nash, S. Markham, B. Pandher, N. Phillips, A. Sargeant, J. Sargeant, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Tromans, M. Walsh, C. Watkins and K. Wilson.

Apologies were received from Councillors S. Harbison, M. Rudkin and H. Walmsley

CL56 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 1st December 2021 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 26th January 2022 be approved and signed by the Mayor.

CL57 **Declarations of Interests**

RESOLVED that the Declarations of Interests for this meeting are as set out in the schedule attached to these minutes. In addition the following was declared:

Councillor K. Evans declared that he was no longer a Governor of Race Leys School and could this be removed from his schedule of declarations.

CL58 **Announcements**

Councillor A. Sargeant expressed his thanks to officers, friends and family who have helped him over his four year term as he would no longer be standing for the election in May 2022.

Councillor J. Sargeant also expressed her thanks to all the officers and councillors especially her other ward member Councillor Golby who have helped her during her four year term with many community projects as she would no longer be standing for election in May 2022.

Councillor C. Golby, Deputy Leader, announced that she would be undertaking a firewalk (walking across hot coals) for Acorns Children Hospice Charity, any sponsorship would be gratefully received.

The Mayor announced that his Civic dinner is being held on the 7th May at Weston Hall and that an ABBA tribute group will be performing at the Co-op Hall on Friday 13th May tickets will be £8.

CL59 **Public Participation**

Mr Carl Walker submitted the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation:

Will the conservative council support a sustained and determined, ongoing, AND public pressure on the Conservative MP's to work together and deliver a moratorium, with ongoing lobbying of the minister of housing, to prevent an injustice being executed within NBBC?

The council have stated they are unable to affect any change due to process and are unable to deliver the outcomes in a reasonable amount of time – many people in the public do not agree the current timeline presented by the Conservatives is a reasonable amount of time.

With this in mind, does the council agree that the only way to deliver for 6000 residents who petitioned against the plan, is to hold our MP's accountable for destroying the green belt in this borough and do they agree to lobby them publicly to ensure action is taken.

Councillor R. Smith, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation responded as follows:

Thank you, Mr Walker for the question, I do however find it rather ironic that Mr Walker is blaming our MPs for destroying our precious green belt when they have stood side by side with the residents and the Conservative group in opposing the inflated housing numbers foisted on this Borough by the previous Labour administration.

It is the previous administration and them alone that are responsible for the current and by their own admission a third-rate borough plan. Our election manifesto last year promised we would start an immediate review of the Borough Plan and withdraw from the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the previous Labour administration that added an extra 4000 houses from Coventry to our houses figure that was a promise we kept within weeks of taking control, if the labour administration had kept their promise to carry out an immediate review of the Borough Plan on its adoption in 2019, we would now be nearing the end of that journey. Not only did we keep our manifesto promise but we went further by writing to the secretary of state for levelling up housing and communities to request a moratorium on major developments in the Borough until the inflated Coventry housing figures were sorted out and our own plan was reviewed. Our three MPs fully supported our actions and very actively lobbied the secretary of state to try and get the resolution we were seeking, unfortunately despite very active lobbying for all three of our MPs the secretary of state did not support our request. Following a recent Cabinet reshuffle, we now have a new secretary of state in place and our leader has already raised the issue of Coventry's housing numbers with him. Our intention is to follow up this exchange with another letter setting out our

case in the hopes it will be seen with fresh eyes, and we will of course be asking our three MPs for ongoing support. In the meantime, we will press on with the review as fast as we can to produce a sound local plan that is fit for purpose that will see the right houses in the right places and will not include 4000 houses from Coventry.

Mr Sam Margrave submitted the following question of the Leader of the Council:

To the Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Civic Honours Sub-Committee

Today is Valentine's day!

John 15:13 says "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"

In 2009, Sgt Simon Valentine aged just 29 gave the ultimate sacrifice for us all.

My home Town of Bedworth is known as the Town that Never Forgets, which I am sure every Councillor and Citizen is proud of, is still yet to name a Street after our fallen hero.

While an offer of naming an allotment has been made, other fallen heroes are almost always recognised by the naming of a Street.

Will the Council revisit the offer of naming an allotment after Sgt Valentine, and instead commit to naming a Street (or both) after one of Bedworth's greatest Men, Sgt Simon Valentine on this Valentines day?"

Councillor K. Wilson, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Business, Regeneration and Planning responded as follows:

Thank you to Mr. Margrave for this question.

One of the priorities for this new Conservative administration is to revive civic pride within our Borough. As part of this mission, we have set up a Civic Honours Sub Committee to look at all ways of reviving civic pride and how we can reward those in our community who have made a difference.

At the first meeting of the sub-committee, we have begun the process of putting in place a policy that allows roads and buildings to be named after residents of our Borough who have served with distinction. This will mainly overturn Labour's ban on honouring people while they are alive, but we are equally keen to honour those who have sadly passed.

It is far easier to name a road than to re-name a road, with the legislation surrounding it dating back to the 1920s. Some of it does appear too archaic.

But, so long as the family's wishes are respected and there are no legal obstacles, I have absolutely no problem with naming a street after Sgt Valentine who made the ultimate sacrifice for Queen and Country.

Andrew Crichton submitted the following question to the Leader of the Council:

Recently the ruling Conservative group announced plans to honour five former Councillors with the position of Aldermen, the first time this has occurred in decades. 80% of those announced are ex Conservative Councillors. Does the leader of the Council agree with me that we should be honouring our nurses and keyworkers, not ex politicians?

Councillor K. Wilson, Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration responded as follows:

Thank you, Mr. Crichton for your question. It is pleasing to see that as a Labour Party candidate and activist he is taking an interest in honouring people in our community after decades of his party failing to do so when they were ran this council.

As I explained in my answer to Mr. Margrave, reviving civic pride in our Borough is a fundamental part of Building a Better Borough. Awarding the Honorary Alderman and women positions is a step forward to restoring that civic pride which was eroded by decades of Labour control of this council. Many councils still do this, including Labour-led Coventry City Council, which regularly makes these awards.

And what of the ex-Councillors we are looking to honour?

They include people who have fought for Queen and Country, spent decades fundraising for the Poppy Appeal and co-ordinating our Remembrance Sunday; they have worked in the health service advocating for patients across Nuneaton and Bedworth and also involved in community safety; they have spend years as a local magistrate dispensing justice in the community they live in; they have represented Nuneaton and Bedworth on a national stage and brought inward investment and jobs to our constituents; and they have all been involved in championing the interests of their local communities. I believe that those qualities of worthy of honouring by this Council.

And that is not all we are doing.

At the same meeting we have put forward two outstanding residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth for Freedom of the Borough. Om Gurung has served Queen and Country, made Nuneaton his home, championed the Gurkha community in our town and been involved in numerous community events. And we have Jean Whittaker, who has dedicated decades to fundraising for our local health service. Again, extremely worthy candidates for honouring by this Council.

Furthermore, we are devising a new award – the Nuneaton and Bedworth Award of Merit – that will put in a place a permanent system of honouring distinguished members of our community in place.

Work is underway to find this new award and a policy will be brought to council in due course to approve. This is slightly more complicated and rights a wrong that Labour perpetuated throughout decades of control – there was

no formal award of this Council to honour those in our community who have made a difference. Conservatives under this administration are putting this right.

Mr Andrew Crichton submitted the following question to Cabinet on the 9th February but was deferred to the meeting of Council. The question was submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities:

The local housing allowance rates fail to match the private rental market locally, leaving many residents who are unable to work having to dig into their meagre Universal Credit personal element to cover their rent. Discretionary Housing Payment can offer a temporary solution to this. Can the portfolio holder for Housing confirm what percentage of the DHP budget for this financial year has gone to residents, and what steps the local authority will take to increase the take up of DHP in the Borough?

Councillor C. Golby, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, responded as follows:

So far this year we have paid out almost £161k in DHP of which £115k (72%) has gone to the private rental sector with the remaining £46k to residents in the local authority sector.

There is almost £75k remaining to be spent from our allocation and teams responsible for awarding DHP always endeavour to spend the full allocation and this year is no exception.

Works we are doing and have done to ensure we get the message is out there are:

- Regular multi departmental officer meetings (such as benefits, recovery, enforcement and housing) to establish customers who are in need of support
- We are looking to restart work in the communities with our Financial Inclusion Support Officers to promote DHP alongside other financial assistance
- We have updated our online application form for residents which is much easier than previous
- We have a tenancy support officer whose role undertakes case work with some of the more vulnerable tenants. Their work is not restricted to purely financial matters, however, as part of their role they do and can pick up on financial difficulties and engage with Financial Inclusion Support Officers if needed.

Mrs Michele Kondakor asking the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities

Homelessness, unfortunately, continues to be problem both locally and across the country so the news of an additional homeless hostel is welcome. I

am concerned, however, about the finances of this. In the agenda, it states at item 11d, point 6.3 with regards to the Homeless Hostel Conversion, that 'a procurement exercise has been completed with tenders exceeding the budget provision. The spec. is currently under review' and yet in Appendix E, no further money has been allocated for the conversion. There seems to have been very little scrutiny, if any, of the decision to purchase the property and the necessary funds that would be required for conversion. What scrutiny of the spec put out to tender was there by members? How is the Portfolio Holder going to prevent this from becoming another Gresham Road, where the original budget allowed was obviously inadequate for the level of specification required?

Councillor C. Golby, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, responded as follows:

First of all, I need to correct something that is incorrect in that we have not brought a new property, this is an existing property, and what we did was we went to market with an idea of what we would like to do with that property. The tenders came back too much, we had a ball park figure in our heads, it came back, didn't match, so we have gone away to rethink it. We have done this specifically to avoid another scenario where we start a project and then get levered with costs. This is all part of a more corporate approach to things which I will be discussing later on when I present my Housing Revenue Account budget.

Mr Mike Wright submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder of Planning and Regulation

In 2020, the Council started a cross-party Working Group to update the Public Space Protection Orders in the Borough. These Public Space Protection Orders - for Begging Control, Highway Car Sales, Alcohol and Novel psychoactive substances were consulted on and were then all approved by Cabinet last year. Would the Portfolio holder please explain which ones are now in force and the time-scales for those that are now overdue?

Councillor R. Smith, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation responded as follows:

Thank you, Mr Wright for your question.

These Public Space Protection Orders are important tools and enable us to effectively enforce and prevent against anti-social behaviour and protect our public spaces being spoilt for the many by what is probably just a few individuals.

I am very happy to let Mr Wright know that the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for begging control is now active and people may have noticed the improvement when visiting our town centres. The orders in relation to alcohol and novel psychoactive substances are now also active and enforceable and finally the highway commercial car sales order is in the very final stages of

preparation and we are currently organising street signage to make commercial salesmen aware that if they continue to put cars for sale on the side of the highway they will be liable to fines of upto £1000 per enforcement.

I can confirm that this PSPO will be active from the 1st March.

CL60 **Questions by Members**

Councillor Kyle Evans asked the following question of the Leader of the Council:

Can the Leader of the Council provide Council with an update on the Bedworth Market trial in All Saints Square?

The Leader of the Council, Councillor K. Wilson, responded as follows:

Thank you, Councillor Evans for your question.

At the election in May 2021, this administration stood on a promise that we would introduce a trial of having an outdoor market in All Saints Square, Bedworth, after years of residents telling us on the doorsteps this is what they would like to see.

I am pleased to report that the trial is going well Mr Mayor and as you will see from tonight's budget papers later on, we are proposing to extend this and also expand this to Tuesdays too.

I must thank both the community in Bedworth and the market traders for supporting this trial, it is through their support that we can demonstrate its success. We have 10 traders taking part on a Friday which equates to 20 stalls being used. There are eight existing traders and two new traders to the town who have been participating in the success of our trial.

The footfall figures in All Saints Square speak for themselves, the average footfall figures reveal that there were 1160 new visits since the start of the trial and 2436 repeat visits during the trial period compared to the pre-trial period where there were 471 new visits and 1290 repeat visits. In addition, our support for the indoor market continues too, in the trial period there have been 187 new visits and 581 repeat visits compared to the pre-trial period of 128 new visits and 381 repeat visits.

After years of Labour refusing to listen to residents in Bedworth who wanted to trial a return of the outdoor market to All Saints Square it is this Conservative administration that has delivered on the people's wishes and made a success of it.

Councillor Kyle Evans asked a supplementary question:

Thank you, Mr Mayor,

Free parking in Bedworth Town Centre, 50% reduction in rates for traders in Bedworth market, the market now outside after public demand, £50 million

pounds from government to start regeneration in Bedworth Town Centre and a shop front enhancement scheme to help local business. Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that this Conservative council has achieved more for Bedworth Town centre in 10 months than what Labour achieved in 40 years?

The Leader of the Council, Councillor K. Wilson, responded as follows:

Quite simply – yes Mr Mayor.

Councillor Keith Kondakor submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities:

The council's flats at Cleaver Gardens in Weddington were built in the 1970s. The road and pavements around Cleaver Gardens have been managed by the borough council ever since, but the Borough council has the view that some of these should be the responsibility of the County Council. As a result, the borough council seems to have failed to properly maintain them or bring the pavements up to proper accessibility standards. It is my view that they are now in an unsafe condition.

The ping-pong of emails about whose responsibility has been going on for years without progress. Will this council ensure that this impasse does not drag on into another year and that one of the councils brings the roads and pavements up to a safe and accessible standard in 2022?

Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor C. Golby, responded as follows:

I can't guarantee when its going to end, I wish I could, but I can't. The problem we have got at the moment is that it is similar to no mans land, we can't do anything because we don't see that we have a legal responsibility or any right to do anything and the county council have similar view. We are at an impasse, however there are conversations taking place, it is an active discussion, and I am trying to get this resolved as quickly as possible. I cannot give you a timeframe simple as that and I cannot guarantee any time it might be next week, it might be next year, it might not be, that's all I can say, and I have explained to you in previous public meetings that there are ongoing dialogues taking place.

Councillor Keith Kondakor asked a supplementary question as follows:

Thank you, Councillor Golby, for that answer, I think one important thing is to make them safe rather than who pays for it as far as the residents are concerned so could we at least try to agree on doing some urgent safety repairs at Cleaver Gardens and then working out the responsibility for costs as a longer term thing. I understand it may take a year, or even, two years to work out responsibility but in the meantime, I am very frightened of my residents falling down the potholes or off some of the dodgy kerbs. I would at least like that some of the urgent work is done even if we have to put to one side who eventually pays for them.

Councillor C. Golby responded as follows:

I think a good example of this would be, had you been at county would they have allowed you to use your delegated budget? I think the answer is no because they don't see it as their responsibility, unfortunately we are in a position where I can't pay for works out of a budget on land that is not technically ours, we believe the land is not technically ours, therefore, I cannot sign off on any budget to spend any money on that land.

I don't know in how many different ways I need to explain this to you, but I am trying to get this sorted and it will be sorted as soon as possible, that is all I can say at this time.

Councillor B. Beetham asked the following question to the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Business and Regeneration, Councillor K. Wilson

As the portfolio holder for Finance and Corporate you must be aware that under the previous Labour administration the longest waiting time for responses for complaints at one point was 175 days. Even more concerning was the longest wait time for Freedom of information requests which got up to 218 days. This is not customer service that any resident should have to face, especially from their council.

This was raised as a major concern at the Finance and Public Services Committee in July. The service level agreement for complaints is 10 day's end to end. The service level agreement for Freedom of Information act requests is 20 working days.

Can the cabinet member please confirm that this Conservative council takes complaints seriously and endeavours to deal with them swiftly for residents? Could the portfolio holder also confirm that this Conservative council is focused on openness and transparency with an aim to get the information to those who request it promptly?

If the cabinet member could answer the above as well as answer what actions this Conservative council have taken in regard to improving customer service and how many days on average a resident need to currently wait in regard to complaints and Freedom of Information requests.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Finance, Councillor S. Croft responded as follows:

I entirely agree with him, he is quite right that customer service performance at this Council has been poor for many years with little explanation as OSP reports shown. Every single year it would come to OSP and there would be no satisfactory explanation.

I entirely agree with him that residents should be able to get the information results that they need simply, quickly and easily without having to raise to a level of compliant or apply to their councillor or their MP for address.

I can confirm that we made this a priority when we took office not just because it would deliver a better service to the residents but because we

need accurate data to inform our policies. I am delighted to inform tonight that the latest figures that have been reported to the Finance and Public Services OSP demonstrate a huge difference in our customer service results. The number of complaints outside the 10 days he referred to went from 70 in October to 7 in January and the number of FOIs outside the 20days went from 57 to 3 over the same period.

To do this we first needed to bring in the proper staff because we know we are understaffed at this authority, so we hired a customer service officer at no extra cost to the budget and he has done magnificent work in clearing the backlog. Then we need the change in culture across the council and focusing on results for the residents and proper engagement with customer services because that team can only help people if the whole business co-operates with them. Finally, we needed the will and drive to break out of old habits and I do want to publicly congratulate Director – Tom Shardlow, Customer Experience Officer - John Sherratt and Customer Services Manager Gavin Orton for the fantastic work they have done and the entire team.

So Mr Mayor these three simple steps, proper resourcing, a customer focused culture and a will to achieve results has achieved this remarkable effort and its not rocket science Mr Mayor, it is Conservative government in action and our next steps are to be informed of monitoring of the content and quality of the customer service replies so that we can provide a better service for our residents and I can reveal to Councillor Beetham tonight that to that end we are going to push the Council to achieve the CSE Customer Service Excellence Qualification this year or in the words of Director – Tom Shardlow we will die trying.

Slowly but surely Mr Mayor we are sorting the place out, so watch this space Mr Mayor there is a lot more to come.

CL61 **Special Urgency Decisions**

The following special urgency decisions be noted:

- a) Cabinet 8th December 2021 – Town Centre Regeneration Update (Exempt)
- b) Cabinet 12th January 2022 – Public Conveniences and Car Parks (Exempt)

CL62 **Cabinet Report**

The Leader of the Council submitted his report on behalf of Cabinet. The report highlighted matters considered at the Cabinet meetings held on 8th December 2021, 12th January and 2nd February 2022 and details of reports from the West Midlands Combined Authority Board, which has a direct impact on NBBC.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CL63 **Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor**

The Council gave consideration to the selection of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2022/23:

(a) Mayor

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor J. Clarke be invited to accept the office of Mayor.

It was further proposed and seconded that Councillor C. Watkins, be invited to accept the office of Mayor.

It was further proposed and seconded that Councillor K. Kondakor, be invited to accept the office of Mayor.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR COUNCILLOR J. CLARKE: Councillors: B. Beetham, D. Brown, J. Clarke, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, L. Downs, K. Evans, C. Golby, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, J. Hartshorn, J. Kennaugh, A. Llewellyn-Nash, S. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Baxter-Payne, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Tromans, R. Tromans, M. Walsh and K. Wilson

FOR COUNCILLOR K. KONDAKOR: None

FOR COUNCILLOR C. WATKINS: Councillors: L. Hocking, A. Sargeant, J. Sargeant, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard and C. Watkins

RESOLVED that Councillor J. Clarke be invited to accept the office of Mayor for Municipal Year 2022/23

(b) Deputy Mayor

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor M. Walsh be invited to accept the office of Deputy Mayor.

It was further proposed and seconded that Councillor N. Phillips, be invited to accept the office of Deputy Mayor.

A vote was taken

RESOLVED that Councillor M. Walsh be invited to accept the office of Deputy Mayor for Municipal Year 2022/23

CL64 **Recommendations from Cabinet and Other Committees**

a) Local Development Scheme

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulation, Councillor R. Smith, presented the recommendations made at Cabinet on 8th December 2021. The existing Local Development Scheme was adopted in September 2020. The timescales within the LDS are now out of date and an updated

version was presented to confirm the milestones and timescales for the emerging Development Plan Documents.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the approved Local Development Scheme be adopted, the Local Development Scheme be published on the Council's website and the Town Centres Area Action Plan be withdrawn and replaced by a Town Centres Supplementary Planning Document; and
- ii) the Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD be formally withdrawn.

Councillor K. Kondakor requested that his vote against the Local Development Scheme be recorded in the minutes

b) Local Enforcement Plan (Planning) Adoption

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulation, Councillor R. Smith, presented the recommendation agreed at Cabinet, in respect of the above, on the 12th January, 2022 for Council approval.

RESOLVED that the Local Enforcement Plan (Planning) document (as set out in Appendix A of the Cabinet report) be adopted

c) Supplementary Planning Documents adoption Transport Demand Matters Parking Standards SPD and Conservation Areas Appraisals and Management SPDs

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulation, Councillor R. Smith, presented the recommendations agreed at Cabinet on the 12th January 2022 for Council approval

RESOLVED that the Transport Demand Management Matters – Parking Standards SPD (at Appendix A1 of the Cabinet report) and the five Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plan SPDs and the Transport Demand Matters SPD (at Appendices B1 to B5 of the Cabinet report) be adopted

d) General Fund Revenue and Capital Budgets 2022/23

Councillor K. Wilson moved that section 4.13.4 procedural rule of the constitution be suspended to enable the proposer, seconder and Leader of the Opposition no time limit for speeches on the budget items. This was seconded by Councillor R. Tromans.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate, Councillor S. Croft, presented the recommendations made at Cabinet on the 9th February 2022, in respect of the above, and moved a motion for their approval.

Councillor K. Wilson seconded the motion.

Councillor C. Watkins put forward an amendment to present the alternative budget proposal on behalf of the Labour Group which was seconded by Councillor J. Sheppard as follows:

OPPOSITION BUDGET RECOMMENDATION 14th February 2022

- (a) That the General Fund draft revenue budget 2022/23, attached as Appendix B, be recommended to the Council for approval.
- (b) That the Council Tax requirement for 2022/23 is determined as £9,743,704.34 and the District Council Tax for 2022/23 be increased by £1.99% for a Band D property (an increase of £4.85 on a Band D property).
- (c) To note the initial budget changes that were approved by NBBC Cabinet on 8th December 2021 and include them in the budget for final approval by Full Council on 14 February 2022 excepting the below items:

8th December 2021 Initial Savings Not Accepted	£
Community centres: Transfer of community centres to community.	33,720
Pest control – Discontinuation of service.	15,000
Buildings and Car parks: Transfer of Cleaning staff to NABCEL.	20,000
Caravan rents: Increase in rent to £28.74/pw.	15,000
	83,720

- (d) To note the budget changes included within the 14th February 2022 NBBC Cabinet report and include them in the following budget excepting the below items:

14th February 2022 Budget Report Growth Not Accepted	£
Market Rents: Part year cost of changes including pricing review	(54,000)
Promotions - Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Celebration	(20,000)
	(74,000)

- (e) To include the following budget changes as detailed below:

Savings Identified	£
Street Cleansing: Growth offering river clearance service to other authorities.	(5,000)
To increase the Mobile Home charges from £25.07 to £27 per week.	(7,900)
Markets :Freeze on all market rents except Bedworth open stalls with an increase from £8.20 to £15.	(14,000)

Finance : Increase recharge to NABCEL for support provided by finance	(2,000)
	(28,900)

Additional Growth Items	£
Car Parks: 2022/23 Temporary change in charging structure. Free parking after 3pm be provided in all Council car parks 3. Plus £1.50 for 3 hours and all day on Sundays.	24,600
Promotions: Queen Elizabeth II Platinum celebrations.	10,000
	34,600

- (f) That the £24,600 2022/23 one year change to the parking fee structure be funded from reserves.
- (g) With the above budgetary growth and savings initiatives, the net revenue expenditure of the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23 of £13,169,280 as detailed at Appendix B.
- (h) The revised budget position is a surplus of £10,964.
- (i) Where any potential staffing implications of the savings above, the Council's Management of Change policy will be followed.
- (j) That the Labour General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23 of £13,169,280 be recommended to Council for approval.
- (k) That the budget surplus of £10,964 be added to the General Fund Balances to support the savings programme in future years.
- (l) That the Director – Finance & Enterprise assurance statements on reserves and base budget proposals as included in Appendix A be noted.
- (m) Because of the timescales involved, the General Fund Revenue Budget 2022/23 was considered as an urgent item and not subject to call-in as provided for in paragraph 15(f) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.

APPENDIX A

ROBUSTNESS OF BUDGET ESTIMATES AND ADEQUACY OF THE RESERVES

1.) Introduction

The 2003 Local Government Act places specific responsibilities on the Section 151 Officer to report on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of proposed financial reserves when the authority is setting its budget for the forthcoming year. These principles are embedded throughout the Council's budget setting and medium-term financial planning processes.

2.) Robustness of Estimates

The budget estimates include assumptions on spend pressures, inflationary pressures, interest rate forecasts and current trends on demand for services. The latter is kept under constant review, especially for the income generating services. The estimates also reflect the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23 as well as the most up to date forecast of business rates income. Savings targets have also been assessed to ensure that they are realistic and achievable.

3.) Adequacy of Reserves

The minimum prudent level of reserves that the Council should maintain is a matter of judgement, taking into account a number of factors. This includes an assessment of current and future risks that the Council faces but these can and will change over time and so this cannot be the only factor. Reserve levels are ultimately the Council's safety net against unforeseen or unexpected circumstances and risks. Failure to maintain a minimum prudent level of reserves could lead to the Council being forced to cut spending during the year in an arbitrary way leading to loss of services and reputational damage.

Reserves are established and maintained in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and are reviewed annually by the S151 and also the Council's external auditors as part of the Value for Money Conclusion.

The main categories of reserves to be considered:

a) Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked reserves are those which the Council builds up over a period of time to fund known or predicted liabilities. Earmarked reserves may also contain funding for specific projects to be completed in the future, often by external contributions. The Council reviews the levels, contributions and appropriateness of these reserves annually as part of the budget setting process and when preparing the longer term financial strategy.

It is estimated that the General Fund will have revenue reserves of £11.58m and capital reserves of £2.58m as at 31st March 2022, and £8.35m and £2.21m respectively as at 31st March 2023.

b) Unallocated General Reserves (General Fund)

The Council has determined a minimum working balance of £1m for the general fund balance over the medium term (approximately 7% of future net expenditure levels) to deal with timing issues and uneven cash-flows and avoid unnecessary borrowing. The actual General Fund balance is estimated to stand at £1.45m at the end of March 2022 and £1.46m at the end of March 2023.

Business Rates Retention has brought about much greater risk and uncertainty to local government finance. The level of reserves that are held by the General Fund are prudent and continue to reflect this on-going risk and uncertainty.

In line with established accounting practice, part of the Council's financial strategy is to ensure that funding for future spending is not dependent on the use of reserves so as to demonstrate long-term sustainability.

4.) Section 151 Officer's Statement

Taking into account the above, together with all the proposals within the budget report, it is the Director – Finance & Enterprise view that the estimates for 2022/23 are robust and the proposed level of reserves is adequate. A risk assessment of the assumptions within the budget are accepted as being achievable.

Appendix B

Opposition General Fund Budget Summary

	Current Budget 2021/22	Original Budget 2022/23
	£	£
Business & Regeneration	1,916,010	1,373,400
Finance & Corporate	3,768,950	4,076,860
Health & Environment	2,888,080	3,030,560
Housing & Communities	1,329,900	1,217,850
Planning & Regulation	(942,130)	(391,180)
Public Services	8,381,460	8,098,230
Portfolio Total	17,342,270	17,405,720
Central Provisions	334,500	334,500
Depreciation and Impairment	(3,096,530)	(3,096,530)
Transfers To/ (From) Corporate Reserves	(5,672,515)	(3,268,230)
Financing of Capital Expenditure	1,594,000	1,258,700
PWLB Premiums	21,120	21,120
Interest and Investment Income	(100,000)	(460,000)
Minimum Revenue Provision	477,800	536,000
Debt Interest	468,000	438,000
Total Council Net Expenditure	11,368,645	13,169,280
Funded by:		
Net Retained Business Rates	(4,712,780)	(4,077,300)
NDR Collection Fund (Surplus)/ Deficit	4,960,420	1,723,300
Council Tax Collection Fund (Surplus)/ Deficit	57,000	(18,010)
New Homes Bonus	(851,360)	(644,430)
Other Government Grants (one off funding)	(1,467,805)	(420,100)
Transfer Surplus to General Fund Reserves	4,398	10,964
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT	9,358,518	9,743,704

The Mayor moved an adjournment for ten minutes to consider the alternative budget put forward by the opposition at 19.54PM

The meeting reconvened at 20.08pm.

Councillor K. Wilson moved in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4A.21 to suspend standing orders to allow the business of the meeting to be concluded. Councillor C. Golby seconded the procedural motion.

A vote was taken

The procedural motion was carried.

A recorded vote on the alternative budget amendment put forward by the Labour Group was taken as follows:

For: Councillors J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, and C. Watkins

Against: Councillors B. Beetham, D. Brown, J. Clarke, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, L. Downs, K. Evans, C. Golby, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, J. Hartshorn, J. Kennaugh, A. Llewellyn-Nash, S. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Baxter-Payne, A. Sargeant, J. Sargeant, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Tromans, R. Tromans, M. Walsh and K. Wilson

Abstentions: Councillor K. Kondakor

The amendment was lost.

The Conservative budget was then the substantive motion.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

For: Councillors B. Beetham, D. Brown, J. Clarke, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, L. Downs, K. Evans, C. Golby, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, J. Hartshorn, J. Kennaugh, A. Llewellyn-Nash, S. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Baxter-Payne, A. Sargeant, J. Sargeant, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Tromans, R. Tromans, M. Walsh and K. Wilson

Against: Councillors K. Kondakor, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, and C. Watkins

Abstentions: None

The Conservative budget motion was carried

RESOLVED that

- i) the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23, as detailed at Appendix D of the report, with a net revenue expenditure of £13,178,460 be approved including the growth and savings initiatives detailed in the report;
- ii) the initial budget savings that were approved by NBBC Cabinet on 8th December 2021 be noted; and
- iii) the Capital Programme for 2022/23 of £61,597,696 be approved.

e) **Housing Revenue Account Budget and Capital Programme 2022/23**

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, Councillor C. Golby, presented the recommendations made at Cabinet held on 9th February 2022, in respect of the above and moved the motion.

Councillor S. Croft seconded the motion

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

For: Councillors B. Beetham, D. Brown, J. Clarke, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, L. Downs, K. Evans, C. Golby, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, J. Hartshorn, J. Kennaugh, K. Kondakor, A. Llewellyn-Nash, S. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Baxter-Payne, A. Sargeant, J. Sargeant, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Tromans, R. Tromans, M. Walsh, C. Watkins and K. Wilson

Against: None

Abstentions: None

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED that

- i) the forecast outturn for 2021/22 be noted and the revised capital programme for 2021/22 of £21.294m be approved;
- ii) the draft HRA Capital Programme for 2022/23 of £22.938m as shown at Appendix C of the report be approved; and
- iii) the 2022/23 draft HRA Revenue budget, including the rent and fee changes, be approved.

f) **Council Tax 2022/23**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate, Councillor S. Croft, proposed the following motion:

‘To defer the determination of the Council Tax 2022/23 to a Council Tax Setting Committee to be held on 22nd February, 2022 due to the Police and Crime Commission Precept not being available yet and that the Committee consist of five conservatives (Councillors K. Wilson, R. Tromans, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic and J. Kennaugh) one labour and one from the Green and Independent Party Alliance’

Councillor K. Wilson seconded the motion

A vote was taken

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED that

- i) the setting of the council tax be deferred to a Council Tax setting Committee to be held on 22nd February 2022 upon the receipt of the Police and Crime Commission Precept; and
- ii) the committee consist of five conservative members (Councillors K. Wilson, R. Tromans, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic and J. Kennaugh) one labour member and one member from the Green and Independent Party Alliance

g) Treasury Management Strategy and Budgetary Framework 2022/23

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate, Councillor S. Croft, presented the recommendations made at Cabinet, in respect of the above, on 9th February 2022 and moved the motion.

Councillor K. Wilson seconded the motion.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

For: Councillors B. Beetham, D. Brown, J. Clarke, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Cvetkovic, L. Downs, K. Evans, C. Golby, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, J. Hartshorn, J. Kennaugh, K. Kondakor, A. Llewellyn-Nash, S. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Baxter-Payne, A. Sargeant, J. Sargeant, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Tromans, R. Tromans, M. Walsh, C. Watkins and K. Wilson

Against: None

Abstentions: None

The motion was carried

RESOLVED that the Treasury Strategy and Budgetary Framework 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix G of the report including the items below be approved

- Treasury Strategy
- Treasury and Prudential Indicators
- MRP Policy Statement
- Capital Resource Allocations

h) Local Council Tax Support Policy

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate, Councillor S. Croft, presented the recommendations made at Cabinet, in respect of the above, on the 9th February 2022.

RESOLVED that the Local Council Tax Scheme at Appendix A of the report be approved.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate, Councillor S. Croft, presented the report to council which set out the proposals for appointing the external auditor to the Council for the accounts for the five-year period from 2023/24 to 2027/27.

RESOLVED that the Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1st April 2023 be accepted.

CL66 **Vote of Thanks**

Councillor S. Croft, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate, proposed a vote of thanks, which was seconded by Councillor K. Wilson, to the Finance Officers who have all worked tirelessly to enable this budget to be brought forward. A special thanks and farewell was also expressed to Stephen Fitzgerald – Director for Finance and Enterprise and Craig Pugh – Head of Financial Services who would be leaving the authority and wished them both all the best for the future.

Mayor

Council - Schedule of Declarations of Interests – 2021/2022

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
	General dispensations granted to all members under s.33 of the Localism Act 2011			Granted to all members of the Council in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing matters - Statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 - An allowance, payment given to members - An indemnity given to members - Any ceremonial honour given to members - Setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 - Planning and Licensing matters - Allotments - Local Enterprise Partnership
	R. Baxter-Payne	Manager Brinklow Quarry Ltd, Brinklow; County Councillor - WCC	Spouse: Self-employed childminder	
	B. Beetham	Employed at The George Eliot Hospital; Warwickshire County Council – Camp Hill	Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp Hill Urban Village: Pride in Camp Hill Board • Committee of Management of Hartshill and Nuneaton Recreation Ground 	
	D. Brown	Employed by H.M Land Registry	Regional Coordinator, Ragdoll Rescue Charity. Representative on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhall Education Foundation; • Warwickshire Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee; • NBBC Biodiversity Champion 	
	J. Clarke	Employed by Marcus Jones MP	County Councillor W.C.C. Nuneaton Conservative Association; Deputy Chairman	
	T. Cooper	None	Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp Hill Urban Village: Pride in Camp Hill Board 	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee of Management of Hartshill and Nuneaton Recreation Ground 	
	S. Croft	Employed at Holland & Barrett Retail Ltd	Treasurer of the Conservative Association Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion for Safeguarding (Children and Adults) Local Government Superannuation Scheme Consultative Board West Midlands Employers 	
	L. Cvetkovic	Head of Geography (Teacher), Sidney Stringer Academy, Coventry	The Bulkington Volunteers (Founder); Bulkington Sports and Social Club (Trustee) Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Control Partnership Steering Group 	
	L. Downs	River Bars Limited; Coventry Plus Beyond the Plane	NBBC representative on the Armed Forces Covenant Meeting	
	K. Evans	Employed by UK Parliament	Sponsorship: Election Expenses – North Warwickshire Conservative Association Membership of Other Bodies: West Midlands Combined Authority Audit Committee. Executive Officer – North Warwickshire Conservative Association; Member of the Conservative and Unionist Party; Member of the Governing Body – Race Leys Infant School	
	C. Golby		Member of Warwickshire County Council Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coventry, Warwickshire and Hinckley and Bosworth Joint Committee 	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Leaders • Local Enterprise Partnership • Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd. (NABCEL) • Nuneaton and Bedworth Home Improvement Agency • NBBC representative on the George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust – Public/User Board • NBBC representative on George Eliot Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Governors 	
	J. Gutteridge		Representative on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board • Age UK (Warwickshire Branch) 	
	B. Hammersley	County Councillor – W.C.C.	Member of NABCEL	
	S. Harbison	Employed by Meridian c/o Hello Fresh, 1 St Georges Way, Nuneaton	Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor's Piece Charity • Astley Charity 	
	J. Hartshorn	Employed by Nuneaton Library – Digital Inclusion – WCC (Senior Customer Service Assistant) COVID Community Testing – WCC – Team Leader (Casual)	Member of Nuneaton Conservatives	
	L. Hocking	Employed by Openreach	Member of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unite the Union • Communication Workers Union 	
	J. Kennaugh	County Councillor W.C.C. Employed by UK	Member of the W.C.C. Regulatory Committee Member of the Conservative Party	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
		Flooring Direct Ltd.	Member of UNITE the Union Nuneaton and Bedworth representative for the Equality and Inclusion Partnership NBBC Representative on Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership	
	K.A. Kondakor	Electronic Design Engineer (self-employed semi-retired); Statistical data analyst and expert witness (self employed)	Unpaid director of 100PERCENTRENEWABLEUK LTD	
	A. Llewellyn-Nash	Employee of BMI Healthcare	Treasurer of Exhall Multi-cultural Group Governor at Newdigate Primary and Nursery School, Bedworth Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospice Charity 	
	S. Markham	County Councillor – W.C.C.	Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedworth Neighbourhood Watch • Governor at Ash Green School • Sherbourne Asset Co Shareholder Committee; • Nuneaton and Bedworth Sports Forum; • Warwickshire Direct Partnership; • Warwickshire Waste Partnership; 	
	B. Pandher		Member of Warwickshire County Council Treasurer & Trustee of Nanaksar Gurdwara Gursikh Temple; Coordinator of Council of Sikh Temples in Coventry; Secretary of Coventry Indian Community; Trustee of Sikh Monument Trust Vice Chair Exhall Multicultural Group Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foleshill Charity Trustee – Proffitt's Charity 	
	N. Phillips	Employee of DWP	Member of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuneaton Labour CLP 	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fabian Society • The George Eliot Society • The PCS Union • Central Credit Union • Stockingford Sports and Allotment Club • Haunchwood Sports and Social Club 	
	M. Rudkin	Employee of Coventry City Council	Unite the Union	
	A. Sargeant	Employed by Pertemps	<p>Chairman of The Nook (Nuneaton) Residents Association. Member of Nuneaton Carnival Committee.</p> <p>Representative on the following Outside Bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice Rights 	
	J. Sargeant	Head of Retail – Life Charity		
	J. Sheppard		<p>Partnership member of the Hill Top and Caldwell Big Local.</p> <p>Director of Wembrook Community Centre.</p> <p>Member of the Management Committee at the Mental Health Drop in.</p>	<p>Dispensation to speak and vote on any matters of Borough Plan that relate to the Directorship of Wembrook Community Centre</p>
	T. Sheppard	Employee of Dairy Crest		
	J. Singh			
	R. Smith		<p>Chairman of Volunteer Friends, Bulkington; Trustee of Bulkington Sports and Social Club;</p> <p>Member of the following Outside Bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A5 Member Partnership; • Patrol (Parking and Traffic Regulation Outside of London) Joint Committee; • Building Control Partnership Steering Group • Bulkington Village 	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			Community and Conference Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative on the Nuneaton and Bedworth Older Peoples Forum • Digital Infrastructure Board 	
	M. Tromans	RTC Ltd, Nuneaton; WCC, Warwick	Nuneaton Acorns WI	
	R. Tromans	RTC, Nuneaton AFL, Wellingborough	W.C.C. Warwick Member of the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuneaton Neighbourhood Watch Committee • Nuneaton Festival of Arts 	
	H. Walmsley	Chief of Staff to Julian Knight MP	Chartered Institute of Public Relations Member on the following Outside Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendship Project for Children • West Midlands Combined Authority Audit Group 	Dispensation to speak and vote
	M. Walsh	Employed by MacInnes Tooling Ltd. – UK Sales Manager		
	C.M. Watkins	Landlord of a privately rented property	Representative on the following outside bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd. (NABCEL) 	
	K.D. Wilson	Acting Delivery Manager, Nuneaton and Warwick County Courts, HMCTS, Warwickshire Justice Centre, Nuneaton	Nuneaton Conservative Association Corporate Tenancies: properties are leased by NBBC to Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd, of which I am a Council appointed Director. Representative on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprises Ltd (NABCEL) • Coventry, Warwickshire and Hinckley & Bosworth Joint Committee • District Council Network • Local Government 	

	Name of Councillor	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Other Personal Interest	Dispensation
			Association <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd (CWLEP) • West Midlands Combined Authority • Deputy Chairman – Nuneaton Conservative Association • District Council Network • Local Government Association 	