

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO BE ASKED BY COUNCILLOR KLEIN OF THE
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE AND CULTURE AT THE MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON 14 MAY 2018**

Following the recent report from 'Fields in Trust' recently which states that parks and green spaces save the NHS £111 million per year, does the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture agree that this shows the importance of continued investment in parks and green spaces across Nottingham?

Response:

Thank you for question, our public parks and open spaces play a major part in helping to shape our City, improve the quality of life and play a central role in making our City a great Place. Fields in Trust are absolutely right that our parks particularly in large urban conurbations do save our NHS huge sums of money.

In our often very heavily developed and crowded city, the parks and open spaces provide clean fresh air in which to play sport, get fit, meet with friends, attend memorable events and they also provide a place to appreciate local heritage, engage with nature and relax. As a result, it comes as no surprise that they are much loved and well used by our citizens

The report from the Fields in Trust now confirms that Parks and Green Spaces provide both social and health benefits for those that access them. This assumption is now supported by a growing body of robust research, which identifies that high quality green space brings considerable benefits to the local economy, to the environment and to people's physical and mental health in particular in terms of reducing obesity, decreasing the risk of coronary heart disease and strokes and improvements in mental health and wellbeing. The research has shown that residents in high 'greenery' environments were 40% less likely to be overweight and obese as those in the lowest greenery category.

Around 40 years ago parks seriously suffered from a considerable lack of investment through Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) imposed by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government. It took parks right across the country 30 years to begin to recover from that.

Yet again our parks have been attacked through government austerity since 2010. There is no national voice as the Conservative Government have abolished a number of organisations that championed open and green spaces. As a response to a Parliamentary Public Inquiry in July 2015 which declared the country's parks are at a "tipping point" the government set up a Parks Action Group with *no funding*.

Whilst some of our major cities are having to make major cuts, looking at outsourcing some parks with a dowry, looking at full cost recovery and even selling off parks. Even the Heritage Lottery Fund, that have been a saviour to parks are looking at reshaping their funding priorities which would include stopping the Parks for People

Programme. This fund has been a very successful Parks Regeneration Fund, being the primary driver behind the Parks Renaissance over the last 20 years.

In Nottingham our members particularly Labour members have prioritised our parks. The Parks Service have worked hard to drive out the neglect and abandonment that decimated the country's parks during the late 1970s and 1980s.

Thanks to the support of the Councils Area Capital Funds matched against Heritage Lottery Fund, Wren, Sport England, Football Foundation, NHS Funds, Police Crime Commissionaire Funds, ERDF, S106 many other funds.

The Parks Team have secured over £38million and helped Nottingham to continue with our Parks improvement programme at a time when many others have already stopped investing or reduced service delivery.

The Parks Service now brings in 91% of service costs through commercial activities.

The Service generates £12.19 external capital funding for every £1 of Council funds.

A decade of transformation in service delivery, quality and culture has created a thriving, sustainable service fit to grow, build, maintain and activate Nottingham's parks. External funds totalling almost £38,000,000, alongside ambitious commercialisation and dynamic partnership working, have revitalised parks.

Green spaces in Nottingham which now flies 56 Green Flags, the highest number in the country, 79 new playgrounds, gyms and skate parks, and restored heritage sites treasured by an active and engaged community.

Political support is robust, and public satisfaction has climbed from 76% to 94%. As a result our parks have once again become places to be proud of.

In terms of Fields in Trust, we have 6 dedicated of our parks and this dedication helps to protect these sites for the future; King George V Playing Fields, Victoria Park, Jubilee Fields 2012, Vernon Park, Woodthorpe Grange, Centenary Fields 2017, Victoria Embankment, and Bulwell Forest.

We mustn't be complacent though the national picture is dire and the government continue to unfairly exert austerity towards large northern urban local authorities like Nottingham.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO BE ASKED BY COUNCILLOR CORALL JENKINS OF
THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ADULTS AND HEALTH AT THE MEETING OF
THE CITY COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON 14 MAY 2018**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health explain what the process is for the removal of services by council officers to vulnerable adults when consultation with the service user or their families has not taken place? In addition, if a process has not been followed and the vulnerable person is deemed to be at risk, how is this dealt with to support the vulnerable adult?

Response:

Within Adult Social Care, reviews are conducted in line with our duties under the Care Act 2014. It is therefore legislation that drives practice. Reviews are conducted with citizens and their family/carers where appropriate.

Changes to policy (such as the recent transport policy) which may change the offer to citizens are always subject to a full consultation process prior to implementation.

If someone has concerns that the right process has not been followed they can get in touch with the Adult Social Care health and care point on [0300 131 0300](tel:03001310300).

There is also a statutory complaints process if they are not satisfied with the response.