

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

held at the Council House, Nottingham,

on Monday 10 September 2007 at 2.00 pm

ATTENDANCES

✓ Councillor Munir		Lord Mayor
✓ Councillor Ahmed	✓	Councillor Jones
✓ Councillor Akhtar		Councillor A Khan
✓ Councillor Arnold	✓	Councillor G Khan
✓ Councillor Aslam	✓	Councillor Klein
✓ Councillor Benson	✓	Councillor Lee
Councillor Bryan	✓	Councillor Liversidge
✓ Councillor Bull	✓	Councillor Long
✓ Councillor Campbell	✓	Councillor MacLennan
✓ Councillor Chapman	✓	Councillor Malcolm
✓ Councillor Clark	✓	Councillor Marshall
Councillor Clarke-Smith	✓	Councillor Mellen
✓ Councillor Collins		Councillor Mir
✓ Councillor Cowan	✓	Councillor Newton
✓ Councillor Cresswell	✓	Councillor Oldham
✓ Councillor Culley	✓	Councillor Packer
✓ Councillor Davie	✓	Councillor Parbutt
✓ Councillor Dewinton	✓	Councillor Price
✓ Councillor Edwards	✓	Councillor Smith
✓ Councillor Foster	✓	Councillor Spencer
✓ Councillor Gibson	✓	Councillor Sutton
✓ Councillor Griggs	✓	Councillor Trimble
✓ Councillor Grocock	✓	Councillor Unczur
✓ Councillor Hartshorne	✓	Councillor Urquhart
Councillor Heppell		Councillor Watson
✓ Councillor Ibrahim	✓	Councillor Wildgust
✓ Councillor James	✓	Councillor Williams
✓ Councillor Johnson	✓	Councillor Wood

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Urquhart declared a personal interest in agenda item 6, SAFE Review 2006/07, as an employee of the Probation Service which did not preclude her from speaking or voting.

22 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Public Petitions

Councillor Arnold submitted a petition to the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the residents of Western Boulevard who were concerned about the absence of consultation in relation to traffic regulation activities along Western Boulevard. The residents requested the City Council's Highways Department to review the enforcement of parking restrictions until full consultation was secured and all options thoroughly researched.

Councillor Wildgust submitted a petition to the Lord Mayor, on behalf of 621 Nottingham residents regarding the bus service from Bulwell to Nottingham via Basford and the Hyson Green area, (route numbers 60 and 62). Residents felt that the current service was limited and that consideration should be given to extending the service along Radford Road to enable local people to access the local shops.

23 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2007, be confirmed and signed by the Lord Mayor.

24 QUESTIONS

Target Percentage for Crimes Reduction - 2006/07

Councillor Benson asked the following question of the Chair of the Police Authority:-

Will the Chair of the Police Authority please tell me what was the target percentage reduction in Nottingham for 2006/07 for each of

the following categories of recorded crimes and what was the actual percentage reduction:

- burglary of a dwelling;
- theft from a motor vehicle;
- theft of a motor vehicle;
- vehicle crime;
- robbery;
- violence against the person;
- criminal damage;
- non-domestic burglary;
- all Crime?

Councillor Malcolm replied as follows:-

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

First of all I must apologise for County Councillor John Clarke from the Police Authority who is attending a 'Code of Conduct' training session at the moment at County Hall. I must thank the usher of the Sheriff of Nottinghamshire for getting me back here in time to substitute for Councillor Clarke because I have been in Farnsfield all morning. The answers were supplied to me by the Chief Constable and I would like to thank Councillor Benson for the question:

- burglary dwelling – target reduction is 12%, actual reduction 6.5%. I should mention that the reduction target is disaggregated from the Force target set by the Police Authority;
- theft from a motor vehicle – target reduction 14%, actual reduction 15.7%;
- theft of motor vehicle – target reduction 14%, actual reduction 13.2%;
- vehicle crime – target reduction 14%, actual reduction 15.2%;
- robbery – target reduction 8%, increase of 11.5%;

- violent crime – target reduction 4%, increase of 4.7%;
- criminal damage – target reduction 18%, actual reduction 10.1%;
- non-domestic burglary – target reduction 5%, actual reduction 2.8%;
- all crime – target reduction 8.6%, actual reduction 5.3%.

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

Number of Police Officers in Nottinghamshire

Councillor Price asked the following question of the Chair of the Police Authority:-

Will Councillor Malcolm the representative of the Police Authority please tell me the number of police officers on the strength of the Nottinghamshire Force as at 31 March for each of the years 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007?

Councillor Malcolm replied as follows:-

Thank you, Lord Mayor and I'd like to thank Councillor Price for his question. The Chief Constable has provided me with the following response:-

2003/04

Police Officers – 2,507

Police Staff except Police Community Support Officer's (PCSO's)
– 1,285

PCSOs - 56

Specials - 295

Total force = 4,143

2004/2005

Police Officers – 2,522

Police Staff (excluding PCSOs) – 1,318

PCSOs – 108
Specials – 333

Total = 4,281

2005/06

Police Officers – 2,512
Police staff (excluding PCSOs) – 1,385
PCSOs – 112
Specials – 361

Total force = 4,370

2006/07

Police Officers – 2,445
Police staff (excluding PCSOs) – 1,370
PCSOs – 217
Specials - 382

Total force = 4,414

The overall establishment size of the Nottinghamshire Police has increased over the last 4 years by 6.5%.

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

Welfare Rights Service

Councillor Sutton asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Customer Services, Consultation and Area Working:-

How many solicitors' letters have been sent to people, and how many injunctions have been threatened, relating to the management of Welfare Rights Service by the Housing Benefit Manager? Would it not have been better to address the issues of concern relating to impartiality and confidentiality?

Councillor Campbell replied as follows:-

Thank you, Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Sutton for his question.

The first part of Councillor Sutton's question raises issues which indirectly are the subject of current employment tribunal and the internal appeals process and it would be quite inappropriate for me to provide information within this Chamber whilst these proceedings are live.

The other part of the question seems, to me, to be intended to be rhetorical, as the answer provided by Councillor Trimble at the July Council meeting covered the issues quite comprehensively. I agreed with his comments then, and I see no reason to add to them now.

Future Transport Policy

Councillor Williams asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Economic Development and Skills:-

Could the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Economic Development and Skills explain his view on the implications of John Redwood's policy review and its likely impact on future transport policy?

Councillor Parbutt replied as follows:-

I would like to thank Councillor Williams for his question.

Policy announcements by national political parties are important to the Council not only because they can indicate the actions of a future national government, but they can influence current investment decisions by the private sector as developers and transport operators.

The Redwood review into Economic Competitiveness is just that and we shouldn't presume that everything in the review will become party policy, particularly as Jon Gummer's review into Quality of Life out this week may offer some completely contradictory recommendations.

However, as a statement of the way Conservative thinking is going on the economy and particularly on transport, it makes fascinating reading.

A key theme of the report is the recommendation for a big new programme of road building, as well as increasing rail and airport capacity. Whilst I would agree that some road building is required for economic development, such as the A453, it must be a complete fallacy that we can build our way out of congestion, when all experience suggests that increasing road capacity inevitably increases traffic. Nowhere does the report even begin to address the issue of the road building impact on traffic growth, and it assumes that current levels of traffic growth would be maintained. My view is that growth would be very much increased by the proposals.

The main press coverage seems to have been focussed on the traffic management proposals. Introducing a left turn at red traffic lights, banning red phases (pedestrian phases we would call them) widening large roundabouts and adding flyovers and underpasses at roundabouts in cities, and re-building the underpasses and footbridges hated by pedestrians and which most local authorities have spent the last 20 years removing for community safety reasons. This seems to be a pedestrian's nightmare and can only lead to fewer people walking anywhere at all. Making walking unattractive in urban areas will in itself lead to more traffic growth and more congestion. The report says that there is an opportunity to "rediscover the lost habit of walking and cycling," but its proposals seem to suggest that walking and cycling are regarded as very inferior ways of getting about than driving a car and those who walk or cycle should be treated as second class citizens.

We can also predict what impact on the quality of life for city residents there would be.

The report dismisses the need to manage speed on the highway in urban areas, claiming that speed is not a factor in 90% of accidents, a figure it doesn't even attempt to justify, and calling for the removal of many traffic management schemes that have

reduced accidents and which were in many instances requested by local residents.

Although the report says that there should be some encouragement to use local public transport, there is not a single proposal to improve local bus services, nothing, and the main way of reducing traffic growth seems to be introducing flexi time in the civil service, even though the civil service have had flexi time for donkeys' years, and getting government ministers to group meetings outside of London so that they all travel on the same day. The scale of these suggestions seems ludicrous to me balanced against our economic requirements and our Kyoto commitments, which we presume the slightly green washed Conservative Leader David Cameron supports.

We don't want to be complacent but the Transport Strategy we have adopted in Nottingham does strike a sensible balance between the needs of the economy and recognition that most journeys are by car, and the quality of the environment, the convenience of pedestrians and cyclists and the provision of public transport alternatives. Instead of expensive road building (the M6 widening, we are told, was recently quoted at £1,000 per inch) we would recommend more investment in public transport, including, of course, the NET extension and the Nottingham Station refurbishment and the Midland Mainline upgrade. A national policy based on the Redwood review would lead to more congestion, not less, and would stifle the economic growth he says he wishes to achieve.

GCSE Results

Councillor Grocock asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services:-

Would the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services like to inform Council of the recent GCSE results and explain how GCSE results pass rates have changed since the City took control of education?

Councillor Urquhart replied as follows:-

Thank you, Councillor Grocock for your question.

I would be very pleased to inform Council of the GCSE results and the changes since the City took control of education. Before I do that however, I would like to pass on my congratulations to all the young people who took GCSEs this summer and who worked so hard to achieve such a fantastic set of results. I would like to pass on my thanks to the staff in our schools who have helped them get there and to the governors of those schools who have put in their time to help them get there as well. I ought also to include my thanks to Councillor Chapman as my predecessor for the leadership that he showed to Children's Services in moving that agenda forward. So there is staff from our Authority and staff from the schools to be thanked.

The initial indications that we have are that well over 53% of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 obtained 5 or more GCSE passes at grade A – C, compared with 44.6% in 2006. 15 of 18 schools obtained their best ever results. Our results currently are now 2% behind those achieved in Nottinghamshire in the County.

In 1998 we took control of education and 26.2% of pupils achieved such results, so the increase to this year's figure of 53% represents a doubling in the proportion of pupils reaching that key measure. More importantly, I think, it is helpful to think of that in terms of actual numbers of children and young people. It means that over 700 more pupils are leaving school with those qualifications than did so in 1998. I think it is that kind of information about the numbers of our young people who are now leaving with that kind of qualification that is really important to me.

Over the past 10 years results have improved nationally and our results have improved more than the national level. I think that that is a double cause for celebration. Nationally, results have improved and our improvement rate has been faster than the national one.

We were one of the most improved authorities from 2005-2006 and we would anticipate that this progress from 2006-2007 will be

greater than the progress made nationally and in our similar authorities.

We clearly need to continue to prioritise educational attainment and to continue to close the gap with other places so that our young people have the same or better chances than others of achieving the qualifications that will stand them in good stead for a positive future.

There is still a great deal of work to do, I think these results are a great achievement however, we must continue to be bold and be determined to build on them for further success in the future.

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

Local Jobs for Local People

Councillor Newton asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Economic Development and Skills:-

Would the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Economic Development and Skills outline the council's policy on Local Jobs for Local People and indicate what efforts are being undertaken to progress the agenda on incapacity benefit and long term unemployment?

Councillor Parbutt replied as follows:-

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

I am more than happy to outline not only the Council's policy on Local Jobs for Local People but also the level of success that it is achieving, and the challenges ahead.

Nottingham City Council as both a civic leader and major employer feels that it is crucial for our city, for as many people as possible to share in the economic prosperity this great city of ours can offer. The management of the economy nationally over recent years, which has seen significant falls in registered unemployment, has brought great benefits to local communities and allowed many people to get jobs which they would otherwise

not have had. Our ambition is to spread this benefit to as many people as possible, including to those who have been out of the labour market for some time and who may need direct support to gain employment.

To this end Local Jobs for Local People has become the umbrella name for three direct pieces of work:

- Council Jobs for Local People;
- City Careerships; and
- Making the Connections.

The three strands are brought together in what is our current action plan spanning 2006-2008.

Council Jobs for Local People has achieved over 54% of city employees living within the city boundary including representative percentages from both Black Minority Ethnic and disabled communities. It is believed that this is the highest percentage of all core cities.

City Careerships has seen 53 young people (78% of them from disadvantaged groups) engage in fully accredited training and development programmes within the Council and Making the Connection which primarily concentrates on placing hard to reach groups into mainstream employment within the city achieved nearly 400 work placements in 2006/07 with over 40% of these from the Black Minority Ethnic community.

These are very positive initiatives which have worked well, but we now need to address the more fundamental and long term consequences on communities with large numbers of residents being outside of the workforce and the impacts that this has on the culture and aspiration of those communities. This is a major task, and we will need to involve all of our partners, including Jobcentre Plus, who are the leading agency from national government in this field.

That is why, in line with this Council's priority to increase economic activity within the city we are embarking fully with partners to develop the new initiatives such as City Strategy and

Skills for Work, which specifically targets incapacity benefit claimants, the long term unemployed and lone parents. Indeed Nottingham was one of only 14 areas to receive City Strategy status and funding which in itself concentrates on Incapacity Benefit claimants and lone parents and is worth just over £2m to the city and is expected to reduce cumulatively the claimant count by over 3,000 over 3 years.

As yet, it is perhaps too early to analyse trends appropriately but the city's employment rate as of September 2006 (the last available figure) was 66.1% an improvement from the year on year figure of 65.01%.

I understand that, as I speak, the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, is at the TUC in Brighton announcing new financial support for those moving back into the workforce which is to be very much welcomed. But it will also require a great deal of support in giving people the confidence and the capacity to enter work. The benefits, not just to our communities and our economy, but for the people involved, are enormous.

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

25 ANNUAL REVIEW (2006/07) - SAFE FOR NOTTINGHAM 2005
-2008

The report of Councillor Collins (as set out on page 143 of the agenda) was submitted.

MOVED by Councillor Benson by way of amendment and seconded by Councillor Cowan:-

Amendment to recommendation;

- (a) delete 'note' in line 1
- (b) at the beginning of (i) insert 'notes with disappointment'
- (c) at the beginning of (ii) insert 'notes'
- (d) add new paragraph (iii):

‘(iii) notes with concern the increase in 2006/07 in the number of offences of theft from a person, common assault and robbery from a person, and the increase in violent crime recorded by the police’

After discussion the amendment was put to the vote and was not carried.

MOVED by Councillor Long by way of amendment and seconded by Councillor Sutton:-

In 2 recommendations (page 143)

1 After “...Members” insert

“(a) agree to amend the Table on page 155 of the report by changing the status of Target 1 from amber to red and Target 6 from green to red;

(b) ...”

2 After “ (ii).. are met” insert

“(c) request the CDP to

(i) develop an action plan to ensure Target 1 is met;

(ii) reconsider the action plan relating to Target 3 to ensure it is adequate; and,

(iii) report back in writing to members within 6 weeks”.

and re-format appropriately so that the revised recommendations read:-

“It is RECOMMENDED that Members

(a) agree to amend the Table on page 155 of the report by changing the status of Target 1 from amber to red and Target 6 from green to red.

(b) note:-

- (i) the current progress of the Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership (CDP) against the eight headline targets of the SAFE strategy; and,
- (ii) the corrective actions currently in place, and planned, to ensure that the SAFE headline targets are met.

(c) request the CDP to:-

- (i) develop an action plan to ensure Target 1 is met;
- (ii) reconsider the action plan relating to Target 3 to ensure it is adequate; and,
- (iii) report back in writing to members within 6 weeks.”

After discussion the amendment was put to the vote and was not carried.

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Malcolm:-

- (i) that the current progress of the Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership (CDP) against the eight headline targets of the SAFE strategy be noted;**
- (ii) that the corrective actions currently in place, and planned, to ensure that the SAFE headline targets are met, be noted.**

The meeting closed at 4.50pm

Council Question(s) requiring a written response

The following responses were circulated to all members on 19 September 2007:-

Environmental Targets

Councillor Foster asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change:-

What progress has been made towards the environmental targets set by the Council last October?

Councillor Bull replied as follows:

I would like to thank Councillor Foster for his question.

Following your recent question regarding progress on the Climate Change Strategy, may I take this opportunity to respond.

I welcome this question as it gives me an excellent opportunity to describe progress made by our Council on this most pressing of subjects.

Since the last public scrutiny of this topic by the Regeneration, Infrastructure and Sustainability Standing Panel in February 2007, 43, from the 60 original recommendations have either been completed or progress is underway. Of the remaining 17 recommendations they are either derivatives of projects initiated, such as EMAS, and/or subject to current baseline data analysis prior to commissioning.

Notable progress includes the mainstreaming of energy reduction, now part of the Local Area Agreement with a target of a 10% reduction in energy over the next three years. Progress so far is on track to reach this target. Also of considerable note is the Council's commitment to gain the Eco-Management and Audit System (EMAS) within 3 years. This will have an impact not only on Nottingham City Council itself but also our partners and suppliers. Indeed we have acted most corporately in transferring the current skills from one work area to another to enable this programme to be rolled out on schedule. In addition, we have also

embarked on not just a carbon management plan but a full energy strategy and are currently advertising for an Energy Project Manager to accelerate this work.

Other notable successes include: Green Travel Plans, SMART metering, the piloting of power perfecter and the acceleration of adapting what is widely known as the 'Merton Rule' in planning through which a 10% requirement for renewable energy is needed to be generated on site in new developments over 1,000m².

In summary, much has been done and some early success achieved. However, we must not rest and admit that much more is needed in order to achieve our joint objective of a carbon neutral Nottingham City Council by 2016 and a carbon neutral city by 2100.

I again welcome your interest and must point you in the direction of the Climate Change Strategy progress report due for presentation at the Regeneration, Infrastructure and Sustainability Standing Panel in October for a more fuller and detailed response.

Veterans Day Celebrations

Councillor Davie asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Leisure and Culture:-

Considering the immense gratitude we owe our Veterans, does the Portfolio Holder agree that the organisers of next years Veterans Day celebrations, or similar events, should consider their particular needs and ensure their enjoyment of their celebration?

Councillor Trimble replied as follows:

My thanks are due to Councillor Davie for asking this question. I agree with him that the Veterans' Day provides an excellent opportunity for the City of Nottingham to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution of veterans' to the safety of this country and its interests in many places throughout the world over many years. The City Council is proud to play its part, in partnership with other organisations (such as the Veterans' Agency, the Army, and the Royal British Legion) in making this happen.

The City Council was successful in securing agreement for Wollaton Hall and Park to host the regional launch of Veterans' Day for the East Midlands and was closely involved with the Veterans' Agency to arrange the events in Nottingham. Drawing on contributions from a range of services and working with external partners, the City Council provided opportunities for celebrations to take place over the Veterans' Day weekend. One focus of activity was at Wollaton Hall and Park, and another in the City Centre.

The events at Wollaton Hall and Park were successful although numbers attending were undoubtedly affected by the poor weather this summer on the Saturday. However, the Sunday was much busier and the weather improved to allow the fly past of historic aircraft to take place. Staff from the Hall and Park itself, Museums and Arts and Events teams were on hand to ensure that the Veterans themselves, their families and other visitors were welcomed and able to enjoy the events and activities.

The second focus was in the City Centre where a public event involving the presentation of medals took place in the Old Market Square. The weather did not help the medal ceremony either. The Army was keen to

keep the event in public rather than re-locate the event inside the Council House away from public view.

The Royal British Legion (Wollaton Branch) then hosted a dinner in the Council House for the Veterans. To help, it was agreed that no charge for the use of the building would be made for this event. All the arrangements for the dinner were made by the Royal British Legion.

With regard to the future, the Veterans' Agency has told us that they were very pleased with the support and co-operation of the City Council for the first holding of Veterans' Day. Discussions are now at an early stage for planning events for next year with the Agency and funding opportunities being explored to expand the event.

Undoubtedly there will be lessons to be learned about those aspects of this year's event and the affect they had on everybody's enjoyment, but I know that both the City Council and the Veterans' Agency are enthusiastic about the opportunities presented.