

REPORT OF THE LEADER

REVISED PORTFOLIO ROLES AND EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS

1 SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for revised executive arrangements within the City Council.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

IT IS RECOMMENDED that:-

- (i) a nine member Executive be approved which will meet in public (save for exempt items) with attendance and speaking rights throughout all parts of Executive Board meetings given to the Leaders of minority groups;
- (ii) the composition of the Executive Board and revised portfolio roles and responsibilities as set out in Appendix 1 to this report be approved, and take effect immediately following this meeting;
- (iii) the role of Executive Assistant to Portfolio Holders be established in accordance with the roles and responsibilities, and nominations set out in Appendix 2 to this report; that the principle of Special Responsibility Allowances being payable for the duties of these posts at a level equivalent to those payable to chairs of the main regulatory committees be supported and funded from the existing Members' Services budget, and the Independent Remuneration Panel be requested to give consideration to Special Responsibility Allowances, at that level, for these roles;
- (iv) that the vacancies created in the Overview and Scrutiny and Standards Committees, as a result of the changes to the Executive Board, be filled by nominations to be advised at the meeting;
- (v) that the Constitution be revised accordingly.

3 BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

Background

- 3.1 I consider it appropriate to review the Council's executive arrangements for the following reasons:-
- (i) the commencement of a new four-year term with a new team of elected members, a new Chief Executive and restructured senior management team. In looking to improve both the effectiveness of the Council and outcomes for residents, the current structure has been revised to ensure it is fit for purpose.
 - (ii) the Labour Manifesto sets out to build on past achievements, has established new priorities around climate change and a stronger emphasis on neighbourhood management and regeneration. The plans and policies in the manifesto were adopted at the last Council meeting and these now need to be reflected in the executive structure and portfolio responsibilities.
 - (iii) an increasing focus on Adult Services and Children's Services since the last time the structure was significantly changed needs to be fully accounted for in the executive structure, with additional support being provided;
 - (iv) the views expressed in the Council's Peer Review raised issues about the composition and constitution of the Executive;
 - (v) the findings and recommendations of the recent Corporate Assessment and Joint Area Review, which required early attention to be paid to clarifying the respective roles of councillors and officers at all levels of the organisation.

Single Party Executive

- 3.2 My first proposal is that the Council agree a nine member Executive Board, discontinuing the role of Executive member without portfolio, whilst granting attendance and speaking rights throughout Board meetings to the Leaders of minority groups. Nottingham is now unusual amongst unitary authorities, where one party has a majority, in still having minority group representation on their Executive. Originally members took the view that minority group representation

helped ensure effective accountability. However, this view is not now widely shared in local government. Both minority groups have expressed no benefit in having a place on the Executive Board and a similar view was expressed in the IDeA Peer Review of the authority published in 2005.

- 3.3 Representation for the minority groups would be maintained by giving the Leaders of both groups the right to attend and speak at Executive Board meetings, including when exempt items are being considered.
- 3.4 The proposed composition of the Executive Board and the new Executive Portfolios are set out in Appendix 1. The proposals assume that individual portfolios will be taken by the Deputy Leader and myself.
- 3.5 Executive government arrangements under the Local Government Act 2000, prescribed the size, (a maximum of 10 members) of the Executive and significantly concentrated decision making responsibility on it. Over the past four years, the responsibilities of some executive members have increased significantly. The proposed changes to portfolios address this, in part, but there remains a need for further support to some portfolios, and the following proposal seeks to address this.

Executive Assistants to Portfolio Holders

- 3.6 Other large Local Authorities, for example, Westminster, Manchester and Leeds City Councils, have adopted a system of assistants to support Executive members in fulfilling their responsibilities. Although only Executive members can formally make decisions and take part in the Executive Board decision-making, assistants can work with officers, represent the Executive members at meetings and offer advice and support. The establishment of Executive Assistant posts will also offer non-executive members the opportunity to develop experience in the work of the executive, and increase the number of members with a detailed understanding of how major Council services work.
- 3.7 The government increasingly recognises the importance of developing strong local governance of Children's and Adult Services and the workload of these portfolios is reflecting this. Equally, Neighbourhood Regeneration is a key manifesto priority which will

require a high level of Executive resource. Initial allocations of work to Executive Assistants may reflect these priorities but it is essential that a flexible approach is taken to meeting Executive needs.

- 3.8 The proposed generic responsibilities for Executive Assistants are set out in Appendix 2 to this report. Specific tasks and reporting arrangements for each assistant will be determined by me in discussion with the relevant Portfolio Holder. I also propose that the posts attract Special Responsibility Allowances, at a level equivalent to those given to chairs of the main regulatory committees, funded from within the Members' Services budget and recommend that this proposal be considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Consequential changes

- 3.9 Under the City Council's executive arrangements, an Executive member may not sit on Overview and Scrutiny Committees and only one Executive member can sit on the Standards Committee. Accordingly, the changes proposed for membership of Executive Board will require consequential changes, as follows:-

Councillor Urquhart will cease to be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Panels under it, the Call-in Sub-Committee and a substitute for the Serving the Adult Community Standing Panel;

Councillor Parbutt will cease to be a member of the Performance and Resources Standing Panel and a substitute for the Call-in Sub-Committee;

Councillors Urquhart and Clark are members of the Standard Committee. There is a limitation in the City Council's constitution of one Executive member on that Committee.

Council will need to approve new membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Standards Committee, and nominations will be received at the meeting. Membership of Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the Call-in Sub-Committee will be dealt with by the parent Committee.

- 3.10 As a result of changes to the Executive further changes to committee membership may be requested by groups, and these will be reported to the meeting.

4 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

None.

5 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING REPORT

Nottingham City Council Constitution – Adopted July 2005
IDeA Peer Review published December 2005
Local Government Act 2000

**COUNCILLOR JON COLLINS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

COMPOSITION AND REVISED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

COMPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

Councillor Collins (Chair)	Councillor Parbutt
Councillor Edwards (Vice Chair)	Councillor Trimble
Councillor Bull	Councillor Unczur
Councillor Campbell	Councillor Urquhart
Councillor Clark	

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS - GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to their specific portfolio responsibilities all portfolio holders also have the following common responsibilities:-

- 1 Sharing responsibility with the Leader, Deputy Leader and other members of the Executive for the Executive business of the Council.
- 2 Promoting and being accountable for the services in their portfolio within the Council and the City as a whole, and nationally and internationally as required, representing the Council's views on matters of corporate or strategic policy within their portfolio.
- 3 Ensuring that the executive functions within the portfolio are performed in accordance with approved Council policies and strategies, and to the highest ethical standards.
- 4 Below the level of Key Decisions, and where not otherwise delegated, taking executive decisions in relation to executive functions within their portfolio, and in accordance with constitutional requirements. A portfolio holder may delegate decisions in respect of matters within their portfolio to an officer (subject to the financial limits set out in the constitution).
- 5 Reporting to the Leader, Executive Board and Overview and Scrutiny bodies on the performance of their portfolio, as reasonably required.
- 6 Directing, encouraging and developing Executive Assistants working on behalf of the Executive, and other Councillors and, generally, acting as a role model.

- 7 Approving capital expenditure in accordance with Financial Regulations on schemes within the remit of their portfolio which form part of the approved capital programme.

Proposed Executive Portfolios 2007/08	
Portfolio Title and Holder	Area of Responsibility
Leader - Councillor Collins	<p>Specific</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The key responsibilities for this portfolio are identified as follows:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) working with partners to build a shared vision for the City, aiming to ensure that Council policies and plans, and those of the Council's partners, match that vision; (2) promoting the City, and the Council and its core values and objectives; (3) steering and overseeing the strategic use of resources and the strategic planning cycle of the Council to achieve its objectives; (4) to lead the political development of the City, within the context of regional, national, European and international policy and strategic partnerships; (5) leading the work of the Executive Board in developing, setting and implementing policy and in taking key decisions. 2. To be responsible for presenting a report to the Annual Council meeting setting out his or her proposals for Executive Board composition and allocation of responsibilities to portfolio holders. 3. To prepare the forward plan of 'key decisions'. 4. The Leader is also empowered:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) To exercise Executive powers and duties included within any portfolio of any other Executive member in the event that the Executive member concerned is unavailable or otherwise unable to act; (2) To determine that any decision which an Executive member would otherwise be empowered to make shall only be made by the Executive Board; (3) To exercise all the statutory functions of the Leader within Leader and Cabinet executive arrangements of the Local Government Act 2000. 5. To carry out the functions of his/her specifically allocated portfolio. 6. To ensure that the Code of Conduct is observed and that ethical behaviour is promoted.
Deputy Leader - Councillor Edwards	<p>Specific</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To deputise for and assist the Leader in respect of all the Council's affairs and responsibilities. 2. To provide assistance and support to all portfolio holders in the

Proposed Executive Portfolios 2007/08	
Portfolio Title and Holder	Area of Responsibility
	<p>delivery of their individual areas of responsibility.</p> <p>3. To carry out the functions of his/her specifically allocated portfolio.</p>
Community Safety and Reputation - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are identified as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) leadership of the strategy for tackling Envirocrime, as part of the Respect for Nottingham Strategy; (2) leadership on the City Council's Community Safety and Respect for Nottingham Strategy (which includes the Safe Strategy); (3) the effective discharge of the Council's Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 responsibilities, by ensuring Section 17 issues are considered, as relevant, throughout the performance of Council functions; (4) ensuring that the reputation of the City is maintained and improved.
Resources - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are identified as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) performance management; (2) management of the commercial and operational estate and other asset management; (3) championing equality and diversity throughout Council functions, and for the whole City; (4) risk management and health and safety; (5) support services, including information communication technology, legal, human resources and financial services; (6) overview of the City Council's budget process; (7) performance in relation to collection of Council Tax and processing claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax benefit.
Environment and Climate Change - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are the performance of Executive functions and strategic overview in relation to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Climate change and sustainability (2) waste management (3) local liveability being the encouragement of the attractiveness of the City as a place to live, work and visit (4) street scene being the performance of local services to maintain neighbourhoods and improve the local environment (5) public protection including environmental health

Proposed Executive Portfolios 2007/08	
Portfolio Title and Holder	Area of Responsibility
Transport, Economic Development and Skills - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are the performance of Executive functions and strategic overview in relation to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) investment, including major developments such as Science City (2) ensuring investment benefits the local economy by initiatives such as Local Jobs for Local People – Making the Connections (3) ensuring effective investment in initiatives to achieve jobs for excluded and disadvantaged groups in the City (4) city centre management and initiatives (5) Nottingham Express Transit - Phases 1 and 2 and future development (6) traffic management and parking, ensuring these support the economic development of the City in a sustainable way (7) ensuring that Nottingham continues to be a leading authority in the field of local transport initiatives, encouraging and promoting the increased use of public transport (8) the role of Highway Authority
Neighbourhood Regeneration - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are the performance of Executive function and strategic overview in relation to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) housing strategy (2) the performance of Nottingham City Homes Ltd in managing the City Council's housing stock (3) ensuring that the Town and Country Planning function is operating in accordance with, and promoting, Council objectives (4) co-ordinating of capital investment of the City Council, and its partners, to achieve added value in attaining City Council and partnership objectives in regenerating and development initiatives (5) physical neighbourhood transformation and regeneration, including the acquisition and disposal of property to achieve this
Communities, Leisure and Culture - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are the performance of Executive functions and strategic overview in relation to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) performing a Lead role at political level in the City Council's dealings with the Voluntary and Community Sector, seeking to promote the sector, where appropriate, as a service partner for the City Council (2) provision of Community Development (3) provision of Community Cohesion

Proposed Executive Portfolios 2007/08	
Portfolio Title and Holder	Area of Responsibility
	(4) parks (5) tourism and heritage (6) leisure and libraries and their transformation programmes
Children's Services - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are the performance of Executive functions and strategic overview in relation to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) acting as the champion for children and children's services (2) safeguarding of children (3) children looked after, fostering and adoption and children with disabilities (4) educational attainment of children (5) Building Schools for the Future, academies and school reorganisation (6) development of Children's Trust arrangements, taking into account Early Intervention (7) Children and Young People's Plan including development of partnerships to achieve plan objectives (8) Youth Service and Youth Offending Team (9) transition of children to adulthood (10) partnership with Connexions
Adult Services - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are the performance of Executive functions and strategic overview in relation to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) acting as the champion for vulnerable adults and for older persons, and for services for them, including the promotion of independent living (2) Corporate Strategies for Older People (3) public health and wellbeing, including strategies and plans for dealing with health inequalities, smoking, avoidable injuries and other health consequences of economic disadvantage (4) partnership and integration with the PCT and other health services to achieve the joint objectives of the partner organisations (5) ensuring the Council has an effective Supporting People programme and homelessness and supported housing services, including telecare, and other retained housing functions
Customer Services, Consultation and Area Working - [To be advised]	<p>Specific</p> <p>The key responsibilities for this portfolio are identified as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) ensuring that all of Nottingham's people have excellent access to

Proposed Executive Portfolios 2007/08	
Portfolio Title and Holder	Area of Responsibility
	<p>services</p> <p>(2) customer research, engagement and consultations to achieve better services and better access to services</p> <p>(3) Contact Centre (Front and back office) and locally based contact with customers</p> <p>(4) complaints handling and learning from our experience and those of others</p> <p>(5) Neighbourhood Management (and town centre management)</p> <p>(6) consumer protection, including trading standards, local licensing and food hygiene</p>

COMPOSITION AND GENERIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS

Proposed Executive Assistants - [to be advised]

- 1 Executive Assistants will provide general political support to the Executive and will, mainly, achieve this by supporting particular Executive Members' portfolios and areas of executive work. Their roles will include the following:-
 - (1) development of policy in areas allocated by the Executive;
 - (2) assisting Executive Members in all elements of work within their portfolios, including:-
 - (a) carrying out research and providing advice on executive functions, including briefings to support portfolio decisions;
 - (b) supporting liaison between the Executive Members and other Councillors, Corporate Directors and Overview and Scrutiny function, and external organisations;
 - (c) representing the Executive Members at internal and external meetings and events;
 - (3) development of knowledge, experience and expertise in the portfolio of the Executive Member;
- 2 An Executive Assistant may not participate in an item of business of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or any of its Standing or Task and Finish Panels if they have been, or are, working on an issue which is being considered by the scrutiny meeting. They may, however, be invited to attend the meeting in the capacity of expert witness.

- 3 Executive Assistants do not have delegated authority to take executive decisions in relation to any executive functions.