

## **NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **COUNCIL**

**14<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

A Council meeting of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council was held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Due to government guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held in person in the Council Chamber, but there was a limit on how many could attend, so those not attending had their apologies entered into the minutes.

### **Present**

The Mayor (Councillor R. Tromans)

Councillors D. Brown, J. Clarke, L. Cvetkovic, K Evans, C. Golby, J. Kennaugh, K. Kondakor, M. Rudkin, J. Sheppard, R. Smith, H. Walmsley, C. Watkins, K. Wilson

**Apologies** were received from Councillors B. Beetham, T. Cooper, S. Croft, L. Downs, P. Elliott, J. Gutteridge, B. Hammersley, S. Harbison, L. Hocking, A. Llewellyn-Nash, S. Markham, B. Pandher, R. Baxter-Payne, N. Phillips, A. Sargeant, J. Sargeant, T. Sheppard, J. Singh, M. Tromans, M Walsh

#### CL16 **Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 be approved and signed by the Mayor following an amendment of a change of name under item CL10 in the Appeals Committee, which should read B Hammersley. **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021, be approved and signed by the Mayor.

#### CL17 **Declarations of Interests**

**RESOLVED** that the Declarations of Interests for this meeting are as set out in the schedule attached to these minutes, with some additions further to those sent out with the agenda and now attached.

#### CL18 **Announcements**

Councillor Wilson on behalf of the Council, noted their congratulations to the England football team for getting as far as they did, to their first final in 55 years. He noted that he and Councillor Clarke had visited the football mural in Nuneaton and noted the tremendous community efforts of the fundraising from this for the purchase of some defibrillators. Councillor Wilson did note the Council's sadness at the racism comments online and said that there is no place in society for this and that the Council stands by those players affected. He noted the words of the great Martin Luther King, that a person should not be judged on the colour of their skin but on the contents of their character.

Councillor Evans was pleased to announce that a national athletics event was taking place at the Pingles Leisure Centre on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> July, when teams from across the country would be participating in this event and that the Council would welcome the investment that this brings to the borough and that it was putting Nuneaton on the sporting map.

Councillor Evans also informed Council that £23k has been awarded from the Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants Scheme to go towards the Museum's exhibition on the Nuneaton Abbey. He confirmed that they would be working alongside partners at St Mary's Church and hoped that residents would visit the exhibition for free.

#### **CL19 Business Deferred from Council – 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021**

- a) i) Notice of Motion: "This Council has no confidence in the current controlling group and calls upon the Cabinet to resign forthwith". Councillor Wilson proposed to withdraw this motion following the change of the administration in the elections and Councillor Walmsley seconded this motion. A vote was taken.

**RESOLVED:** the motion be withdrawn. Councillor Kondakor voted against the motion.

- ii) Notice of Motion: "This Council condemns the Government's proposal to award only a 1% pay increase to NHS workers in Nuneaton and Bedworth. NHS staff deserve a pay rise that reflects the sacrifices they have made during the pandemic, and sometimes at the expense of their own health, and untimely deaths. This Council joins with other organisations and our NHS colleagues to urge the Independent Pay Review Body to reject the Government's proposals and recommend the substantial increase our NHS workers so richly deserve".

The motion lapsed as no member of the Council is a signatory to the motion

- b) Questions by Members as follows:

#### **Question 1 – Councillor A. Sargeant**

"Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Watkins, give the residents of Roxburgh Road an assurance that the green space, pavements and kerbs will be returned to their previous condition, if not better, at the Council's and mod pods development on the old garage site".

#### **As the new Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Golby replied to this question:**

The contract administrator on the Roxburgh Road development site has given Councillor Sargeant reassurances that the green area adjacent to the site will return to the condition it was prior to the development starting.

With regards to the kerbstones and footpaths, a condition survey was carried out prior to works commencing which will be used to determine the

extent of the work required. It is worth noting the kerbstones and footpaths were not in a very good condition prior to works commencing.

**Question 2 – Councillor K. Kondakor**

“Hopefully the council leader is already aware that Warwickshire County Council is looking to solve the day-time retained fire crew availability problems at Bedworth Fire Station by the relocation one of our two remaining crews from Nuneaton. It is clearly unacceptable to cut the size of the borough’s fire cover again, after already reducing the standard size of crew on each appliance. Does the council leader agree with me that the Borough needs 3 fully crewed fire appliances and will she ask the management team to ensure that the Borough Council monitor any firm plans that emerge after the election?”

**As the new Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, Councillor Golby replied to this question:**

As Cllr Kondakor will be aware, having until just recently been a County Councillor, that the responsibility of the Fire and Rescue Service is with Warwickshire County Council. During his time, I understand that he has asked many questions of the Portfolio Holder, Cllr Andy Crump, who has answered a number of points that he has raised with him.

The proposals to which Cllr Kondakor refers have been led by the Fire and Rescue Service themselves and I am confident that they would not sign off on any plan that would endanger the residents of Nuneaton or Bedworth.

Neither Cllr Kondakor or I are trained or qualified in the field of fire and rescue.

However, as Leader of the Council I will not engage in the politics of fear and attempt to stir up a storm over these proposals that will unnecessarily worry our residents. I will maintain a watching brief and I can assure Cllr Kondakor that officers will monitor the development and impact of these plans on our Borough.

**CL20 Public Participation**

**Question 1**

**Dr Al. Saje asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration:**

“Town plan NUN356 aims to sell for housing the Johnson Road Bedworth Elizabeth Centre area that holds over 50 cars at peak times often bringing up to a 100 children a day, seven days a week for football training and matches at the leased and reinstated Johnson Road recreation ground. There is virtually no non-residential parking on Johnson Road or the Tewkesbury Drive estate, a cul-de-sac, and current plans to provide only a replacement 18 places in an unsafe and unsuitable position, will cause severe traffic problems, endanger child safety, and put in doubt the future of Bedworth Eagles JFC football charity. Will the council commit to review this non-

strategic plan urgently before the sale of the land and be open to the plan's reversal or effective mitigation?"

**Councillor Smith responded as follows:**

I thank Dr Saje for his question and would like to congratulate him and the team of volunteers at Bedworth Eagles for the success of the club since taking on the Johnson Road Recreation Ground and reinstating it to be one of the best grounds in the borough.

The land at the old Elizabeth Centre site was included in the Borough Plan by the previous administration as a non-strategic site and can only be removed from the Borough plan as part of the review process that is currently underway and due for completion in early 2023, as of now no planning applications have come forward for this land.

The previous administration, as well as delivering a 3<sup>rd</sup> rate borough plan that included this site, also left a legacy of financial mismanagement that has the potential to seriously impact on the future provision of key Leisure facilities in the Miners Welfare Park and to address this issue it is possible the council will have to raise revenue from the sale of this land to partially fund the development of the new Leisure centre.

You will know from our recent meetings we are fully aware and sympathetic to the issue you raise and will continue to work with you and explore ways of finding a suitable solution to the problem.

Question 2

**Mr Sam Margrave asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder of Housing and Communities:**

"Under the oversight of then Cabinet member Councillor Chris Watkins, the Council applied to the Chancellor's Green Homes Grant to secure some of the generous and substantial funding Government made available to help residents in the Borough; however, the Council failed to secure any money for reasons given below, despite the Neighbouring Authority in North Warwickshire securing £320,000.

Lord Callanan, the minister responsible for the scheme at BEIS cited the following reason(s) for the application failing:

1. "Costs provided for capital spend by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council within the cost breakdown table did not match the total amount of capital funding the Local Authority had requested. This meant the assessors were unable to determine the correct figure to base the assessment on";
2. "The initial bid didn't allow them (BEIS) to determine the amount of funding being requested";
3. "Give an opportunity to rectify this, the re-submission costs didn't match their original submission, so it was rejected";

Can the leader of the Council confirm that the cabinet member at the time was ultimately responsible for the failure to add up or provide appropriate figures; and provide a detailed estimate of how much funding the error (in the

department Councillor Watkins was responsible for) cost the tax payers in potential help for residents?"

**Councillor Golby responded as follows:**

Thank you for your question.

The submission of bids is an operational matter undertaken by officers of the Council and it would not be appropriate for I or any other members to get directly involved in these sorts of things.

The rejected bid was for £1.4M and yes there will have been an indirect cost to the taxpayer in the time it took council staff to work on the bid the first time around then again when it was returned for amendment however what the financial value of this is I cannot say.

NBBC is a member lead organisation. While I'm aware this has been dealt with from an officer perspective & I wouldn't expect Cllr Watkins to have gotten his calculator out to add every little thing up he was portfolio holder at the time and this was on his watch.

£1.4 Million is no small sum and could have gone a very long way. He certainly should have been involved to such a degree to have had oversight enough to ask had the numbers been added up correctly.

This was pretty significant bid which we were given a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance at but it was still incorrect when it was resubmitted.

Unfortunately, it was a missed opportunity to provide further support to our residents, but officers have assured me that the error has been corrected and future bids will not suffer the same fate.

Question 3

**Mr Brian Walmsley asked the following question of the Leader:**

"I read with interest and possible horror, in our local press, that this council is planning to refuse to replace obsolete air conditioning equipment at Bedworth Civic Hall, in order to fund their free car parking plans throughout our borough.

Can the leader of the council give a categorical assurance, to all NBBC residents, that there will be absolutely zero risk, that any such failure of facilities at the Civic Hall, which could bring a halt to the wonderful vaccination work being carried out by our wonderful National Health Service?"

**Councillor Wilson responded as follows:**

I thank the Labour candidate for Weddington for his question.

Firstly, I would like to clarify that the issue with the system relates to a control panel and not the air conditioning unit itself.

Having investigated this particular item on the capital works programme, it has been confirmed that this issue has been outstanding for 3 years. I make that at least since 2018. As he will be aware, the Labour Party were in charge in

2018, 2019, 2020 and – thankfully – only part of 2021. During all that time they had the option to carry out the works but did not do so. And the system still works.

I am delighted to confirm that the Council is working hard with its Health Partners to support the delivery of the vaccination programme. The use of the Civic Hall Bedworth has played an important part in this process to support local delivery from as far back as last September/October when Flu Jabs commenced. This followed Covid Testing and now vaccination delivery. We continue to maintain and manage the site as has been the case previously.

We have simply pushed back the replacement of the panel as the works required would mean intruding into the controlled vaccination area – something that is not appropriate given the need for a controlled vaccination environment. The works have been moved to the next financial year, taking account of the current use of the Civic Hall.

I cannot give a zero-risk assurance as much as any other person could as to equipment failure, but we will work with addressing any issues should they arise at the site.

#### Question 4

#### **Mrs Michele Kondakor asked the following question of the Leader:**

“Many of the play areas around the Borough are well overdue for improvement and whilst it was good to see mention of some in the recent budget, others such as Buttermere Park, Sandon Park and Coronation Walk are at the end of their lives and were not mentioned. Buttermere Park play area has had no significant work done for 40 years now and, with the recent developments, is being used by considerably more families. I understand that some of the monies from Bellway have already been given to the Council so when can residents expect to see work done to upgrade and modernise the Buttermere Park Play area?”

#### **Councillor Wilson responded as follows:**

Since taking office in May, as a new administration we have found that the several of our policies are out of date, which includes our Play Strategy. Therefore, we are currently reviewing several of its strategies, including the Play Strategy, to develop a strategic approach to supporting improvements and additional capacity across the Borough's 50 + play area sites.

The Council does receive S.106 contributions from new housing developments and these are based upon negotiated agreements and with staged payments being received over a period of time. The S.106 contributions are to support additional capacity at specified sites. However, until a few weeks ago we did not have a dedicated s.106 officer to chase and monitor payment of the financial obligations. Our new officer has made a fantastic start and we will be reviewing what we have shortly.

As part of the new Play strategy an action plan will be developed as to how to maximise the use of the contributions and future capital investment to make

best use of the funds and make the biggest impact for residents. We will be looking at future procurement opportunities, such as working with a chosen contractor/s across the whole borough and not at individual sites, where we will lose efficiencies of scale.

Furthermore, I am aware that there are some sites in our Borough that have had developments and some contributions paid over as part of the first tranche of obligations under their planning consents – particularly in Weddington and St Nicolas. But there are additional phases of building which will attract additional financial contributions. This will mean more money available for those areas and more potential for improving the play equipment we have. We feel it is better to allow some of this money to accumulate so that even better services can be provided in the long run.

**Statement 5 from Mr Karl Mayer:**

“How refreshing it was to read Item agenda 15 of tonight's full council meeting, at last a council that listens to this borough's resident's concerns about the borough plan, instead of ploughing on regardless like the ousted Labour group did with their developers charter plan. The action group fully support this motion and hope the three MP's explain to the secretary of state that our plan should be put on the back burner until Coventry's dubious housing targets are confirmed by the ONS, given the ousted Labour groups decision to accept 4020 extra houses on top of our boroughs actual need through the memorandum of understanding with Coventry City Council. The current review process is welcomed but in my opinion 2 years to late thanks to the previous ruling regime, and a timescale process that could result in all sites in the borough plan being approved before the review conclusion. How crazy would it be for this borough to complete in time its borough plan to then find out it was adopted on flawed figures, it needs halting as soon as possible until we find out the truth”.

Councillor Smith thanked Mr Mayer for his statement of support for tonight's memorandum of understanding motion on behalf of the Woodland's Action Group.

I am fully aware of how much time and effort Mr Mayer and the Woodlands Group have invested in trying to secure a positive outcome for the woodlands as part of the Borough Plan process; much of their efforts fell on deaf ears.

I also remember the a long ago election promise from the Labour group that they would give the Woodlands protected status as green belt and it would never be developed.

Mr Mayer, that was an election promise made and an election promise very quickly broken by Labour.

I am confident that by the end of proceedings tonight, the Conservatives will have made this election promise in May another election promise kept within just 8 weeks in control.

The following decisions have been taken under Special Urgency arrangements since the last Council meeting:

**a) Leisure Strategy**

To provide Cabinet on the Council's Leisure Strategy in relation to the Pingles, Bedworth and Top Farm sites. The work being undertaken to deliver future leisure and green space activities is a key strategic outcome for the Council, supporting residents with opportunities for improvements in their health and well-being.

Cabinet approved the recommendations and gave their thanks to the Director – Leisure, Recreation and Health, the Head of Sports Development, the Sports Development Team and the external consultants, who worked hard on the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) application bid to support this strategy and Leisure facilities.

**RESOLVED** that the Special Urgency Decision taken under delegated officer authority by the Director – Leisure, Recreation and Health on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, as detailed in the agenda, be noted.

**CL22 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 26<sup>th</sup> May and 23<sup>rd</sup> June and details of reports from the West Midlands Combined Authority Board, which has a direct impact on NBBC.

Several questions were raised to which the Leader of the Council, the appropriate Portfolio Holder, or a Member of the leading party, gave a response.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**CL23 Independent Remuneration Review of Members' Allowances 2021-2022**

A report of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel's proposals of Members' Allowances 2021-2022, following approval at the Annual Council in May.

Councillor Wilson moved the recommendations from the report as set out after the table on page 1 Councillor Golby seconded this motion. A vote was taken.

**RESOLVED** that the Members Allowances Scheme be amended as set out in the recommendation set out after the table on page 1 of the report.

Councillor Kondakor requested that his abstention be noted in the minutes

**CL24 Adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – Health Impact Assessment SPD and Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD**



A report by the Director of Democracy, Planning and Public Protection to approve the Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD. These documents provide supplementary planning guidance in accordance with the commitments set out in the adopted Borough Plan and the latest Local Development Scheme dated September 2020. Councillor Smith moved this motion and Councillor Wilson seconded it that the SPDs are adopted, following approval at Cabinet, but it was noted that there was disappointment that there was a lack of response to the public consultation on this matter and lessons need to be learned on how to improve on the consultation process going forward.

**RESOLVED** that the SPDs be adopted.

**CL25 Civic Honours Committee – Article 7 of the Councils’ Constitution**

A report of the Executive Director – Operations to approve arrangements for establishing a Civic Honours Sub-Committee, to formally consider bestowing various civic honours such as (but not limited to):

- Community Awards
- Freedom of the Borough
- Honorary Aldermen

To help in reviving “civic pride” within the Borough.

Councillor Wilson moved the recommendation and this was seconded by Councillor Brown. A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) A Civic Awards Sub-Committee of Cabinet be established;
- b) The Civic Awards Sub-Committee comprise of:
  - Leader of the Council
  - Deputy Leader of the Council
  - The Cabinet Member – Finance and Corporate Services
  - The Mayor
  - Leader of the Main Opposition Party

And be chaired by the Leader of the Council;

- c) Article 7 of the Councils’ Constitution be amended accordingly.

**CL26 Recommendations from Cabinet or Other Committees**

- a) To Consider Proposed Changes to the Constitution – Audit & Standards Committee approval**

Councillor Walmsley moved the recommendations set out for their approval. Councillor Wilson seconded the motion.

A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

- i) the requirement for the appointment of 2 co-opted members be reduced to 1 on the Audit and Standards Committee as shown in Appendix A and for the Overview and Scrutiny Panels;
- ii) the proposed changes to Article 4A.9 Public Participation, by removing Article 4.9.4 and the consequential amendments as shown in Appendix B, be approved;
- iii) the proposed changes to Article 4A.10 Questions by Councillors, by inserting 4.10.6 as shown in Appendix B be approved;
- iv) the Constitution be amended accordingly.

**b) Arrangement for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Audit & Standards Committee approval.**

A report for establishing a Member Working Party to plan for the Platinum Jubilee in 2022 was considered.

Councillor Walmsley moved a motion for the recommendations to be approved, with the additional point that Councillor L Cvetkovic be appointed. Councillor Kennaugh seconded the motion.

A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

- i) a cross party working group of 5 members be established to plan for events for the Platinum Jubilee be approved;
- ii) the working group comprise of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Leader of the main opposition group, Portfolio holder for Finance & Corporate and Councillor L. Cvetkovic..

Councillor Kondakor requested that his abstention be recorded in the minutes.

**c) Update to the Officer/Member protocol – Audit & Standards Committee**

A report of the Director – Democracy, Planning and Public Protection reported on the recommendations to consider changes to the Council's policy on the receipt of Gifts & Hospitality Policy in Part 5L; and minor amendments to the Protocol for Member/Employee Relations in Part 5C of the Constitution.

Councillor Walmsley moved a motion for their approval, noting an error on a single member decision on this matter which needs to be corrected to 18<sup>th</sup> June not 28<sup>th</sup> June, and Councillor Wilson seconded the motion.

Councillor Rudkin left the Meeting

#### **d) Employment Committee – Audit & Standards**

A report to establish an Employment Committee to the Council was considered.

Councillor Walmsley noted that the version sent out omitted the following recommendation which had been approved at Audit and Standards:

- Article 8 of the Council's Constitution be amended as shown in Appendix A of the report, with the amendment to include vi (e) to commission an annual performance review of the Head of Paid Services

Councillor Walmsley moved the recommendations with the above addition and Councillor Evans seconded the motion.

A vote was taken. The motion was carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

- i) an Employment Committee be established for the Council to include as follows:
  - o Councillor Croft (Chair)
  - o Councillor Wilson
  - o Councillor Walmsley
  - o Councillor Brown
  - o Councillor Watkins
- iii) Article 8 of the Council's Constitution be amended as shown in Appendix A of the report, with the amendment to include vi ( e) to commission an annual performance review of the Head of Paid Services; and
- iv) the Constitution be amended accordingly.

Councillor Kondakor requested that his vote against the motion be recorded in the minutes.

Councillor Wilson moved an extension that Standing Orders be suspended until the completion of business, which was seconded by Councillor Evans.

A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

#### **e) Appointment of Independent Persons**

An additional report (sent out as an addendum before the meeting), from the Director – Democracy, Planning & Public Protection, to confirm the arrangements for the appointment of Independent Persons as required by Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 for a four year of term of office.

Councillor Walmsley moved the recommendations and Councillor Wilson seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was carried.

**RESOLVED** that:

- i) Garth Murphy, Maureen O'Sullivan and Mumtaz Goolam be re-appointed as Independent Persons for a second term of 4 years, until July 2025.

CL27 **Notice of Motions**

Borough Plan Motion

We are compelled, against our will, to build 4700 new homes on Greenbelt as a result of the decision to take an additional 4000 houses from Coventry City Council. This requirement came out of housing need assessments based upon population projections made by the Office of National Statistics which have now proved to be incorrect, overstating the need in Coventry by a considerable margin.

Currently, as councillors, we are required to consider and determine planning applications for over 9000 new homes in the Borough in the coming years based upon these projections. Yet, here in Nuneaton and Bedworth the impacts on roads, schools and other services are already substantial and increasing. The Borough is uniquely unsuitable for large scale development in Warwickshire because it is geographically compact, mainly urban and is, already, the most densely populated administrative area in the County. Against this background, this Council believes that the Local Plan does not adequately protect existing communities from increasing loss of limited green space and further densification of the Borough. Therefore, we have no confidence in the Local Plan. Accordingly,

1. The Council calls on the Government to introduce a moratorium on large scale development in the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough area whilst Coventry City Council's housing need is properly assessed at governmental level and more appropriate arrangements are put in place to accommodate that need within Coventry's boundaries;
2. the Executive Director (Operations) be instructed to write to the appropriate Government Minister to notify him/her of this motion and to request a meeting with the Minister in order to discuss it;
3. The Leader of the Council be requested to inform all Warwickshire Districts and Boroughs of the Council's intention to step away from the current Memorandum of Understanding on Housing provision, with a view to negotiating a more suitable arrangement between the partners; and
4. We will work with local MPs to engage with the concerns raised in this motion and to assist the Council in taking these concerns to both Government and our neighbouring Councils.

Councillor Wilson moved the recommendations to this motion, and this was seconded by Councillor Golby.

A recorded vote was taken as follows:

FOR: Councillors: D. Brown, J. Clarke, L Cvetkovic, K. Evans  
C. Golby, J. Kennaugh, K. Kondakor,  
R. Smith, R. Tromans, H. Walmsley,  
K. Wilson

ABSTENTION: Councillors: C. Watkins, J. Sheppard

The motion was carried.

## CL28 **Questions By Members**

**As she had left the meeting, Councillor Watkins asked the following question of Councillor Golby, Portfolio Holder of Housing and Communities on behalf of Councillor Rudkin:**

Following the decision to cease the buying of properties for NABCEL to let for the Council, does the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities intend to continue with the programme of new builds within the HRA that commenced under the former Labour Group?

**Councillor Golby responded as follows:**

The decision was to pause the purchase of properties for NABCEL not cease the buying programme.

The restarting of purchases will be reviewed in the new financial year.

The strategy for the Housing Revenue Account remains the same:

To invest in its existing stock and to provide additional homes where it is financially able to do so, to provide much needed affordable accommodation within the borough.

A programme that we are able to undertake following the move to self-financing in April 2012 and the removal of the borrowing cap in October 2018.

Had the changes allowing us to self-finance not happened in 2012 and the HRA borrowing cap been lifted in 2018 we would **not** have been able to start the building program at all.

These changes to legislation were done under successive Conservative governments.

In 2018 the then councillor Jackson, as part of this councils Labour leadership of the time proposed, as part of the annual budget setting, a plan using the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap, to build 257 council houses over a long-term plan of 30 years (if I remember correctly).

The Conservative group who were in opposition at the time proposed an amendment to that budget as part of our own shadow budget.

That Conservative resolution, over the same time frame as the Labour leaderships proposal would have delivered 333 homes.

We worked with officers and had a fully costed scheme which would have delivered 76 MORE homes than the labour administration's proposals did.

That's 76 more families with a place to call home.

This was rejected by labour councillors who voted down our amendment and voted instead for their own proposals to build the lesser amount. Some of those people are still here now.

No one should be in any doubt about the commitment of this conservative group to provide the best for our residents, to make a difference and most of all get things done.

**Councillor Watkins asked the following question of Councillor Golby, Portfolio Holder of Housing and Communities:**

Although we have a number of Hostels within the Borough to help people who unfortunately find themselves needing Temporary Accommodation, we are still paying for in excess of 30 people per week to stop in B&Bs. Can the Portfolio Holder tell me roughly (I know this changes each week) how much this is costing the Borough, and does the Portfolio Holder find it acceptable that the Government allow this situation to continue?

**Councillor Golby responded as follows:**

How much this is costing the Borough

On an average of 30 people and bearing in mind we do receive funding to cover part of the cost, the net cost to the council is £10,707 per week.

It should be noted that for 2020/21, there have been considerably more placements, and rooms required, as a direct impact of the Pandemic however, we have continued to be successful in securing Government funding of around £738,000. This is to help with things like:

- Operation of the Rough Sleeper Hostel;
- To Deliver an enhanced Housing Solutions Service which is prioritising preventing homelessness wherever possible;
- Planning the conversion of our own Hostels to create self-contained accommodation;
- Removing shared bathrooms and kitchens, making them safer and more appropriate for homeless households.

These sorts of things will eventually reduce the need for Hotel use.

We have also secured funding from WCC to deliver support to homeless households, including a bespoke service targeted at local private sector Landlords, in an attempt, to prevent evictions following the relaxing of the evictions ban, and the reopening of the courts hearing repossession cases.

There has also been Covid Outbreak Management Fund Money from Government, totalling approximately £400,000 received by NBBC via Warwickshire County Council to assist with the 'Bringing Everyone In Campaign.

Do I find it acceptable that the Government allow this situation to continue?

The Government is not allowing homeless to continue.

There are many reasons why people become homeless, some intensely personal ones like sexual or domestic abuse in the home.

Homelessness is not a one size fits all problem that can be eradicated with a magic bullet.

Anyone who is involved in dealing with the issue of homelessness will tell you that it has occurred & will continue to occur in some way under successive governments.

Ultimately and with legislation like the homeless reduction act (clue is in the name) this Government's drive is to try as much as possible to prevent homelessness from happening in the first place.

I would be worried that if government did say they would pay in full every time an instance of homelessness happened that some councils would become complacent & wouldn't do everything, they could to prevent people and families becoming homeless, the net result being more people having to go through the trauma of losing their homes.

**Councillor Kondakor asked the following question of Councillor Golby, Portfolio Holder of Housing and Communities:**

We have a significant number of residents having difficulty using the doors to their council flats, (including some who can now only exit via patio doors) , after the doors have been replaced with very heavy fire doors.

Thankfully, the council has in the past, installed electrically assisted opening devices for some of the borough disabled residents, with this is now being done via the councils HEART project, but that is now failing to deliver, very hard to contact and in one case in my ward, a resident has been waiting many months, unable to go out, while for her door to be sorted out.

Can the cabinet member investigate what is going wrong with the Heart programme and tell my resident when they will have the door opener fitted?

**Councillor Golby responded as follows:**

I've spoken to several people about this, and we are only aware of 1 resident currently experiencing difficulties with the operation of the necessary instalment of fire doors to help to keep our residents safe.

Also, HEART is not delivering the project of electrical door assistance.

The role of HEART is to assess needs of those who are experiencing difficulties due to health and other medical conditions.

HEART assessed the tenant in question within a short timeframe of 4 days and referred on to the Capital Projects team to install an assisted door opener.

The Capital Projects Team engaged an appropriate contractor to carry out a site survey and to them undertake the installation of the mechanism.

Unfortunately, a delay has been experienced in terms of supply and workforce availability from the contractor – an issue we are increasingly experiencing due to COVID

We are assured that the works will be carried out within the next 2 weeks and their progress will be monitored.

In the meantime, the affected resident has been contacted and additional assistance has been offered by the Council to help the resident in any way possible whilst we are awaiting the completion of the works.

#### CL29 **Exclusion of Public and Press**

Under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, it being likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in paragraph (i) and (iv) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

Councillor Tromans moved the recommendations that the meeting moved to a private session and Councillor Wilson seconded the proposal. A vote was taken and the motion was carried. Councillor Kondakor asked for his vote to be recorded.

#### CL30 **Restructure of Management Team**

A report of the Corporate HR Business Partner, Human Resources, was considered.

Councillor Wilson moved the recommendations of the report and Councillor Golby seconded this. A vote was taken. The motion was carried.