

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

held at the Council House, Nottingham,

on Monday 14 December 2009 at 2.00 pm

ATTENDANCES

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

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cresswell, Heppell, MacLennan, Mir, Watson and Williams and from County Councillor Clark as Chair of the Police Authority.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors Benson, Grocock, Hartshorne and Wood declared personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item 7 - the Review of the City Council's Statement of Gambling Policy – as City Council nominated directors of Nottingham Racecourse Limited, and withdrew from the Chamber during discussion of the item.

50 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No petitions or questions from members of the public were submitted.

51 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2009, be confirmed and signed by the Lord Mayor.

52 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Chief Executive reported the following communications:-

Nottingham Tourism Centre

The Nottingham Tourism Centre has won the Gold Award for Tourist Information Services at the Enjoy Excellence Awards 2009. The whole team worked incredibly hard with commitment and dedication to deliver a first class service and were intensely mystery shopped for many months so this is a wonderful achievement for all involved.

Forest Recreation Ground

The recently completed Forest Recreation Ground play area has been awarded a Nottingham Civic Society commendation award. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has provided

£2.5 million funding to deliver the Play Pathfinder Project in Nottingham city over a three year period between 2008 and 2011. The Forest Recreation Ground play area is part of the first wave of transforming innovative and exciting public play areas.

Entry To Employment

Learning Works for Young People / Entry To Employment (E2E) has been awarded the highest health and safety performance rating of outstanding by the East Midlands Learning and Skills Council. This is very rare across the region.

The Elections and Local Land and Property Gazetteer Team

The Elections and Local Land And Property Gazetteer Teams have been recognised for joint working and improvement to service at the National Underpinning Transformation Government Awards 2009. They also won an award for The Best Partnership Working Between Organisations and were highly commended in the Ministry of Justice Best Implementation of the Electoral Registration Data Standard category.

This work has helped improve and share good practice and has played a major role towards the end goal which is to increase engagement in the democratic process and give real power to real people.

Finally, the East Midlands won the best region award for the most up-to-date and accurate LLPG under the custodianship of Nottingham City Council's Diane Fieldhouse.

Institute of Sport and Recreation Management

John Wileman, Head of Sport and Leisure, has become President of the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management.

Our lifeguards came 9th in the country at the Royal Lifesaving Society Lifeguard Challenge Event held in Birmingham.

Neighbourhood Management Awards

The Iremongers Pond Association has won first prize in the "Cleaner and Greener Innovation" section at the National Association for Neighbourhood Management awards. These awards focus on how volunteer groups can interact with mainstream services.

Learning Outside the Classroom Awards

Edale Rise Primary and Nursery School in Sneinton Dale is the East Midlands Regional Winner of the 2009 Learning Outside the Classroom Award. Now in their second year, the Learning Outside the Classroom Awards for Excellence and innovation recognise the commitment of schools to giving young people excellent experiences away from their desks.

53 QUESTIONS

Questions to the Nottinghamshire Police Authority.

Costs of Policing Events

Councillor Grocock asked the following question of the Chairman of the Police Authority:-

"Could the Chair of the Police Authority indicate how much policing the events of 5th December 2009 cost? And how much of this will the City Council be responsible for?"

Councillor Malcolm, on behalf of County Councillor Clarke, replied as follows:-

Thank you Lord Mayor.

Councillor Clarke apologises for not being available today, but I have an official answer from the Police Authority which I will read out, but I have to stress that this is an interim answer and, when the Chairman returns, we will make sure he gets a full answer.

The official answer is: costs are yet to be finalised. However, we estimate a cost of around £170,000 and there are no costs to the City Council in actually policing the event.

It is an interim cost and there are other costs to come in. For example, the possibility of billing from other Police Forces - although they may decide to actually not bill us for some of those operations or some of their costs. Then there are things like witness days, when the Police actually have to go to court. Even from the aerospace operation back in May at Sneinton, we don't know yet the true costs because, when those cases come to court, officers will be tied up for many days in court and so the cost of that will have to be added on.

I know the Chairman of the Police Authority quoted a figure in the press - an estimate that is based on the number of PSU vehicles operated on the day, compared with the number of PSU vehicles operated on Ratcliffe-on-Soar where the cost was estimated at £750,000-£800,000. There were more PSU vehicles in the City Centre than were actually in operation at Ratcliffe-on-Soar. So when the Chairman returns we will get you his further clarification on that answer.

As to the question about the City Council; obviously, the Police weren't able to supply those figures but I have now obtained the figures because I realised on the day there were CPO's drafted in to help in the outer areas but who would not otherwise have been on duty. Those costs have been supplied to me as £42,032. Thank You.

City Council Communication Campaigns

Councillor Sutton asked the following question of the Deputy Leader of the Council:-

"Does Councillor Chapman recall saying at the October Council meeting that Councillor Sutton was incapable of telling lies, but that he created "innuendo and falsehoods" when he said that "the District Auditor found that some council publicity was unlawful"?

The District Auditor said in his 2004 Annual Audit and Inspection Letter:

"we have estimated that approximately 5% of all material published in the Nottingham Arrow in 1999/00 was unlawful" (p12)

and

“we concluded that 20% of the 570 press releases issued by the Council in 1999/00 were unlawful (p12)

Was the District Auditor creating innuendo and falsehoods when he said this?

Does Councillor Chapman now accept that it is true that the District Auditor found that some Council publicity was unlawful? ”

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:-

Thank you Lord Mayor.

I think I remember using the word ‘innuendo’ because I always associate Councillor Sutton with innuendo. I don’t ever associate him with ‘falsehood’. It is not a word I use and I don’t think I used the word falsehood but I am not absolutely sure, to tell you the truth. OK.

It may have been a bit naive of me when I was explaining that the District Auditor did not, in my view, find our publicity unlawful because I was actually thinking of this year and not 1999 and the year 2000 and, perhaps, I should have been thinking of the year 1999 and 2000 rather than this year and it is very remiss of me - but none of us are perfect - but that is one of the reasons why I thought that we weren’t acting illegally, so would you forgive me. But there is more. The law he is complaining about - going even further back than 1999 - is the 1986 Local Government Act, an act passed by the Thatcher government, which is highly restrictive and which was opposed by both Liberal and Labour, because I was there lobbying against it having to ring people up including Manny Shinwell who was deaf (apparently you used to have to ring his neighbour who would then go across the road and knock on his door in order to be able to get him to answer the phone) so I remember that very, very clearly. But, nevertheless, the law is the law and we must abide by it but, as we all know, what is very, very important, is the interpretation of the law and that particular law is quite ambiguous and interpretations varied quite considerably.

What we were talking about in 1999/2000 was to do with the amount of publicity that the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holders were getting in the local Arrow and was exclusively, as far as I remember, about that. The view was that if we had quotes, or if we had pictures in the Arrow, then it could be interpreted that we were from a political party and,

therefore, it was promoting us as political individuals, which I think is a very obscure interpretation, but that was the interpretation that the District Auditor came down on. But what was quite interesting about that was that we were the only local authority in the country in that position.

Other local authorities with gay abandon were publishing photos of Leaders, publishing photos of Portfolio Holders but because of the Nottingham situation were found not to be abiding by the law in that particular instance. But on that basis, one would have assumed that local government ministers who have their photos published, Boris Johnson, Mayors who have their photos published, would also be against the law. But for some reason, the Leader of Nottingham had to have his face blanked out or have any articles anonymised if he were to appear in the Arrow and there is a certain stupidity about that. There was obviously a conflict of interests or a conflict of aims between the promotion of Councillors and the need to be publicly accountable and that particular piece of legislation and that is why we have got into the difficulty we have. There is, in my view, a duty to promote but I would have thought, for example, that the Liberals, who are very open on the whole, would have actually come down on the second interpretation; that there is more of a duty to promote than a duty to suppress, information to the public, even in Council legislation. But the fact that the District Auditor, at that time, did conclude that it was not legal, in my view, was not terribly relevant, because in the end nothing came of it. It was, in fact, his interpretation at that particular moment and, given the fact that the rest of the country would behave in a different way and it never got to law, then I would actually dispute if it was illegal. What is also quite interesting is that, since that point, the whole mood has changed. We now have Mayors, and the expectation is that Mayors are accountable, and their activities are publicised by the Council - and that is no different than the position that the Leader of this Council was in at that particular time.

In 2006 we had the White Paper which talked about the Duty to Promote - not only the Leader of the Council, not only Portfolio Holders, but Councillors. And then we have the 2007 Local Government Act, the provisions of which have not been entirely implemented - but that reinforced the 2006 White Paper. Then we have the Local Government Association which, again, is urging us all - all parties, to promote the existence of Councillors, to promote their views, and to promote the facilities they offer. That is why this year, even though there has been very little change, in my view, in the way we are behaving compared to 1997, people are not finding us guilty of any miscreance in terms of

publicity. What I would also say to the Liberals is that they are taking advantage of that position because, in the Community Arrow, we now have pictures of Liberals smiling. I have one of you Councillor Foster, actually, somewhere here, smiling, with a big cheque, handing over to some lady, some constituent, and your constituents can now have the benefit of knowing you are doing things like handing big cheques over to people, smiling. We even have, my God, on the same page, a picture of Councillor Wood smiling. How rare is that? So, in fact, what I would say is that we have reached that position because this Council has been insistent, but it asserts its rights, over and above some of the dubious judgements of District Auditors in the past and, rather than condemning me, I think the Liberals ought to be thanking me because now their constituents can see them in the Arrow which they would not have been able to in 1999. Thank you very much.

City Council Publicity

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

"Does the Portfolio Holder recall accusing the Liberal Democrats of publishing untruths in Focus leaflets regarding the District Auditor saying in 2005 that the Council published unlawful material, and being afraid to say it in Full Council?"

Is he not aware that in February 2005 the then District Auditor issued a press release stating "The Council incurred unlawful expenditure of £13,000 in the year. This is not a huge sum in itself, but there is a very important principle at stake here, which is that public money should not be used in a way which could be construed as trying to gain political advantage"?

Now that the statement has been made in Full Council and the source identified, does he now retract his unfair accusation?"

Councillor Clark replied as follows:-

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

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services advises me "that Council Questions are covered by Standing Orders 2 and 4(e), [which we all knew], and relevant to this question, Standing Order 4(e)(3) applies.

"I do not see why Councillor Clarke should be asked a question which is not within his remit, from reading a transcript of the October meeting the question arises in response to a supplemental question/comment made by Councillor Clarke in his capacity as a Councillor in the chamber, and not as a Portfolio Holder, so it is open to him to refuse to answer the question on that ground."

If circumstances had been different and there hadn't been two other questions on this matter, in the interest of openness, I would have answered but, as there are two other questions on this matter and to avoid repetition, deviation and repetition and to save time, I will leave it to Councillor Chapman, as Portfolio Holder, to give his full and very interesting answers."

City Council Communication Campaigns

Councillor Long asked the following question of the Deputy Leader of the Council:-

"Does the Deputy Leader recall saying, regarding publicity, "It is black and white, it is either lawful or unlawful" and that it had been concluded that the Council's publicity material had been proved lawful?

Can I refer him to the report to Executive Board of 22nd May 2007 on communications?

Does he recall that although the opinion from Clive Lewis QC said that he was concerned that the "07" banners may have contravened Section 2 and that he felt that "the material was on the borderline of lawfulness"?

Does he further recall that the District Auditor said "In my opinion the expenditure on the "0607" poster and banner material is of questionable lawfulness"?

How does he reconcile these statements with his?"

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:-

I go back to my previous answer, Lord Mayor that, when I was asked the question, I naively thought that we were talking about the current year -

why wouldn't I? I didn't realise we were going back first of all to 1999/2000, and then two years ago.

My second point is that we have never been found unlawful. Nobody has taken us to court, it has been an opinion. In fact, in this instance, it was 'not lawful' it was some very odd phraseology used, I think, 'on the boundaries of lawfulness', I can't quite remember, or 'questionable lawfulness'. Well, quite honestly, some of us live in the real world, some lawyers and District Auditors do not.

Question of lawfulness is either lawful or not lawful, as you actually have to do something about it, and you can't do something about it on the basis of questionability. It's a bit like a court of law. This is actually the test of whether it is black or white. You are not found 'questionably guilty' when in a court of law. You are either found guilty, or not found questionably innocent. You are found guilty or innocent. In Scotland, it is not proven. So, quite honestly, we have got to the stage where it is one or the other. We do have to operate the system and you do need that clarity. They have not provided the clarity and on that basis they have not taken us to court. On that basis it is quite black and white.

Registration of Businesses for the Workplace Parking Levy

Councillor Benson asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Area Working:-

"Can the portfolio holder explain to me why all businesses have to register for the Work Place Parking Levy, and can she give an assurance that businesses with less than 11 parking spaces will never have to pay this tax?"

Councillor Urquhart replied a follows:-

Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Benson.

It is interesting isn't it. We are in the Christmas Council Meeting and Christmas tends to be a time when you start to think about traditions - and I know that in my Christmas preparations there are some things that I do, because of family tradition, but when I think about it I am not quite certain why I am doing things in that particular way. Maybe there is some obscure call to some form of loyalty or connection with a wider family group. Anyway, I think that the Conservatives are clearly on my

wavelength in that as it now seems very traditional on their part to ask me a question on Work Place Parking Levy. I am not certain to what end, but I suspect, for them, that it will bind them together in some way and in some sense of loyalty to their particular tribe.

Anyway, the basic thing to say - and I will answer in what has become traditional for the Work Place Parking Levy question at Council – that we believe in two more lines of the tram and we know that the levy is our way to fund it. Whereas our counterparts in the Conservatives can't be sure if they support the tram or not and, if they did, they don't know where they would get the money from.

So once again, in keeping with tradition, I answer the question, but pose back the more fundamental question, which is: Do you agree with our local Chamber of Commerce who are very clear in their support for the next two lines of the tram, or are you, with your County Council colleagues, keen to reverse the progress made in transport in the City and conurbation? Because we do have a formidable reputation in terms of transport. Our public transport provision has been rated as excellent by the Audit Commission during the recent Comprehensive Area Assessment. Public transport is an area where we have a Green Flag and they say getting about Nottingham is easy by public transport which keeps on getting better and better. It won't continue to get better and better unless we move forward. However, such progress and such accolades are not an accident. They are a result of years and years of clear policy direction and significant investment. This city is served by two of the country's leading bus operators and one highly successful tram network. So to cope with the likely increase in population in the coming years and for even more better public transport and to help tackle the problems caused by traffic congestion, further investment is needed.

The Work Place Parking Levy will raise an average of over £14 million per year, over its 23 years, all of which will be spent to improve public transport. We are very clear. We know where we stand - no Work Place Parking Levy, no tram. It's as simple as that. So, to come to the specifics of this particular question in the traditional long running series. The Work Place Parking Levy is a charge on employers within the City who provide eleven or more eligible work place parking spaces. Those who provide ten or fewer, will receive a 100% discount. All work place parking places at Fire and Rescue Services premises, Police, Serious and Organised Crime Agency premises and qualifying NHS premises will receive a 100% discount. However, it is clearly important that employers who

qualify for 100% discount will still be required to have a licence because, of course, we need to know the ongoing number of work place parking spaces being provided in our administrative boundary and we need to track changes in those because, clearly, some places who currently would receive 100% discount may, at some point in the future, look to expand and wouldn't any longer receive as much discount. Or, alternatively, in the other direction, places who would be currently liable to pay may at some point in the future, reduce their parking spaces and would not be liable to pay. So it enables our compliance and enforcement activities to be effective at all premises and, hopefully, it will - and this is part of the purpose of the levy itself – encourage employers to manage their parking actively.

So the 100% discount, for all employers who provide those 10 or fewer places, recognises the proportionately higher impact of the additional administration cost on smaller businesses and the lesser impact these organisations have on congestion. So the discount, we estimate, will apply to about 85% of employers who provide workplace parking. However, it only accounts for 20% of liable parking places being removed from the charge because the majority of work place parking is provided by larger employers within the City.

Our larger employers, of course, support the future growth and prosperity of the City recognising that congestion costs them money; and more tram lines and better buses are quite key to any congestion solutions and, as commuters are the main cause of congestion in Nottingham, I believe that it is only fair that businesses accept some responsibility, especially those larger employers, and proactively manage the traffic going to and from their employment sites and contribute to investment in the public transport alternatives to the car. Ultimately, businesses will benefit from less congestion and employees will individually gain through better public transport options. Business investment in large scale transport infrastructure is something that is commonplace in other parts of Europe. The investment in transport in France is one example.

The Workplace Parking Levy Scheme was confirmed by the Secretary of Transport on 31 July 2009 and, as a result, the discount for the smaller businesses with ten or fewer liable spaces has been written in the Work Place Parking Levy legislation and has been through an extensive consultation and approval process, both nationally and locally. City Council on the 14 September resolved to implement the Scheme in line with the Nottingham Scheme Order. So, any change, including discounts

and exemptions, would require the same extensive public consultation process and a Variation Order which would need to be approved by this full Council and then be confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport. So, therefore, there would have to be a compelling case put forward for any changes to the existing Order including any steps to remove the current discounts for small businesses and front line emergency services.

So the scheme is set, with the discount set within it. Overall, the Work Place Parking Levy is the way for us to fund two more lines of the Tram, to make sure we have a sustainable link bus network and to ensure improvements to the station. It is quite simple, no Work Place Parking Levy, no tram.

School Uniforms

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

"Would the portfolio holder agree with me that it would assist parents and carers financially if Nottingham City Council would encourage schools to supply sew-on/iron-on badges instead of forcing parents to purchase uniforms from more expensive specialist shops?"

Councillor Mellen replied as follows:-

Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Morley for her question.

School uniforms used to be the subject which caused debate in and around school communities in our City. Arguments were put forward as to whether a pre-set uniform was a good thing or whether children's individuality and comfort, and hence their readiness for learning, could be best achieved by letting them wear their own clothes for school.

This no longer seems to be an issue for most schools because both secondary schools and now the vast majority of Primary Schools in our City, encourage children strongly to wear a uniform. The benefits of belonging to a school, wearing clothes that are appropriate for learning and the positive effect for children's behaviour are regularly cited as good reasons for compulsory uniform for children.

As Council will recall, we held a public consultation about school clothing allowances last year as part of the Budget consultation. One of the outcomes of that consultation with parents, in relation to the cost of school uniforms, identified sew-on and iron-on badges as a way of reducing the cost of uniforms. Now, although the Local Authority can - and does - give advice to schools on the matter of school uniforms, decisions of this nature are for school governing bodies to make. However, we have in the past year, worked with schools on the issue of uniforms.

In October, Children's Services, in partnership with Pupil Benefits, held a market stall event which encouraged schools to review their school uniform policies and strongly consider providing sew-on badges to parents. An article was also sent through the weekly school newsletter SCENE which advised schools of a number of other actions they could take to reduce the cost of uniform to parents. This was part of the 'On Your Side' campaign to help families through this time of economic hardship.

Schools have also been provided with a contact within Children's Services to advise and assist them in reviewing their current policy and school uniform arrangements. I understand that, since October, at least one primary school, Melbury School in Bilborough, has already started to provide school badges to its parents at minimal costs as a result of this advice. This is not the only school; a number of others across the City have been offering this for some time as an alternative to purchasing a school uniform item with a logo already integral to the item of clothing.

So, yes Councillor Morley, I would be in favour of schools offering this as an alternative to parents who wish to save money on school uniform. A number of schools already do this and I would like to see this number grow. The Council has already given advice to schools wishing to pursue this way forward and encouragement to all schools to look at this possibility of offering such a scheme.

Management of Staff Vacancies and Recruitment

Councillor Price asked the following question of the Deputy Leader of the Council:-

"Does the Deputy Leader agree that if this Council is an organisation that is serious about its budget, it needs to have a central list of staff vacancies so that the recruitment of staff and the associated costs can be managed more strategically?"

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:-

Thank you, Councillor Price, for your question.

Yes, I do agree, and it is a good question. The Council will be introducing a better system of staffing control in the new financial year which will allow us to identify vacancies corporately.

However, it would be wrong to suggest that the existing processes do not enable effective budget resource management which is where I do disagree. Since October 2008, the Council has had in place a good vacancy management test and the effectiveness of the vacancy management process - sorry I did not write this I wish I had, but I wouldn't have written it as it was - and the effectiveness of the vacancy management process was the recent workplace reduction, where over 1,000 employees were initially identified as being at risk of redundancy and, ultimately, only 20 employees were made compulsorily redundant, Which, I think, is a major achievement.

The main reason the Council was able to minimise the number of compulsory redundancies was that vacancy management had successfully created a pool of suitable vacancies into which employees at risk of redundancy could be successfully redeployed. This saved the Council a considerable amount of money in potential redundancy costs and, clearly, was to the benefit of the employees concerned who were able to keep their jobs with the Council. So, in short, the central system for staffing control could be improved - you spotted that. It will be improved and if it isn't, I am sure you will come back to me - and I hope you will; but secondly, we have done, I think, an exceptional job in minimising the number of redundancies and therefore helping more staff to maintain their jobs but also keeping down redundancy costs. Thank you.

Refusal Rates for Decent Homes Modernisations

Councillor Hartshorne asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Delivery:-

"Please could you let me know what is the refusal rate in Nottingham of those people offered Decent Homes modernisation?"

Councillor Liversidge replied as follows:-

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank Councillor Hartshorne for his question.

The problem of refusing modernisation of houses has always been an issue for all housing authorities. Many of you have probably come across constituents who have moved into a house where every other house in the road has had some sort of modernisation but they have not had it, because someone in the past has refused that modernisation and it creates problems throughout all authorities throughout the country.

My understanding is that in Nottinghamshire, the majority of authorities are actually having a refusal rate of over 10%. In fact, I understand that one district authority is having a 25% refusal rate. It is going to create massive problems for them in the future. So I am really pleased to say that Nottingham City Homes' refusal rate is only 2.5%. That means 97.5% of tenants are actually saying yes to having their decent homes modernisation. Now, I think that is due to the fact that Nottingham City Homes have gone about advertising and publicising what their modernisation is going to be very well over the last two or three years, so people have actually become used to wanting this modernisation - wanting to have it. I think it is the way we are doing modernisation in Nottingham, in that we are doing it in pieces rather than whole houses, where some authorities are whole house, which is the thought we had originally. But I think that doing the windows first, then going on to other things, is a very easy way of actually providing modernisation for people, because it means that they don't have a large scale disruption over a long period for each of the elements. It is also saving Nottingham City Homes a lot of money. When I say a lot of money, it is probably saving, at the moment, upwards of £40million on the budget of Nottingham City Homes. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

OFSTED Annual Performance Rating

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

"Would the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services comment on the recent Ofsted annual performance rating of services for children and young people in Nottingham?"

Councillor Mellen replied as follows:-

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

The Children's Services annual rating is part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process.

The CAA covers all aspects of the area including both Council and non-Council organisations. This was published by the Audit Commission on their new One Place website where all reports are now available including the Children's Services OFSTED inspection.

For the first time, the 2009 annual rating shows that Nottingham City Council's Children's Services are judged to be performing well by OFSTED and the children in our City are seen by inspectors as getting off to a good start. A rating of 3 out of 4 has been given this year for the first time.

Since the establishment of the department for Children's Services in 2006, we have striven to become a good Children's Services authority. Until now the authority has been judged to be satisfactory overall. So, achieving this improvement to a good rating is very encouraging and credit should be given to the hard work of all staff both in schools, in other parts of the Council, partners and stakeholders who have also contributed to achieving this.

No one would deny that there are huge challenges in our City but this rating shows that our partnership with schools and other services providing to our young people is strong and delivering better outcomes for the children of Nottingham. The annual performance rating shows that, in most areas, our performance is in line with that of similar authorities and has shown a significant improvement since the establishment of Children's Services in 2006.

The letter received from the Divisional Manager of the Comprehensive Area Assessment also mentions that Nottingham has a, to quote “clear and sustained trended improvement of standard at 16” and that, to quote again, “the gap in achievement between children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable and their peers is smaller in Nottingham than found elsewhere and that the overall effectiveness of all inspectors, services, settings and institutions is good”. The rating also draws on individual assessments made over the past years such as that of the adoption service earlier this Autumn which resulted in a 'good with outstanding features' judgement.

This judgement too is surely a testament to continued investment in our children and young people from both the Labour government and Labour Council. Children, particularly the most vulnerable, have been prioritised in every budget in this Chamber since Unitary Status in 1998. We have recognised that good educational standards and safeguarding for our children is of the highest priority and the bedrock of the City success both now, and in the future, and have consequently invested consistently in children.

The future looks bright for further improvement as well. In the past 12 months, the Nottingham Children’s Partnership has been formed and is well represented from all across all key partners and has adopted a strongly performance-based approach around the Children and Young People’s Plan. We also know that the way we have set up our Partnership is aligned to the best practise from across the country. This means we are well positioned to build on this good rating for the future. As we speak, our Children and Young People’s Plan is being re-developed to ensure continued alignment to meeting the often complex needs of Children in this city.

'National Status' Aspirations In Nottingham

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

"Is the Portfolio Holder aware of the aspirations of Basford Hall College to become a national centre for skills in renewable technologies? Does he agree that national status in this field would go far to promote Nottingham as a green city and will he endeavour to support that aspiration?"

Councillor Mellen replied as follows:-

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

This is a forward looking and responsible initiative which, I understand, is still in the early stages of development. I agree that for Nottingham to host such a national centre for skills in renewable technologies would be of significant benefit to the City as a whole and, particularly, to our ongoing work to promote Nottingham as a green city.

Clearly this is an area where jobs can, and will, be created in the future to address the need that we have in this City to reduce our carbon footprint and use wisely the resources that are available to us. In order for Nottingham people to have access to such employment opportunities when they become available, we need to ensure that the necessary skills are being developed. So I applaud the aspirations of New College Nottingham to use its Basford Hall Complex for this purpose.

In partnership with Councillor Ahmed I will explore this aspiration with New College Nottingham. I am keen to understand their plans in more detail, particularly focusing on the benefits that such a development will bring to our young people and adults in Nottingham, as well as the new job opportunities it will look to create.

The new relationships we have and are about to enter into with our FE colleges through the transfer of funding for 16 to 19 year olds education and training, provide a further platform in which to hold this dialogue and ensure that such developments are integrated within our wider plans for the City.

54 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION – APPOINTMENTS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND CORPORATE DIRECTOR FINANCIAL SPENDING LIMITS

The report of the Leader of the Council as set out on pages 281 to 285 of the agenda was submitted.

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

- (1) that the revised terms of reference for the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee, as detailed in Appendix B to the report be approved;**
- (2) that, with the exception of expenditure arising from professional decisions affecting individuals, the reductions to the current financial limits for officer delegated decisions in relation to executive matters, as set out in Appendix C to the report be approved with immediate effect and Section III of Appendix 6(d) of the Constitution be amended accordingly.**

**55 CHANGES TO THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT
2009/10 PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS**

The report of the Deputy Leader of the Council as set out on pages 286 to 289 of the agenda was submitted.

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Chapman, seconded by Councillor Clark, that the revised schedule of Prudential Indicators for 2009/10, as detailed in the Appendix to the report, be approved.

56 STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

The report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change as set out on pages 290 to 294 of the agenda was submitted.

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

- (1) that the Safeguarding Children Board for Nottingham City Council be the appropriate body to advise this Council on the protection of children from harm;**
- (2) that, having regard to the recommendation of the Executive Board of 17 November 2009, the Statement of Gambling Policy be adopted and, pursuant to Section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005, the existing “No Casino” resolution be renewed so that, with effect from 31 January 2010, no casino licences be issued within the administrative area of the City of Nottingham;**

(3) that the Corporate Director of Community and Culture be authorised to comply with the relevant statutory requirements in respect of the advertisement and publication of the Statement.

57 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

The report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out on pages 295 to 308 of the agenda was submitted.

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Dewinton, seconded by Councillor Klein, that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2008/09, be accepted.

**58 MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR COLLINS
- INTRODUCTION OF A 'TOBIN TAX' ON FINANCIAL
TRANSACTIONS**

MOVED by Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Chapman:-

"This Council fully supports the Prime Minister's move to persuade the international community to introduce a 'Tobin Tax' on financial transactions in order to provide benefit to Nottingham through;

- Continued and essential public sector stimulus to the economy and to support public services.
- A source of investment in green technology to combat climate change and create a Global fund to support Third World development and provide a source of potential additional demand for UK businesses.

This Council also urges the Government and all national political parties, in the short and medium term, to sustain public spending and in particular funding for local services in order both to prevent a further recession and to provide the investment in infrastructure needed to re-launch the economy."

MOVED by Councillor Sutton by way of an amendment, seconded by Councillor Foster:-

[To be inserted at after the second bullet-point]

"However, this Council recognises, in light of recent comments by prominent figures such as US Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geithner, that a Tobin tax will probably not get international support and will therefore not be feasible. Council believes that if the Prime Minister has not persuaded the international community to adopt a Tobin tax by the end of the G20 Toronto summit in June 2010, the then government should instead adopt a policy of charging UK banks a 10% levy on their profits; payable on all profits made within the tax year without the deduction of previous years' losses."

The final motion to read:

"This Council fully supports the Prime Minister's move to persuade the international community to introduce a 'Tobin Tax' on financial transactions in order to provide benefit to Nottingham through;

- Continued and essential public sector stimulus to the economy and to support public services.
- A source of investment in green technology to combat climate change and create a, Global fund to support Third World development and provide a source of potential additional demand for UK businesses.

However, this Council recognises, in light of recent comments by prominent figures such as US Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geithner, that a Tobin tax will probably not get international support and will therefore not be feasible. Council believes that if the Prime Minister has not persuaded the international community to adopt a Tobin tax by the end of the G20 Toronto summit in June 2010, the then government should instead adopt a policy of charging UK banks a 10% levy on their profits; payable on all profits made within the tax year without the deduction of previous years' losses.

This Council also urges the Government and all national political parties, in the short and medium term, to sustain public spending and in particular funding for local services in order both to prevent a further recession and to provide the investment in infrastructure needed to re-launch the economy."

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

After discussion the original motion was put to the vote and was carried and the Council RESOLVED that:-

"This Council fully supports the Prime Minister's move to persuade the international community to introduce a 'Tobin Tax' on financial transactions in order to provide benefit to Nottingham through;

- Continued and essential public sector stimulus to the economy and to support public services.**
- A source of investment in green technology to combat climate change and create a Global fund to support Third World development and provide a source of potential additional demand for UK businesses.**

This Council also urges the Government and all national political parties, in the short and medium term, to sustain public spending and in particular funding for local services in order both to prevent a further recession and to provide the investment in infrastructure needed to re-launch the economy."

The meeting concluded at 5.15 pm