

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

held at the Council House, Nottingham,

on Monday 4 February 2008 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

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

49 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Public Petitions

Councillor Watson submitted a petition to the Lord Mayor, on behalf of Nottingham tenants who were concerned about section 3.14 of the proposed Council tenancy agreement that stated that you could only keep one cat or dog, two with written permission, and that you must have direct access to a private garden. The tenants called for section 3.14 to be removed and consultation to be carried out with local groups, the Kennel Club and other interested parties.

Councillor Wood submitted a petition to the Lord Mayor, on behalf of residents of Bilborough who were concerned about the dangers of accessing the A6002 (Bilborough Road) due to excessive speeds and volume of traffic. The residents requested the City Council to introduce a speed limit of 50 mph, install a refuge at the top of Bramhall Road and apply double white lines from Balloon Woods traffic lights to Bilborough College roundabout, to prevent dangerous overtaking was also requested.

50 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2007, be confirmed and signed by the Lord Mayor.

51 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Lord Mayor informed Council that Nikki Mottishaw of Culture and Community Department had been named Coach of the Year by UK Athletics. Nikki had been accredited with huge success in the sprints from Nottingham Athletics Club over the last couple of years. She had also supported both the Nottingham County and Regional Development Squads.

The Lord Mayor also announced that the Communications Team, led by Cheryl Connolly, had won an Excellence in Communications Award 2007 from the Chartered Institute of Public Relations for the Council Services Directory. The judges had concluded that Nottingham City Council's entry stood out as being highly useful, easy to use, and made it clear that the Council provided a vast array of different services, showing the public just how far their council tax goes.

The Lord Mayor congratulated both Nikki and Cheryl and all the staff involved in achieving these awards for their hard work and thanked them for raising Nottingham City Council's profile, at a national level, as an innovative and forward thinking authority.

52 QUESTIONS

Emergency Loan to Bluecoat School

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

Following the Council's emergency loan of £2.44m to Bluecoat School approved by the Executive Board in March 2007, what causes have PricewaterhouseCoopers identified that led the scheme to go over-budget and what financial controls and project management improvements have they recommended during their audit of the Aspley Campus redevelopment?

Councillor Urquhart replied as follows:-

Thank you, Councillor Sutton for your question.

As you will be aware, Nottingham Bluecoat School and Technology College is a voluntary aided school and as such it is not within the direct control of the Council. However, because of the scale of the overspend on the Aspley Lane redevelopment it was considered appropriate to make the loan that you refer to and to undertake a review of the circumstances leading to that overspend and to establish what lessons should be learnt for future schemes.

The Council's Section 151 Officer commissioned an independent review by PricewaterhouseCoopers to examine the reasons for that

overspend and a draft report has been received. However, as there is currently an investigation underway into a number of building related issues at the school, it is not appropriate to disclose the detailed findings at this point and I am sure that Councillor Sutton would not want me to jeopardise any such investigation for political purposes.

I can say that the following things have been put in place to improve financial management of this type of project. Across the city for both our directly controlled schools and voluntary aided schools, project management has been strengthened. At Bluecoat school specifically, we have now put in place a new scheme of financial delegation and have reviewed the levels of authority required for expenditure so the school now has to seek greater authority for any significant capital or revenue expenditure.

I hope that addresses the issues without, as I say, jeopardising the investigation which is ongoing and which I am sure Councillor Sutton would want to support.

Area Committee Budgets

Councillor Benson asked the following question of the Chairman of the Clifton and Wilford Area Committee:-

Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

Does the Chairman of the Clifton and Wilford Area Committee agree that the basic budgets of area committees, currently £18,500 per ward per year, are far too small; and does he agree that councillors should be allocated personal budgets of at least £15,000 a year each to be spent within their wards so as to give some substance here in Nottingham to the Government's 'councillor calls for action' proposals?

Councillor Price replied as follows:-

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

I am sure he would agree with me that the commitment made by community representatives and Area Committees across the city is commendable. The serious manner in which they approach their duties is equally impressive.

However, community representatives at the Clifton and Wilford Area Committee (Area 9) have commented on the limited budget they can influence and that the amount of time they spend on area committee activities and their associated sub-committees and working groups is disproportionate to that amount of finance. Therefore, I would agree that area committees have earned the right to a larger budget and those who point to budget underspend as an argument that area committees do not need additional funding are missing the point.

Area 9 has not been able to spend money allocated for a health project because its contribution was only part of the costs and the reorganisation of the Primary Care Trust delayed the start of the project. If the Area Committee was allowed to fund the post on its own, the project would have been completed by now and the money spent.

Area committees, Lord Mayor, are not short of ambition. Be it health projects or boxing clubs, and I am sure there are plans in many areas that area committees could spend the funds on.

Lord Mayor, Area Committees do not even have the regulatory structure they need to meet the needs of their communities. Area 9 recently passed a motion to support 'Good Companions' a local befriending scheme we all supported. The £10,000 committed from our reserves could not be transferred to that organisation as we are only allowed to make grants of £5,000 at a time. Area Committees have come of age, they need to be able to dispense their funds and have some of the executive's overarching regulations amended to recognise the maturity of these committees.

Lord Mayor while I am a champion of Area Committees, I believe there are a category of local actions that do not require formal debate and I have suggested before that individual councillors should have a personal works budget thus enabling them to get jobs done in their area without the bureaucracy of requiring officers to write papers which then have to be discussed at committees.

I would also suggest that some residents who may require such a minor matter as a drop down kerb due to illness would not want such matters discussed in detail in public and it is very hard to analyse data when you're working locally.

A few years ago I suggested a small budget for Councillors, thinking that it would be easier to increase the budget once the principle had been established and councillor's genuine concerns about fraud or the inappropriate use of funding had been allayed. Lord Mayor I think at that stage I was being too conservative. As the officer time required to create the financial protocols and maintaining them was disproportionate to the level of spending individual councillors were going to have.

Creating such a system for, say, a £15,000 budget, as Councillor Benson suggests, would be a proportionate use of councillor time. In fact maybe they could simply contact officers of the County Council who have a system which currently copes with a £7,500 budget their councillors have. The advantage of such a move would be that backbench councillors, including those in the majority party would have real power in their wards. When we talk to officers about getting something done we can bring real money to the table. When tasking an officer to sort out a problem we'll provide part of the financial solution. This would really empower local councillors who could club together, possibly even cross party lines to solve problems locally.

Forcing councillors also to prioritise what they want and then having to defend those priorities in their electorate would be a good discipline. I think few portfolio holders have ever had backbench councillors come to them and say we understand the corporate budget is a bit tight but that project in my ward isn't a priority. So maybe it would not only be a good discipline but a good training ground for backbench councillors.

I suggested it may also improve our standing with our electorates as they can see us getting more things done. An annual statement of activity could be published in the post and other media. The public might be interested in these projects and comment on the most innovative use of funds and this might create a virtuous circle with a public reach of councillors supporting a local toy library or a self help

group and might encourage other people to get involved in their communities if they thought the seed corn finances were available.

Councillor Benson, this is a brave new world that would entail the shift of power from the Cabinet to Area Committees and individual councillors. It remains to be seen if they have the courage to make such a change but I urge them to do so. If they really want community champions then give us the tools and we will finish the jobs.

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

Library Uniform

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

Does the Portfolio Holder accept that it is unnecessarily discriminatory to require Library Assistants but not professional librarians to wear council uniforms when dealing with public library users; and will he agree that it is sufficient if all staff in libraries wear their own choice of clothing together with an official badge identifying them as staff members?

Councillor Trimble replied as follows:-

Thank you, Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Culley for her question.

The introduction of uniforms for frontline staff across the whole Council is part of the Corporate Customer Services Transformation Strategy. This corporate strategy follows an Audit Commission inspection in 2005 which criticised the non wearing of a standard uniform for reception staff. The strategy was agreed by the Executive Board in September 2005.

I too received the e-mail that many other members received, though another member has informed me that a library assistant he spoke to was happy with the idea of wearing a uniform.

Following this e-mail, I too asked the same question as Councillor Culley about the reasoning as to why it affected library assistants more than librarians. The response I received was that it affected all staff where the majority of their work within the library was dealing directly with the public. Also, most professional librarians have a variety of developmental roles in the back office and spend much less of their time dealing directly with the public in the library setting.

Although this is an agreed Corporate Policy of the Council, my view is that it is more a managerial issue than a political cause. As a Councillor, I am sure you would all recognise my annoyance when one of my constituents does not receive the service or respect that they deserve. This policy is about putting the customer first and it would be hypocritical of me not to support it.

I understand that discussions have taken place with the trade unions for sometime, the discussions with trade unions and with individual members of staff continue and I believe this is the right and proper place for those discussions.

Many staff, including the Contact Centre, Cashiers, Museums, Housing Aid, Children's Services receptions, Adult Services receptions, plus Severns House reception, and other staff in the Council also wear uniforms. What makes this so different?

We on this side of the chamber are concerned with implementing a Labour manifesto and I believe that is what we should be concentrating on.

Waste Recycling Group - Eastcroft Incinerator Application

Councillor Mellen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Regeneration:-

Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

How can local residents now make their views known concerning the application by Waste Recycling Group for an expansion of the Eastcroft incinerator?

Councillor Clark replied as follows:-

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

Waste Recycling Group (WRG), the operators of Eastcroft Incinerator, have lodged an appeal in connection with the planning application they submitted in August 2007 to expand the energy from waste facility.

The City Council, as local planning authority, did not make a decision on the application within the prescribed 16 week period and although it requested an extension of time in which to make a decision, WRG have decided that it does not agree to this, even though they previously stated that they would have preferred the application to be determined locally. The application will be determined at a public inquiry by an inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate.

Any comments made at application stage will be sent to the case officer at the Planning Inspectorate. It is also intended that they will be reported to Development Control Committee in February when the Committee will be asked to consider them and to indicate how it would have determined the application had it been in a position to do so. This will inform the Council's case at the inquiry.

Anyone wanting to make any additional comments must submit 3 copies to the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol by 6th March 2008. Full details are available on the City Council's website.

Re-opening of Ken Martin Leisure Centre

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

Would the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Leisure and Culture comment on the successful reopening of the Ken Martin Leisure Centre?

Councillor Trimble replied as follows:-

Thank you, Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Klein for her question.

Ken Martin Leisure Centre was successfully re-opened 3 weeks ago today with staff in uniforms. It is part of the Leisure Transformation Programme which also saw the successful opening of John Carroll Leisure Centre in Radford, improvements at Portland Leisure Centre in the Meadows and the successful SWAT Rock gym at Clifton Leisure Centre.

Ken Martin Leisure Centre has been totally transformed with a new £2.2 million investment which includes:-

- a larger state of the art gym with all new equipment;
- an excellent new health suite with sauna and steam room;
- modern changing facilities;
- a new swimming pool viewing area with an interactive children's section;
- a refurbished swimming pool;
- a fantastic new fitness suite with an activity room.

In my view and most important of all is that it is completely Disability Discrimination Act compliant. The icing on the cake is a second changing places toilet following the very successful changing places toilet in the City Centre. Making these facilities available, accessible to even the most severely disabled people, not just in Nottingham but from far and wide.

The weekend before the opening, local residents were invited to inspect the new facilities. Over 1500 people attended and around 250 customers signed up for swimming lessons and the Flexible Fitness scheme.

Since the opening the centre has secured 500 new members to the Flexible Fitness scheme and this is to be followed up by an open day on Saturday 23 February which will offer free activities including aerobics, swimming and gym lessons between the hours of 10.00 am – 2.00 pm. It will also include special offers available on the day.

We intend to make it a real fun day for all with street dance, a variety of entertainers and a climbing wall.

Lord Mayor, I believe the Ken Martin Leisure Centre will be a very successful facility for Bulwell but it will also be a successful facility for the rest of the City too.

Competitive Performance of Nottingham

Councillor Chapman asked the following question of the Leader of the Council:-

Would the Leader of the Council comment on the competitive performance of Nottingham in relation to other European Cities?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:-

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

Studies show that Nottingham is an increasingly prosperous and successful city. For example the European Regional Economic Growth Index for 2007 shows that the area covered by Nottingham and Derby (which in the survey counts as one area) is in the top 30 European cities for growth, wealth and business environments, up 26 places on the previous year.

A further study by the European Compete network shows Nottingham has the highest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of any core city in England and on this measure also compares favourably with leading European cities. In fact only the leading German cities and Copenhagen are substantially ahead of Nottingham in terms of GDP for their head of population.

The latest figures for Nottingham show that we have a local economy worth around £11 billion and that it is growing at a faster rate than the rest of the East Midlands and faster than the average growth rate for England as a whole, with:-

- economic output of £17,800 per capita, higher than the English average;

- business and professional service growth at twice the rate of the England average;
- a top ranking retail destination and an above average proportion of the population qualified to degree level or higher.

However, despite this progress we also still have our challenges. Although unemployment is down over the last decade and substantially down, it is still above the national average.

Worklessness is too high and despite very significant progress in our schools, education outcomes and skill levels are still too low.

While retail in the city remains strong, competition from other cities is fierce and growing, and despite good local public transport services, Nottingham needs a better railway station and faster services to London to match those afforded to other major cities.

So for the future, we must meet these challenges and I believe build on our successes. We need to work with our partners to develop the industries of the future and in particular to capitalize on our designation of one of just 6 Science Cities in the UK.

The future growth of Bio City is a priority and a success story while Nottingham University's expertise in sustainable and environmental technologies are a strength we must also build on.

We must tackle worklessness by continuing to collaborate with government on new ways of encouraging the long term unemployed back into work. We need to continue to build a better education for our children and to address skill shortages in specific areas through our local skills board. This, alongside measures to get city residents into jobs with local employers and agencies, including the City Council, are vital areas to tackle if we are to tackle poverty and to improve the local economy.

Retail development at Trinity Square and the refurbishment at Broad Marsh are needed if we are to continue to compete as a successful shopping destination. We need to win funding to successfully regenerate Nottingham's Railway Station and to build lines 2 and 3 of the tram as well as lobbying for regular fast trains to London

capable of delivering passengers to the Euro Star terminal in less than 90 minutes.

Finally we need to get the basics right and to create the kind of city people want to live and work in.

- A safer city where crime rates continue to decline.
- A cleaner city where we are effective at removing litter, dumped waste and graffiti.
- An ambitious city where our schools and colleges strive to give our young people the best possible start in life.
- A city where neighbourhoods are transformed through major investment in housing, public buildings, roads, pavements, street lighting, parks and public open spaces, transformed into a more mixed, more sustainable and more cohesive communities.

In all these things I believe we continue to make progress. We have a clear vision for the city but we are clear too that there is still a lot of work for us to do.

53 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE APPOINTMENTS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE

The report of Councillor Collins (as set out on page 265 of the agenda) was submitted.

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

In the recommendation add after 'adopted'

'subject to the following new sentence being added at the end of the proposed Section 5.2 of the Core Constitution:

'The Chief Executive shall include with the Summons to each Annual Meeting of the Council a public statement showing for each of the posts of Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director, and any equivalent post, the amount of the full-time annual gross salary entitlement for that post as at 1 May in the same year and for each other

named post the annual full-time gross salary for which is greater than 65 per cent of the annual full-time gross salary of the post of Chief Executive.'

After discussion the amendment was put to the vote and carried and the Council RESOLVED that the proposed constitutional changes as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be adopted subject to the following new sentence being added at the end of the proposed Section 5.2 of the Core Constitution:-

'The Chief Executive shall include with the Summons to each Annual Meeting of the Council a public statement showing for each of the posts of Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director, and any equivalent post, the amount of the full time annual gross salary entitlement for that post as at 1 May in the same year and for each other named post the annual full time gross salary for which is greater than 65 per cent of the annual full time gross salary of the post of Chief Executive'

54 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME - REVIEW BY THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

The report of Councillor Collins (as set out on page 272 of the agenda) was submitted.

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

Amendment

- (i) in Recommendation 1
- (ii) delete 'recommendation 2' and substitute 'recommendations 2 and 12 and
- (iii) insert after 'in full' 'provided that any increases in allowances payable shall be backdated only to the date of the Annual Meeting in 2007, namely, 18 May 2007' and

- (iv) add at the end 'but informed that the Council regrets their acceptance contrary to Government advice that far more than 65% of Nottingham Councillors are in receipt of special responsibility allowances not including eight councillors who receive basic and special responsibility allowances from the police and fire authorities as city councillor representatives on those bodies';
- (v) delete Recommendation 2;
- (vi) add to the end of Recommendation 3 'subject to the deletion of the last sentence of paragraph 4(3)';
- (vii) add new Recommendation 4: 'it be noted that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of their recommendations 2 and 12 are not accepted in the case of Executive Assistants because these roles have no statutory authority, are ill-defined and are at least in part party political and therefore should not be remunerated; and in respect of their recommendation 12 that no account was taken of other councillor-related allowances which some of the individuals concerned receive, that they set out insufficient evidence based reasons for their recommendation and that in any event the present level of remuneration is satisfactory';
- (viii) that the Corporate Director of Resources shall publish by way of advertisement in the Nottingham Evening Post before the end of April each year a consolidated statement of allowances paid to each member of the City Council for the immediately previous financial year including basic and special responsibility allowances paid by the police and fire authorities.

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

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

- (1) the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, excepting recommendation 2, be adopted in full and the Panel be thanked for their work on the scheme;**

- (2) Special Responsibility Allowances be given to Executive Assistants, at a level equivalent to Chairs of Regulatory Committees;**
- (3) the current scheme be amended in accordance with the above recommendations and the revised Members Allowances Scheme, set out in Appendix B to the report, be adopted.**

55 STANDARDS COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The report of Councillor Collins (as set out on page 292 of the agenda) was submitted and its recommendations were moved by Councillor Collins and seconded by Councillor Aslam.

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Aslam, that Ms Beverley Denby and Mr Trevor Savage be appointed as Independent Members of the Standards Committee with immediate effect and that the membership of all Independent Members be reviewed with the other appointments to committees, at the appropriate meeting of Council in 2008, with a view to their subsequent re-appointment until the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2009.

56 NOTTINGHAM CITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE GOVERNANCE BOARD - TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The report of Councillor Unczur (as set out on page 294 of the agenda) was submitted and its recommendations were moved by Councillor Unczur and seconded by Councillor Jones.

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Unczur, seconded by Councillor Jones, that:-

- (1) the revised Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved;**

- (2) the change of name from City Health and Social Care Governance Board to City Health and Social Care Commissioning Board be approved.

57 STREET TRADING - THE PROMOTION OF A PRIVATE PARLIAMENTARY BILL

The report of Councillor Campbell (as set out on page 306 of the agenda) was submitted and its recommendations were moved by Councillor Campbell and seconded by Councillor Arnold.

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Arnold, that:-

- (1) the Resolution of this Council passed at a meeting of the Council held on Monday 15 October 2007 to promote a Bill in the present Session of Parliament, pursuant to which the Bill intituled "A Bill to confer powers on Nottingham City Council for the better control of street trading in the City of Nottingham" has been deposited in Parliament, be and the same as hereby confirmed;
- (2) the Corporate Director of Resources be given delegated power to take all necessary steps to carry the above resolution into effect, including the approval of any amendments to the Bill as deemed necessary, as it progresses through Parliament.

The meeting closed at 4.00pm.