

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

20th April 2022

A Council meeting of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council was held on Wednesday 20th April 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, J. Hartshorn, J. Kennaugh, K. Kondakor, S. Markham, B. Pandher, J. Sheppard, T. Sheppard, J. Singh, R. Smith, M. Tromans, M. Walsh, C. Watkins and K. Wilson.

Apologies were received from Councillors L. Hocking, N. Phillips, M. Rudkin, J. Sargeant, and A. Sargeant

CL77 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 14th February 2022 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 16th March 2022 be approved and signed by the Mayor subject to the following amendments:

Ordinary Meeting on the 14th February be amended to include 'Councillor J. Hartshorn' in the list of attendees and the responder to Councillor B. Beetham's Question be amended to 'Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate'

Extraordinary Meeting on the 16th March 2022 be amended to include after announcements 'Councillor K. Kondakor left the meeting'

CL78 **Declarations of Interests**

RESOLVED that the Declarations of Interests for this meeting are as set out in the schedule attached to these minutes.

CL79 **Announcements**

The Mayor announced Om Gurung had informed him that on the 24th April there will be a ceremony for the 7th Anniversary of the unveiling of the monument and 100th anniversary of the Gurkhas joining the British Army.

The Leader put forward a formal thanks to the members who were standing down in this years election after a four year term. These members are Councillors L. Hocking, A. Llewellyn-Nash, H. Walmsley, J. Sargeant, A. Sargeant and M. Rudkin and wished them all the best for the future.

The Leader wished to place on record his thanks to all the officers for their hard work this year. Councillor C. Watkins also echoed these sentiments.

CL80 **Public Participation**

Mr Sam Margrave submitted the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate:

Local people, every one of us, is facing a cost-of-living crisis meaning electric and gas bills, petrol, and the price of an everyday shopping basket is rising. While the Government is offering £150 to each resident, this will hardly make a dent. Meaning many have to choose between eating and heating. This will only get worse as we all feel repercussions from ongoing geopolitics. What is the Council doing extra (working with others or using its budget) beyond and on top of the Government's £150 or existing projects, to protect and make sure children, the vulnerable and local families aren't going hungry and can meet their bills while we all weather this storm of rising prices (often beyond anything some of us have seen in our life time)?

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

Mr Margrave is quite right in his question when he says that the cost of living has worsened for many of our people, which is really code for saying that serious inflation is once again affecting our economy. There is no doubt, and we are acutely aware that inflation is a terrible burden on our residents, and it affects each and every one of us, particularly the poorest and those on fixed incomes. Inflation reduces purchasing power for food and clothing, increases the cost of heating homes, and makes the daily commute and the school run more expensive. And of course, it robs people of their savings and after they've worked for years to build up an investment for the future. But because Mr Margrave has asked such a high level and a broad question, I feel that the first part of my answer must be to manage his expectations. As is implied in the question, inflation, and cost of living pressures we face are affected global and national forces; war in eastern Europe, global supply chain issues, lack of productivity, the after effects of the crises, and ill-considered green levees are all driving price inflation. The solutions to these problems require action at the very least at the national level, and in many cases will be decided far beyond our shores. Set against this Mr Mayor, this Council is a lower tier authority with a very specifically defined set of functions, so it has to be recognised up front that our scope for action is very limited. This administration has already had to take tough budget choices to reset its medium-term financial plan in the light of the black holes we inherited upon taking office, and we are not immune to these inflationary pressures ourselves. There is very little scope for additional spending on top of the budget that we announced just two months ago. So again, I want to make sure that Mr Margrave's expectations are managed to a realistic level, we cannot responsibly promise large-scale programmes of relief to solve cost of living problems with powers or money that we do not possess. Now, having said all that Mr Mayor, where we can help, we will. In the budget we announced we have already reduced car parking charges so that a trip to town is far less expensive than it was. We've kept our Council Tax precepts to the

lowest sustainable level. We've announced £345,000 for our homelessness reduction funding. And we put £75,000 of the new burdens funding towards a youth employment scheme to help our young people get into work. Our Communities team have moved the Citizens Advice Bureau into the Town Hall, so that residents can have better access to a wider range of advice and be signposted to those other agencies that are better placed to offer advice.

On the Housing side we have received £2.5 million of further government grants to assist with energy efficiency of homes within the Borough, both private and Council. We are working to make sure that all our new housing is as close to passive house standards as possible. In addition we are retrofitting as much of our housing stock as we can within our existing budgets with external insulation and boiler upgrades, so the bills of our tenants are reduced. And we've also offered some extra advice to residents for getting ECO Flex grants to help with their energy efficiency.

Of course, Mr Mayor, with our ongoing Council Tax support scheme we have provided a total of £9 million of payments through the financial year that has just gone. Finally, Mr Mayor, I'm very glad that the question referred to the £150 energy rebate scheme from the government, because it allows me to confirm that we have made the first payment of that grant so totalling £3.45 million to 23,000 of our A to D Council Taxpayers, who paid by direct debit on April 1st which should be crediting their accounts from today, so if you haven't got it let us know. There is another quarter of a million pounds in the discretionary scheme and we will be processing the payments for those payments that were made in the middle of April shortly, however, to be able to do that we do need the bank details of our taxpayers, 25% of our Council Tax A to D payers don't actually pay by direct debit, so we don't have your bank details, so I would encourage all taxpayers in this borough to set up a direct debit so that we can actually make this payment to you.

So, there you are Mr Mayor, we do have to be realistic about what we can do as a Council, but we are doing quite a lot as it is.

Mrs Michele Kondakor submitted the following question of the Portfolio Holder of Planning and Regulation:

It is very disappointing to see the state of the path, from the end of Oaston Road to the bridge across the flood relief and on to Horeston Grange. Having seen the building of Crossing Gates completed, I was looking forward to seeing the path improved but, instead, it has deteriorated. I checked the situation back in October 2020, when the planning department confirmed that as part of the planning permission 'the Developer has agreed to hand over a small area of land to the front of the site in order that the current footpath access which crosses over the Flood Relief Channel can be partially widened.' Can the Portfolio Holder for planning explain how we can move this forward with the various stakeholders?

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

Thank you, Mr Mayor, and thank you for the question, Mrs Kondakor. This issue is the subject of a Section 106 agreement between Warwickshire County Council as the Highways Authority and the Developer themselves.

As an update I can confirm that the Developer and the Highways Authority are currently finalising details for the delivery of the improvements, and all parties are eager to proceed with the works which should be agreed shortly, and then they will be carried out by the Developer and they will be a 2.3 metre footpath, a 0.5m border and the remainder being low-level shrubs.

Brian Walmsley submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation:

Councillor Richard Smith should stop blaming innocent parties, and should actually be "*blaming our MPs for destroying our precious green belt*" they are part of the Conservative government that insisted upon a '*duty to cooperate*', at the time local Conservative MP's Jones, Byles and Pawsey, as usual, failed the people of Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington.

I guess Cllr Smith is clueless that his Conservative government's NPPF 2012 document set out requirements for reclassification of Green Belt and the need for councils to "maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land".

I guess Cllr Smith is clueless that the NPPF also identified the housing targets, this council had to achieve.

- Bulkington MP Pawsey, Nuneaton MP Jones and Bedworth MP Byles all voted **IN FAVOUR** of the housing numbers in the NPPF 2012 [2]

The recent local Conservatives "*plea to stop big developments while Coventry City Council's housing need is properly assessed was snubbed by the [Conservative] secretary of state*", who refused to remove the overspill homes due to the "*Localism Act's duty to co-operate. This duty requires councils to consult and engage with neighbouring authorities in the preparation of local plans*" [1].

- Bulkington MP Pawsey, Nuneaton MP Jones and Bedworth MP Byles all voted **IN Favour** of the additional 4020 houses in the Localism Act 2011 [3]

Either they did not understand what they were voting for; or they did not care about Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington; or alternatively they were merely puppets doing as they were told?

In March 2017 Labour called for "*the three [Conservative] MPs that represent the residents of this borough to support [the council] in our fight against any imposition of further housing from the Conservative led councils across Warwickshire*" [4]. This fell on ignoring Conservative MP ears, probably because that was what they had voted for.

In June 2019, the Local Plan was adopted, after acceptance by the Conservative government inspector.

This Conservative Council has since published "*Borough Plan Review Issues and Options 2021.pdf*" in which they write that they actually acknowledge their government failings to the people of Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington: -

At last NBBC Conservatives accept that their government are responsible for the number of houses demanded!

At last NBBC Conservatives accept their government laws forced local councils to take additional numbers of houses!

At last NBBC Conservatives accept local councils cannot do anything without a change of law!

You local Conservative "promised" to submit your shiny "new Borough Plan" to the Secretary of State in July 2022...

That would certainly appear to be yet another Conservative party lie to the good people of Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington.

This Conservative council either lied to the people, or were naïve enough to think laws did not apply to them (Conservative party theme there!) or simply just did not understand, whichever the reason it shows a complete lack of ability in every respect, you local Conservatives should accept your failures and apologise to the people of Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington, as it is you Conservatives at government and you Conservatives at NBBC that are wholly responsible for foisting a fourth rate Borough Plan on our Borough.

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

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I wouldn't normally respond to statements but this one is so far off the mark it was painful to listen to. Before I go on I would need to correct Mr. Walmsley, we don't have an MP Byles for Bedworth, I would have thought you would have known that it is Craig Tracy who is MP.

I'm assuming Mr. Walmsley's renewed interest in the Borough Plan has something to do with the fact that his satnav has led him to Bulkington, and he has been speaking to residents there. I just hope he remembers to apologise to the good people of Bulkington on his travels for the irreversible damage his party's Borough Plan has done to the village and its greenbelt. Hopefully, as I've been a resident of Bulkington for 40 years, mine will be one of the doors he knocks with an apology.

This is a typical Labour response so often used when they mess things up and it follows a very familiar pattern. First of all, Labour takes on a big project, usually they make a complete hash of it. Then they say it was someone else's fault because they made us do it. Finally, in this case they admit they have produced a fourth rate Borough Plan and blame us for not putting it right quickly enough which is totally unbelievable.

Mr. Walmsley's statement conveniently leaves out all of the really important facts. The Borough Plan was totally and wholly put together by the now ousted Labour administration, and Labour alone are to blame because no one else was involved in creating that plan. Fact two: because Labour didn't attend meetings to stand up for the residents of Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington they found themselves forced to take 4,000 overflow houses from Coventry that decimated much precious greenbelt in Bulkington, in Hawkesbury, in Golf Drive, in Whitestone, and the Woodlands in Bedworth to name just a few areas. And by the way, this was the same Woodlands that in an election manifesto Labour promised to protect from any sort of development. Labour were the only members to vote to adopt the Borough Plan, and so it's without doubt totally theirs. Not Conservative, not Green, nor the Independents – Labour.

Having adopted the Borough Plan which they labelled as a third rate at the time, but I see they have now relegated it to a fourth rate Borough Plan, they made a promise to start an immediate review, guess what, two years later we were still waiting for that review. Within two months of taking control last May, this Conservative administration launched a review with a public consultation. We initially set an ambitious target, which unfortunately has been slightly extended due to outside circumstances that are beyond our control, but it will still be delivered within the time frame which if Labour had done what they promised would have seen us adopting a new plan about now.

On taking control this Conservative administration withdrew from the memorandum of understanding signed by Labour that adds 4,000 homes to the plan. This sends a clear message to our partner Local Authorities that this Conservative administration will be doing things very differently and will be standing up for the residents of Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington to protect our greenbelt, not build on it.

Apparently, it's now our MP's fault that Labour produced a fourth rate Borough Plan. These are the same MPs that stood side by side with residents to oppose the disastrous plan when it was in the making. And they've lobbied in Parliament to try and achieve a moratorium on major development, while the inflated housing numbers in our review were sorted out.

Finally, Mr. Mayor, I would urge Mr. Walmsley to think very carefully before putting pen to paper in an attempt to deflect blame in the future and consider it in the light of day before pressing that send button. The only thing in his statement that I accept is that the Borough Plan is fourth rate, and it's solely the work of the previous Labour administration, it's down to them and them alone and this Conservative administration is getting on with the job of putting things right, not just in relation to this plan but in many areas right across the authority after decades of Labour mismanagement.

Mrs Kathleen Price submitted the following question for the Leader of the Council:

Many residents in Nuneaton and Bedworth have concerns, regarding the cost to themselves, in council tax, for some of the current proposals by The Council. One of these proposals is to rename The Roanne Ringway. It is noted that at a Cabinet Meeting on 9 March, The Council were asked for the

costing of this proposal which was voted for unanimously. Councillor Kris Wilson stated, "I think it would be nominal in terms of fees and charges". Is The Council now able to assure residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth, that the re-naming of The Roanne Ringway has been fully costed, and they are able to divulge to the residents the actual cost and the full legal process to achieve this.

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

Thank you Mr. Mayor, and I thank Mrs Price for her question. It is interesting to see that the Labour party are asking questions from the public, yet her Labour Council colleagues here tonight haven't asked a single one on the order paper.

Following years of decline in Civic Pride under the last Labour administration, this new Conservative administration is acting to restore pride in our Borough. As we all know, Her Majesty the Queen has achieved an historic milestone never to be seen in our or indeed probably in future lifetimes again, 70 years on the throne, imagine that Mr. Mayor, 70 years in one job, and she still believes in her solemn vow to our nation to serve and protect our way of life just as much now as she did in 1952.

To address the cost directly, we will, by law, need to advertise the change by placing an advert in the newspaper, this will cost £169 plus VAT. The actual legal mechanisms was in the Cabinet papers if Mrs Price would like to read that. In addition, we will have to replace eight road signs. Each sign will cost £60 to purchase and £70 to install. This means the total cost will come to £1,242.80 or thereabouts with some other Officer time possibly.

When you consider that we are celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, 70 years, or to put it another way 25,567 days that equates to just 0.048 pence per day. I think that it worth it to commemorate such a momentous occasion, Mr. Mayor.

CL81 **Questions by Members**

Councillor Kyle Evans asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities:

To ask the Deputy Leader of the Council to provide Council with an update on the provision of Changing Places toilets across the Borough

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor C. Golby, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities responded as follows:

Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and thank you for your question as well. Before I make any comment on this, just to say that I've gone through soe of the old papers and some of the videos to check facts for accuracy before anybody wants to jump out of their seat.

At a Full Council meeting back in early 2018 I brought up the lack of Changing Places facilities in our Borough has been an issue. Changing Places are more than standard disabled toilets they are accessible toilets which meets the needs of disabled children and adults with complex care needs who require care support appropriate equipment like hoists or changing platforms and more space when using the bathroom. Some of our residents are physically unable to use the bathroom unaided or at all, so having special adult Changing Places facilities to either help with this or allow them to be changed in a clean and dignified manner.

Back at the meeting in 2018 when the suggestion of these facilities was raised, we, the Conservatives, were immediately mocked by the then Portfolio Holder ex-Councillor Barry Longden who said amongst other things, and again I did check the video for accuracy, that he thought the fairies had come down and sprinkled us with fairy dust to give the Conservatives a social conscience. Despite the derogatory comments from and being laughed at by several members of the then controlling Labour group, some of which are standing for election at the moment. This Conservative administration were determined that we should bring these facilities to the Borough.

In 2020, at another Council Scrutiny meeting I again proposed we take the issue of the lack of facilities to a Full Council for a further discussion. Despite the suggestion being backed by the Conservatives, every single Councillor from the then controlling Labour group at that meeting voted against my proposals, so they were again blocked.

Since the first suggestion in 2018 the overarching attitude from the Labour group when they were in control was to dismiss Changing Places proposals rather than find ways to make them happen.

Fast forward to 2022, the Conservatives are in charge at the Town Hall, one of the first things we did was to start to investigate ways we could provide these facilities in our Borough. We looked at feasibility, deliverability, funding streams both internal and external and we applied for available grants. And I am very pleased to say that on 24th March this year, 2022 we received confirmation from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities that we've been successful in our grant application. The grant application to support the installation of Changing Places facilities was accepted and we were awarded £100,000. That means that we can install facilities in both Nuneaton and Bedworth. Perhaps, as naming is such a hot topic at the moment, we should call them the Fairy Dust Facilities or the Longden Lavatories.

In all seriousness though I've said it before and I'll say it again, not everybody is born with disabilities, we are only one bad accident away from needing these facilities ourselves because of permanent life-changing injuries. Anyone that gets in a car or crosses the street is at risk. So, these facilities, to put it very simply are a lifeline for people with disabilities and families with caring responsibilities. No one should have to be laid down on a public toilet floor to be changed, and that will soon become a thing of the past in our Borough thanks to the hard work done since the Conservatives took over at this Town Hall. I would again like to echo what we've said earlier about the effort and time that officers have put in to make things like this a reality, because this

isn't just something that we did for political gain, this is actually for our residents and it's always been for the residents, unfortunately, that seems to have been missed up until this point.

Councillor Kyle Evans asked a supplementary question:

I thank the Deputy Leader for her response and it is great news for this Borough and I understand that one of those toilets in Bedworth may be located in the Miners Welfare Park, but that's obviously to be confirmed. In light of the recent comments made by the North Warwickshire and Bedworth constituency Labour Party's Disability Officer on social media, does the Deputy Leader agree that this administration has a far better track record in providing enhanced facilities for disabled people in the Borough.

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

Thanks, and yes, I have seen some of the comments that have been put on social media by this particular individual, and when I challenged him on what he had done as the Disability Officer with regards to the comments that were made at the time when we proposed these, I was told to prove that it happened. Well, it is all in the matter of public record, there are videos out there, you can go and look for them yourself.

So, as I've mentioned before there was plenty of opportunities in the last four years to bring these plans forward and to install these facilities in our Borough, but the ruling Labour group simply did not want to do that. They did not do it, they made no effort to bring these things forward, and ultimately it was the disabled residents that lost out, plus their families and their carers. We also lost out on an economic level because the purple pound as it's called, is quite significant. People with disabilities will shop where the facilities are to encourage them to shop. The purple pound is worth about £270 million or it was pre-COVID, so we're missing out on that. So again, there is an economic benefit as well as a moral duty to do these sorts of things. So, the question does remain, and it is quite shameful that what did Labour do to install these facilities, well the answer is nothing. The Conservative group have done more in ten months than Labour did in ten years on this, and so categorically we do have a better track record on this, and I think considering we've got £100,000 grant money, we can say we've got a hundred thousand times better a track record on this than the previous Labour administration.

Councillor Keith Kondakor submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Public Services:

For the last decade we have had considerable housebuilding in the Weddington and St Nicolas Wards. One of many impacts of this has been the reduced reliability of the Wednesday waste and recycling collections which serve this expanding area. The problems have become worse as we have had impacts of the ongoing pandemic and industrial action by some of the Coventry City council based recycling lorry drivers.

Requests have been made for the routes to be reconfigured for several years and in June 2021 officers produced plans which showed part of Weddington being transferred to the Tuesday routes. Can the portfolio holder progress this stalled plan or rapidly provide alternative relief for residents on the Wednesday collections, some of which have missed two recycling collections in a row?

Councillor S. Markham, Portfolio Holder for Public Services, responded as follows:

Thank you Mr. Mayor and thank you Councillor Kondakor for the question. Labour's massive development in Saint Nicolas and Weddington has caused a number of pressures on the east of Nuneaton in terms of services and infrastructure, all of which Labour failed to plan for when dumping 6,000 houses in the area. It has been left to this Conservative administration to deal with this Labour's legacy of failure on a number of front and sadly this also includes the waste rounds and we now are at the absolute limits of our current capacity.

In our budget for a better borough that this Conservative Council passed in February, we have faced the challenge head on and have budgeted for a new collection round, equipment and crew. This is a significant investment by this Conservative Council in services that our residents desperately need in Saint Nicolas and Weddington. Unlike Councillor Kondakor we are not carping from the side lines, we are getting on with the job of building a better Borough for all. Labour and the Greens fail to support this extra investment in our services. This will all tie in with the reconfiguration work for waste and recycling collections that we are currently undertaking.

We are now working with amended route schedules and maps which account for the new builds including project schemes within the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council area and we are currently testing the routes to ensure they are achievable. Once we are satisfied with this, communications will commence to inform residents of changes and prepare amended information accordingly. We are therefore looking for amended routes to commence later this year.

Councillor K. Kondakor asked a supplementary question as follows:

Thank you for your answer but it's very similar to the answers I got a year ago when Labour ran the Council. We clearly understand that there is a problem with the length of routes, and we have built almost all of our houses, about 85% of the new houses have gone into Weddington St Nicolas, so as a temporary measure I would like a bit of that area to be collected on the Tuesday round. That would at least balance things out before you got the long-term solution. Your officers keep giving us the same thing, it'll be in six months, it'll be in three months, we need some relief now, and if you cannot fix this can you give residents £10 a collection back for each time you miss? Because Weddington and St Nicolas pay an awful lot in green bin charges and they're getting the worse service in the Borough.

Councillor S. Markham responded as follows:

Well just in response, why is it that you actually voted against us for the budget when we applied for the extra bin round.

Councillor J. Clarke asked the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation

Earlier this year, this new Conservative administration listened to the concerns of residents across Nuneaton and Bedworth - including those of my residents in St Nicolas - about the nuisance sale of cars by the side of the highway and introduced a Public Space Protection Order to combat this activity.

Could the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulation give an update on where we are with the introduction of the PSPO and what actions are being taken?

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

Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and thank you Councillor Clarke for the question. These Public Space Protection Orders are important tools that enable us to effectively enforce to protect our public spaces and stop them being spoilt for the many by just what is probably just a few individuals.

I am very happy to let Councillor Clarke and the many residents who raised this issue know, that the Public Space Protection Order covering Commercial Car Sales on the public highway is now fully in force. Seven-day notices were immediately served on all vehicles that were in contravention of the order on the day it came into force.

I am very pleased to report that on the final day of notice all the vehicles identified were removed from the highway and so far, there have been no further breaches of the order.

Signage is now in place at the known locations to make commercial traders aware if they present cars for sale on the side of the highway, we will use our powers to enforce the order, and they could be liable for fines of up to £1,000 per enforcement.

I would add a note that tonight a Member has raised with me that they've seen a car appear in Bedworth so I'd ask all Members that if you see a car for sale on the side of the highway take a snapshot, report it as a Member on the portal and we will get straight on to enforcing it.

Councillor B. Beetham asked the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Health and Environment:

As the portfolio holder for Health & Environment, I know you are aware of residents and myself asking for new equipment in Stockingford Recreation

Ground. Can you please let residents of Kingswood know when the new play equipment in Stockingford Recreation Ground is due to be installed and what the council are going to do to make sure that parks which under Labour's previous administration haven't gotten new equipment in years are brought up to standard and are maintained?

Councillor J. Gutteridge, Portfolio Holder for Health and Environment, responded as follows:

Thank you, Mr. Mayor and thank you Councillor Beetham for the question. In the emergency budget passed by this Council in June following this Conservative administration taking office. We passed plans for new play equipment to be installed in Bulkington, Keresley and Stockingford. These projects were funded by money that should have been spent years ago on better services for our local people and children, but the last Labour administration squirrelled away and failed to use for local need. As the new Portfolio Holder, I found that this was shameful and was glad that we could right the wrong left to us by Labour.

Following the passage of the emergency budget I am delighted to advise you that additional play equipment, recently discussed, will be fitted in Stockingford Recreation Ground, week commencing the 2nd May, subject to weather conditions. It should be completed within that week, but I will keep you informed of progress.

When I became the Portfolio Holder for Health and Environment, I was dismayed to find the lack of strategy and direction in the department left by the last Labour administration. I have spent a lot of time working with officers to start putting some structure into the department. To this end, we have recently appointed consultants to assist the Parks and Greenspace Team with the development of a new overarching Greenspace Strategy, alongside the new Tree and Biodiversity Recovery Strategies and refreshed Play and Allotment Strategies. These will provide a clear direction for all our Parks and Greenspaces and their facilities, for the next decade.

CL82 Special Urgency Decisions

The following special urgency decisions be noted:

- a) Nuneaton and Bedworth Local Government Boundary Review – Cabinet 9th March
- b) Building a Better Borough – Cabinet 9th March

CL83 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 11th February and 18th March 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.

CL84 **Timetable of Meetings 2022/23 and 2023/24**

The Director of Planning and Regulation submitted a report to council to approve the upcoming committee meetings for the year 2022/23 and provisional dates for 2023/24.

Councillor K. Wilson moved the recommendations with an amendment to Timetable of Meeting 2023/24 Annual Council date be amended to 17th May 2023. This was seconded by Councillor S. Croft.

RESOLVED that

- a) the timetable of meetings for Council, Cabinet, Committees and Overview and Scrutiny panels for 2022/23 and 2023/24 be approved with the amendment of Annual Council date being amended to 17th May 2023; and
- b) delegated powers be granted to the Director – Planning and Regulation in consultation with the relevant chair, to change meetings if, for unforeseen reasons, it becomes necessary to amend a date.

CL85 **Annual OSP Reports**

The Annual OSP reports submitted by the Chairs of the three OSPs were presented for Council's consideration.

RESOLVED that the reports be noted

CL86 **Recommendations from Cabinet and Other Committees**

a) **Mayoral Protocol**

The review of the Mayor's Protocol had taken place in the Constitution Review Working Party where a number of changes had been approved and recommended by the Audit and Standards Committee on the 11th January 2022 for Council approval.

Councillor J. Kennaugh moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor L. Downs

RESOLVED that the constitution be amended accordingly.

b) **The Code of Conduct**

The Code of conduct was taken to the Constitution Review Working Party with a view to align it with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct subject to the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's Code of Conduct retaining the non-pecuniary interests in relation to Planning and Licensing matters. Councillor J. Kennaugh moved the recommendation made at Audit and Standards Committee on the 11th January 2022 for Council's consideration. This was seconded by Councillor B. Beetham

RESOLVED that the Code of Conduct as set out in Appendix A of the Audit and Standards Report be adopted, subject to the modifications recommended in Appendix B of the Audit and Standards report.

c) E-Petitions Scheme

The Petitions Scheme was reviewed at the Constitution Review Working Party to consider the introduction of an E-Petitions Scheme where several changes were then included in the final draft presented and approved by Audit and Standards Committee for Council's consideration. Councillor J. Kennaugh moved the recommendations made at Audit and Standards Committee on 11th January 2022. These were seconded by Councillor L. Downs.

RESOLVED that the Constitution be amended accordingly

d) The Complaints Procedure

At an Audit and Standards sub-committee held on the 20th December 2021, the complaints against Members protocol was reviewed and a number of changes were presented and recommended from Audit and Standards Committee for Councils consideration. Councillor J. Kennaugh moved the recommendations, these were seconded by Councillor J. Hartshorn

RESOLVED that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

e) Nuneaton and Bedworth Local Government Boundary Review

The Chair of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Electoral Review Cabinet Working Party, Councillor K. Wilson, presented to Council the proposed number of Councillors and forecasted electorate, ready for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)

RESOLVED that

- i) the 'Council Size' document included at Appendix A of the report, be approved for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The document requests four additional Councillors, resulting in a total of 38 councillors, elected in halves, representing 19 electoral wards in future;
- ii) the forecasted electorate methodology and proposed electorate per polling district be approved for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England; and
- iii) delegated authority be given to the Director for Planning and Regulation to submit a supplementary document to this response (following consultation with the Leader) to ensure the most up-to-date planning permissions and live applications can be considered when submitted the final electorate forecasts

f) Building a Better Borough

The Leader of the Council, Councillor K. Wilson moved the recommendations made at Cabinet for the adoption of the finalised Building a Better Borough Corporate Plan following consultation with stakeholders, elected members and the public. This was seconded by Councillor C. Golby.

RESOLVED that the Building a Better Borough Corporate Plan and Delivery Plan be adopted.

Mayor