

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

held at the Council House, Nottingham,

on Monday 12 December 2011 at 2.00 pm

ATTENDANCES

✓ Councillor Wildgust	Lord Mayor
✓ Councillor Ali	✓ Councillor Liversidge
Councillor Arnold	Councillor Longford
✓ Councillor Aslam	✓ Councillor McDonald
✓ Councillor Ball	✓ Councillor Malcolm
✓ Councillor Bryan	✓ Councillor McCulloch
✓ Councillor Campbell	✓ Councillor Mellen
✓ Councillor Chapman	✓ Councillor Molife
✓ Councillor Choudhry	✓ Councillor Morley
✓ Councillor Clark	✓ Councillor Morris
✓ Councillor Collins	✓ Councillor Neal
✓ Councillor Cresswell	✓ Councillor Norris
✓ Councillor Culley	✓ Councillor Ottewell
✓ Councillor Dewinton	✓ Councillor Packer
✓ Councillor Edwards	✓ Councillor Parbutt
Councillor Fox	✓ Councillor Parton
✓ Councillor Gibson	✓ Councillor Piper
✓ Councillor Grocock	✓ Councillor Saghir
✓ Councillor Hartshorne	✓ Councillor Smith
✓ Councillor Healy	✓ Councillor Spencer
✓ Councillor Heaton	✓ Councillor Steel
✓ Councillor Ibrahim	✓ Councillor Trimble
Councillor Jeffery	✓ Councillor Unczur
✓ Councillor Jenkins	✓ Councillor Urquhart
Councillor Johnson	✓ Councillor Watson
✓ Councillor Jones	✓ Councillor K Williams
✓ Councillor Khan	✓ Councillor S Williams
✓ Councillor Klein	✓ Councillor Wood

62 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Arnold, Fox, Johnson and Longford.

63 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Culley declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 11, Motion in the name of Councillor Ball, as she derived business income from renting residential property, and left the room prior to consideration of the item.

Councillor Morley declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 11, Motion in the name of Councillor Ball, as she derived business income from renting residential property, but was not present at the meeting at the time the item was considered.

Councillor Morris declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 11, Motion in the name of Councillor Ball, as she derived business income from renting residential property, and left the room prior to consideration of the item.

Councillor Spencer declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 11, Motion in the name of Councillor Ball, as he derived business income from renting residential property, and left the room prior to consideration of the item.

Councillor Khan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 11, Motion in the name of Councillor Ball, as he derived business income from renting residential property, and left the room prior to consideration of the item.

Councillor Aslam declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 11, Motion in the name of Councillor Ball, as he derived business income from renting residential property, and left the room prior to consideration of the item.

64 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM CITIZENS

Questions from citizens

No questions from citizens were received.

Petitions from Councillors on behalf of citizens

Councillor S Williams submitted a petition to the Lord Mayor on behalf of 182 signatories requesting that the former Greenholme School historic sports ground be saved from development.

65 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2011, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Lord Mayor.

66 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Chief Executive reported the following communications:

British Council's International School Link2Learn Awards

Nottingham had been highly commended in the British Council's International School Link2Learn Awards. This reflected the hard work and dedication of Jo Darley, International Dimension Development Manager, and the commitment by our schools to an exceptional breadth of classroom links across the world, developing less xenophobic and introspective global citizens of tomorrow.

Contemporary Art Society Annual Award 2011

Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery won the top £60,000 Contemporary Art Society Annual Award 2011 on 15 November 2011.

The award of £60,000 was for the Castle to commission a major new installation by acclaimed artist Christina Mackie. The new work would be shown for the first time at the Castle in early 2013.

It was the second major award to go to the Castle this year.

Nottingham Urban Wildlife Scheme's Green Guardian Award

At the Nottingham Urban Wildlife Scheme's Green Guardian Awards held on 29 November 2011, the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Service was presented with an award to commemorate 25 years of the

Nottingham Urban Wildlife Scheme and the partnership working between Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to protect wildlife and green space in the City.

Association for Public Service (APSE) Awards

On 1 December 2011 the Highway Services Team won the APSE Award for most improved performer in Highways and Winter Maintenance.

UK Bus Awards

Nottingham's public transport won six awards at the UK Bus Awards on 29 November 2011.

Nottingham City Council and bus operators Nottingham City Transport and Trent Barton came away with four winners' trophies, two runners up awards and one highly commended.

Nottingham City Council won the award for accessibility for its Linking the Journey project, which improved information and facilities for visually impaired people using public transport.

Bus operator Trent Barton won two awards: for its Marketing Excellence Red Arrow 'Red Instead' campaign and a Putting Passengers First award for its a Customer Obsessed Culture campaign, a ground breaking customer relations policy. In the Top National Bus Driver award, driver Ian Grebby was runner up and his colleague Kevin Wood was highly commended.

Nottingham City Transport won the award for Top National Bus Depot for its Gotham garage and were runners up in the City Operator of the Year award.

Portfolio

Nottingham City Council launched the website www.portfoliocreative.org in May 2011, which encouraged the UK public sector to save time and money by sharing marketing campaigns.

Since the website launch, 220 local authorities, police, fire and health authorities had signed up to the website.

Portfolio was currently short-listed in two categories for the UK Public Sector Digital Awards 2011.

Rosehill School

Rosehill School in St Anns was officially opened on 5 December 2011.

It has benefited from £8.6 million investment, which completely transformed the school into a state of the art building, specifically designed to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of pupils with autism.

Children in Care Charter

Nottingham has more than 700 children and young people in care and recent care leavers, and a new charter has been created pledging support to:

- involve children and young people in planning for their own care arrangements;
- support them in the transition to independent adulthood;
- only make changes to their care arrangements when absolutely necessary to keep them safe and well.

67 QUESTIONS

European Regional Development Fund

Councillor K Williams asked the following question of the Deputy Leader:

Would the Deputy Leader please comment on the under spend in the European Regional Development Fund, the reasons behind the under spend and the impact it is having on Nottingham?

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:

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

The European Development Fund, the ERDF, is finance aimed at creating regeneration, it is managed by the government and requires

match funding, either from government or from other sources. Currently, nationally there is £1.2 billion unspent, that is as much as was in the last round of the regional growth fund, 40% of it remains unallocated. We have only until 2013 to spend it. In the East Midlands, £110 million remains unspent and is a source of funding to create growth and rebalance the economy, which should be one of the government aims, it is indeed one of the government's declared aims, so you would have thought that the government would have been enthusiastic about it, but not so. It depends on match funding, but match funding has dried up because it used to be the Regional Development Agencies, which the government has abolished, which used to provide a lot of the match funding.

The management of the fund is bogged down in process, it used to be dealt with by the Regional Development Agencies, but has now been transferred to Whitehall and as a consequence is now getting bogged down in procedure. Moreover, whereas the Regional Development Agencies knew the areas, and they knew the firms, they were able to take some risks, the civil service is highly risk averse. Now I don't want to indulge in point scoring or at least not that much, but the real issue is that schemes in Nottingham are at risk. We have £19 million to spend before 2013. We have already made the most of some of the money we have had. We have extended ultra-band in the City, we have provided business support and we have provided work spaces for small industry. However, there is still £10 million in the pipeline to be spent, and we are geared up to spend it in Nottingham, and we are expecting some sort of decision on some of the money by April 2012. However, not only has the process been slow, not only is there no match funding, the government has imposed an 80% limit on outstanding funds which means that of our £10 million, we have a ceiling of £8 million to put through. Now they are obviously worried about overspend, however, the way that this scheme has operated is that a lot of the existing permissions will not materialise largely because there is no match funding. Moreover, some will be slower than others, and some even in the pipeline will slip away and anybody who has ever had any experience of capital programming will know that you over-programme in order to meet your target, I noticed that Councillor Parbutt has lots of experience and understands these matters. So the risk is, that we could end up, in Nottingham, losing out considerably and so could, actually, the rest of the country in a scheme which is using European money to create regeneration, to rebalance the economy and, meanwhile, the government is doing very little about it. There are a couple of schemes that could lose out in Nottingham, one is

New College Nottingham's Sustainable Construction and Innovation Centre which is a development of a centre which would support sustainable businesses in the construction sector creating 73 new jobs, also training young people how to build and get involved in the green construction sector; the other one is Experience Nottinghamshire Events Bidding Unit, the development of a unit to attract major conferences and events to the City, creating up to 200 new jobs. So, as a result of the government inaction, poor decision making, the abolition of the RDAs, this City risks losing up to 400 jobs and many millions of pounds' worth of investment. I find it very ironic that we could be repatriating some of this money, not only back to the treasury but to Europe, under a Conservative and Liberal Government. Interesting.

Solar Panel Feed-in Tariff

Councillor Neal asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Energy and Sustainability:

Can the Portfolio Holder for Energy and Sustainability tell Council what the reaction has been to the Government's cut to the Solar Panel Feed-In-Tariff by more than a half as from today?

Councillor Clark replied as follows:

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

The bare statistics of the City's response are as follows - on 31 October, the change in feed-in-tariffs from 23:59 on 11 December was announced, a cut from 43.8p to 21p a kilowatt hour. Officers from the Asset Management Team met with the three contractors that had been appointed on 31 October and I chaired a PV Project Board on the next day, 1 November. Following detailed, frank and realistic discussions, it was agreed to accelerate the agreed programme from the following Monday, the 7 November. That would be a programme planned for five months delivered in five weeks, and they did it. The three contractors have completed 1,242 installations, add to that the 60 delivered under the scheme before it was accelerated, 31 new properties built under the Homes and Communities Agency new builds scheme properly registered, and 592 previously completed and featured in the national press on 31 October, with the E-on 'rent a roof' scheme. So the grand total comes to 1,925 and key staff from Nottingham City Homes are here to celebrate this fantastic news, most of those who deserve a mention

are here, but some may either be catching up on their sleep or catching up on other work that was put on hold during this five week period - Alex Dale, Communication Officer, Sheila Gennard, PV Project Liaison Officer, John Jackson, Electrical Project Manager, Graydon Peacock, Electrical Technical Officer, Steve Hale Assistant Director Asset Management, and Steve Edlin also from the Asset Management Team, and many others. They are all heroes to me and they deserve this round of applause. They need to go back to their colleagues at the offices and share the fact that they are heroes.

Here is a bit more detail. I received six emails yesterday to inform me of the progress and I received a weekly update throughout the five week acceleration. The contractors delivered the following numbers- Kier 180, Wates 412 and Keepmoat, a staggering, 710, and here's why we were so successful - to start the project, I took a report to Executive Board on 19 July that agreed, amongst other recommendations, to install solar panels as part of the partnership agreement, to authorise the prudential borrowing of up to £8.5 million, to authorise the development of an implementation plan and, with great insight, to delegate responsibility to me as Portfolio Holder to authorise any additional actions that may have been necessary to deliver this project before the 31 March 2012. There were additional actions in abundance because delivering the project by 31 March 2012 suddenly meant, after government intervention, delivering by 23:59 on 11 December 2011. Secondly Hestia, the best in the business, carried out objective and impartial desk top assessments to find out which properties, owned by NCH, were most suitable using google maps and other data. The criteria was some of the broadest nationally in requiring a roof within 60 degrees of south, as well as other criteria such as roof size, overshadowing, etc. Based on this analysis, 4958 tenants were sent letters inviting expressions of interest. Of these, 1508 replied by the deadline on the letter, and a further 200 replied after the deadline. All these replies were date stamped so we had a list of appropriate customers.

Thirdly, using these addresses, we needed approval from Western Power. It is obvious that our current grid was designed solely to deliver electricity to properties, not to accept it from them, so it is appropriate that Western Power has to approve every address. Western Power could not have been more helpful and, given our clean and accurate data, by 22 October Western Power had approved all addresses for installation.

These three key actions when planning for a five month project, were necessary and sufficient conditions for us to accelerate the process to beat this arbitrary deadline. I have asked for some figures of other core cities and these are not entirely comparable and have only come through since this meeting started, but, according to the FiTs Installation website from Ofgem, our figure is down as 910 so obviously there is a day or two's lag, this is yet another website that has been struggling because the registration website was struggling for a few days. They are working evenings because it is crashing all day. We are down as 910, so on this table of all the core cities, we are actually being beaten by Sheffield only at 1230. So I think you could scale these all up because of action that has taken at pace over the last few days. Of the other cities, Birmingham is down at 551, slightly over half of what we have done, they have done a lot more commercial properties but we have beaten Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool by a mile, Manchester by a mile, Newcastle by a mile and we have been beaten by Sheffield on pure numbers but, when you think that we are a City with about half the population of Sheffield, the fact they got 320 more than us probably shows that per capita we have done very well indeed.

So given the commitment of the dedicated team as I have already said, the team prepared to work right up to the deadline, the last email I got was at 9:30 pm last night, they worked right up to the deadline of 23:59 last night, we did it.

Biotechnology Businesses

Councillor Edwards asked the following question of the Deputy Leader:

It is 50 years since the patenting of Ibuprofen, following its discovery and development in Nottingham.

What lessons for the economic development of the City can we draw from the bio-technology businesses in Nottingham?

Are there any constraints on the success of the sector, such as the availability of local technicians, that can be tackled?

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:

Can I thank Councillor Edwards for his question.

Ibuprofen is just one of the many examples of the strength and depth of the science and technology sector in the City. Bio-science and pharmacy are one of the City's major strengths. This sector has grown in recent years due to a combination of both demand, because of demographic changes, people are living older therefore requiring more medicaments and people's attitudes to health, and also as a result of supply, we are getting a constant stream of supply of research and development from the universities and companies in the locality providing new products. Now bio-technology businesses are particularly successful and these are the lessons, because of the support the City gives them. There is the space to grow and space for spin-out companies at Bio-City and science parks, so we have two hubs and two centres.

At Bio-City there is a facility to access specialised instruments and machines that small companies could not hope to buy, but can use as part of the Bio-City to test and help commercialise their products. There is also a mentoring and business support to help these companies from other bio-science companies and from specialist business support organisations. This is always one of the benefits of having a hub, they act together and they spin-off the benefits. There is also a dedicated investment fund supported by the City Council called Mobius, which is geared at developing the bio-city sector, particularly start-up companies. However, Councillor Edwards also asked what the problems are and there are two main problems, the first is a skills problem, the sector faces a considerable skills gap, not from graduates, we have plenty of graduates, but from NVQ Level 3 Technicians in science subjects, including, of course, the bio-sciences and this applies across all science sectors in the City. Through the Science and Technology Advisory Council, which the City Council has helped re-establish, it used to be the Science City Board, we are looking at identifying a range of science and technology subjects that are currently being offered by a range of schools and colleges, and we want to find out whether these courses reflect the needs of the sector and the City, so what we are trying to do is match up education with what the sector needs, and it sounds obvious but it is something we should have done years ago, but it has not been done and we are about to do it. Although, I do have to say, that there is a responsibility on the sector itself to train people, so we also need to be asking them what they are doing about it.

The second weakness is the capacity to benefit from the research and development, the roll-out and the Mobius fund could help that, but it is mainly for start ups, but I also know that Councillor McDonald has been

working hard and trying to get a fund together, an investment fund for medium range businesses, in order to help them develop, and I fully expect some of it to be targeted at that sector, so there is hope in that direction. We still have a lot of work to do to convince people in the university and get them into the mindset where it is not just good enough to invent something, the next step is to develop it of course, which they would do, but the next step is to develop it within the City so we actually get to the point where it is manufactured in the City and we get jobs out of it.

Thank you.

Government's agenda for Public Services

Councillor Morris asked the following question of the Leader:

Would the Leader comment on the Government's agenda for Public Services?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:

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

The government's attitude to public services, like so much of government policy, is irrational, incoherent and driven by clichés. Their view appears to be private good, public bad and the only response to the current economic challenges facing the country is to cut back public spending of all kinds and practically all services, even if the consequence of this is some 700,000 public sector workers losing their job. Of course, this has been the agenda since the Tories and Liberal Democrats came to office in May 2010, and I will leave members to judge whether this approach has been successful. However, it is worth pointing out that when Labour left office the economy was growing by 2% a year, unemployment was falling and debt was declining. Now, after 18 months of this Tory-led government and after billions of pounds of public spending cuts that was supposed to be the solution to the country's economic problems, the economy is going back into recession, unemployment is rising and borrowing will be £138 billion more than expected over the next four years and, certainly, significantly more than planned by the last Labour government.

So why is that? Well as Nancy, my youngest daughter said to me over the weekend, “if you cut spending so that people lose their jobs and if the public sector is not buying stuff from the private sector so they lose their jobs too, aren’t those people having to claim benefit and not paying any tax, how does that help the government borrow less?” Still, I’m sure the Chancellor knows more about these things than my daughter. After all, it makes absolute sense, having cut billions of pounds of capital spending to save money on infrastructure projects like the A453 immediately after it came to office, it makes absolute sense to reinstate those projects just 18 months later. It makes absolute sense having cut the Future Jobs Fund 18 months ago to save money, to reintroduce a version of it last month to help tackle youth unemployment, and it makes absolute sense having cut the BSF programme for renewing school buildings 18 months ago to save money, to then introduce funding for school building improvements last month. Lord Mayor, you get the distinct impression that these are just some of the decisions that were originally taken for ideological reasons for the first few months that the government was in office but have then been reversed in a form of panic as the economy has taken a dive.

Perhaps the biggest show of contempt for public sector workers however, is the attitude of ministers towards public sector pensions. Remember of course that 17 of 23 cabinet members are millionaires and they will, in any case, benefit from substantial public sector pensions as ministers are unaffected by these proposals. Ministers, nevertheless, argue that the current system of public sector pensions are over generous, unaffordable and unfair. Over-generous even though the average public sector pension is just £7,800 a year and, for women working in local government, just £2,800 a year. Unaffordable, even though both the local government and NHS pension schemes are cash rich with income supported by investments exceeding outgoings in pension payments. This, notwithstanding that changes made to the scheme just three years ago to ensure that both pension schemes remain affordable in the long term.

Unfair, even though having paid into a substantial and sustainable pension scheme, staff are now going to be expected to pay more, work longer and take a smaller pension. Lord Mayor, Ministers would not stand being treated the way they see fit to treat public sector workers. Well it is not our attitude, we value public services and we value the staff that deliver them and will continue to defend those services in the face of unfair and excessive government spending cuts.

Trade Unions

Councillor Parton asked the following question of the Leader:

Nottingham City Council subsidised trade union activity to the tune of £428,000 during 2010-11. Does the Leader of the Council believe that the residents of Nottingham are getting value for money from this considering the attempted disruption to services of recent strike action?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

I do of course acknowledge this raw hatred of trade unions that most members of the Conservative Party seem to have, however, it would be rather stupid to fail to recognise the role that union officers play in making such large organisations like the Council work effectively. The government, big business, major manufacturing companies, even Tory controlled authorities up and down the country, including Nottinghamshire County Council, provide facility time and accommodation for trade union officers and Nottingham City Council does the same. The Council employs over 10,000 employees and to consult and negotiate with them on their terms and conditions of employment individually would clearly be impossible. The most efficient means of meeting the Council's employment law obligations is through collective bargaining and, without trade union officers with the time and resources to engage in that, implementing complex projects such as single status would have been impossible.

As for the recent strike action, managing the impact of the strikes and indeed protecting our most vulnerable services through strike exemptions could not have happened without the opportunity for detailed negotiation with union officers beforehand.

Finally, if Councillor Parton is really bothered about the disruption to local services, I suggest he make his view known to ministers. After all, they have provoked the strike and seem intent on taking action likely to cause further industrial action.

Widening of the A453

Councillor Culley asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation:

Will the Portfolio Holder join the Conservative Group in celebrating the government's decision to proceed with the widening of the A453, agree that it is the number one priority for businesses in and around the City, and congratulate local businessmen and the Conservative led County Council for the role they played in the decision?

Councillor Urquhart replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and very many thanks to Councillor Culley for her question.

Of course, as Councillor Collins has already commented on, the decision to progress the A453, at last, after so many years, is indeed one to be celebrated. This is a crucial transport link and, along side other major transport improvements already under way and planned in the City, such as the Station Hub and the tram extensions, give the City's economic prospects a huge boost. All of those who have worked so hard to secure this investment are to be congratulated. However, in apportioning thanks, it may be worth reflecting and reminding councillors that it was a Labour council which secured the scheme's status as the region's top transport priority and more importantly, it was the last Labour government which programmed the scheme to start in 2010/11.

It was, of course, part of a visionary multi-modal approach with the new two lines of a tram served by a park and ride site, which allowed a much more sensitive highways scheme to be achieved through Clifton than had previously been thought possible. So it is, of course, unfortunate that one of the first acts of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government was to remove the A453 from its hard earned position in that national programme and it was doubly unfortunate, perhaps, that one of the first acts of the Conservative administration at the County Council was to remove their support for the tram, because, of course, if the City Council had not stepped in to find that funding so that the tram scheme could go ahead, it is likely that the A453 scheme might have had to go back to the drawing board. This would have meant, not only expensive redesign, another public inquiry, more delay, more casualties in the

meantime, but also a potentially much worse road based scheme being the outcome for residents of Clifton and Wilford.

So, yes, it is good news that the new government has finally put the scheme back where it was just before the general election, but unfortunate that this delay has been shown to be unnecessary by their u-turn. This delay in getting on with the scheme has cost the Nottingham economy dear at a time when we can least afford it, and, in terms of congestion, it has continued to cost and also in terms of accidents. So, before celebrating too wildly, I would also want to see a firm date and commitment from the Minister, as opposed to the vague timetable as indicated by the Chancellor. I, of course, understand that the County Council may have saved £20 million by not contributing to the tram and I welcome their decision to offer that £20 million to help promote the A453 scheme, just as I am sure that all the millions of future tram passengers and car drivers accessing Nottingham from all three of our motorway junctions will welcome the City's decision to directly fund the provision of world class integrated tram, bus and park and ride transport infrastructure serving the whole county of Nottinghamshire.

And, finally, I would like to remind Councillors that in November 2010 the Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership, which I enjoy sitting on, but my County colleagues, though invited and having places, find difficult to attend, I suspect due to its name, took the initiative to draw together MPs of all parties, colleagues from the Chamber of Commerce, businesses and all local authorities, in producing the 'Lets all Agree on the A453' dossier, including many letters of support and evidence of the true cost of not progressing the scheme. That dossier was presented to government and I think it had a major effect in getting recognition of the issue from the incoming government. So, I think it is important to recognise the inputs of all who have contributed towards making a case for this critically important scheme, as opposed to seeking credit for one party on its own. This issue has, for many years, been one where there has been cross-party agreement and I am pleased that this road is now back where it had been previously although, of course, somewhat delayed from where it should have been.

Parking charges

Councillor Steel asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation:

On-street and off-street parking charges have been recently increased, attempts to hedge bets on two major shopping centre redevelopments has led to the crushing disappointment of Westfield's withdrawal from Nottingham, and increasing numbers of businessmen and women are beginning to realise the detrimental impact the Workplace Parking Levy will have on their operations. Can the Portfolio Holder tell the Council what her next cunning plan is to finish off an already struggling City Centre?

Councillor Urquhart replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you Councillor Steel for your question, and for, of course, packing three questions into one combining all of those Evening Post stories that you've spotted over the past few weeks.

It gives me an opportunity to celebrate the successes of our planning and transport policies in achieving significant inward investment into the City because, once again, it is always us on our side who are proud of what we achieve in Nottingham and who celebrate the successes that we have in Nottingham and who celebrate that level of investment, rather than spending our time running down the City. Nottingham is a busy City, it attracts people from miles around to shop, to socialise and enjoy our varied cultural offer, and we heard at the beginning of our meeting this afternoon about the award that we have won in the cultural sphere.

Some people drive to the City in their cars, while others use its award-winning buses and trams. It may be useful for people to know, of course, that in recent weeks I have been taking a keen interest in footfall in our City Centre, just to see whether everything is as dreadful as Councillor Steel would indicate. The footfall figures for recent weeks show that during November there was a 7.7% increase in footfall on the same month last year and that is also ahead of 2009 figures. That represents 500,000 more people in November this year than last year. I thought that might be helpful for people to know.

So our City Centre car parking offer is designed to give car users a choice about where to park and for how long. Short stay on-street parking bays offer people the flexibility of being able to nip into the City Centre for short periods of time and, therefore, the space is turning over. Smaller retailers depend on this turnover for their trade and, of course, if people wish to stay longer, off-street car parks, such as multi-storeys, are probably more appropriate.

Up until now, after 6pm during the week and all day on Sundays, people have been able to park on those on street spaces which, of course, are only a small fraction of the overall car parking available for unlimited periods of time and, therefore, in some cases these spaces were being used by someone who parked there at the beginning of the period and stayed there for the whole time preventing anyone else from using that space at all. As Sundays are busy shopping days too, there is much demand for that type of parking. It therefore makes sense to introduce parking management and restrictions to apply other than on Monday to Saturday.

For those who choose to park on-street to attend an event at one of the City's venues, I suspect having attended events at the Ice Arena, for example, the cost of deciding to park on-street, is from my experience, a fraction of the price of a ticket you are buying to see someone at the Ice Arena, or to a theatre production or a concert. And, of course, just like anyone coming into our City Centre, people can choose whether they want to use their car or whether they want to use the buses and trams that run late into the night.

So I don't believe that new on-street parking policies will have a detrimental impact on the City Centre, and, in terms of investment into our City and its economic vitality, we are on the verge of securing a deal to build two more tram lines in Nottingham. Arguably, this could be the single biggest boost to Nottingham's economy; half a billion pounds worth of investment in fact; and the creation, according to the Centre for Business Economics, of up to 8000 new jobs. And, of course, all transport planning starts from that priority – the economy. The City's transport strategy has been fully integrated, with the wider aims of its planning policy, to create a sustainable economy.

Of course it's not just me, who thinks this sort of thing, when the Former British Airways chief Sir Rod Eddington, did a study into UK transport infrastructure he pointed out that:

“A good transport network is important in sustaining economic success in modern economies: the transport system links people to jobs; delivers products to markets; underpins supply chains and logistics networks; and is the lifeblood of domestic and international trade.”

So the economic case for the tram is strong, scoring particularly well on the criteria of economic and environmental benefits. The benefit cost

ratio of the tram is 2 to 5. Every £2 spent on developing the scheme puts back £5 into the local economy. That is a very high benefit cost ratio for a public transport project. And, of course, our whole economy will benefit directly through jobs created and, indirectly, through businesses locating here because of the tram. But, of course, locally the Conservatives would have said no to this huge investment, when even their national politicians could see the wisdom of the scheme. I think that as a tool for moving out of the current economic downturn, lines 2 and 3 of the tram is an excellent project.

But, of course, it would not be possible without the Workplace Parking Levy. A difficult and controversial policy without doubt, the business community has long recognised that lines 2 and 3 of the tram, improving the station and the A453 are the transport priorities that this City needs. The business community, whilst they have had their difficulties in coming to terms with WPL, has not yet provided an answer to where else we would get the local funding that is needed for this project.

So these projects, which do top businesses' wish lists for infrastructure improvements, are now due to go ahead. There is little more to say about the A453 as we have covered that extensively in the previous question. So I think if strong leadership is measured in a City by the preparedness to make tough decisions in difficult economic times, then there is no better example of this than us sticking with lines 2 and 3 of the tram, station improvements and working for the A453 along side the introduction of the WPL.

And it is precisely because of our fantastic public transport offer that businesses want to invest in Nottingham. The growth of the NG2 business park over recent years could be attributed directly to the tram proposals. More recently, the developers behind the new Portal near Castle Marina are promoting the site to future tenants with the promise of reduced price tram travel as a staff perk. The ongoing growth of the Science Park off University Boulevard, and our proposals for Medi Park, all hinge on the development of the tram network.

So, of course, to Broadmarsh and Victoria. Now clearly it was a shock that Westfield sold Broadmarsh Shopping Centre to Capital Shopping Centres, but I think the fact that two major players were competing to build in Nottingham, and that one was so keen to expand that they were prepared to buy the opposition out, speaks volumes about Nottingham's appeal to developers.

And, far from hedging bets, I am sure that Councillor Steel will know that that Broadmarsh scheme had been granted planning permission for works that were so far advanced that they were due to start on 21 November with the Victoria scheme also very far along the planning permission route. I am not sure that there is another city with such a huge level of investment already on site or due to commence shortly making Nottingham a very attractive place to do business, shop or to visit.

There's no wonder that further investment in both of our shopping centres is going to happen and, along side of this, we will be working hard to ensure the vitality of our whole City Centre. But I do hope that when he talks about hedging bets that Councillor Steel will not be seeking for us to move with such haste we are unable to safeguard the wider interests of our City Centre by making rapid decisions in this new situation. It is right that we properly consider new proposals from Capital Shopping Centres and work, as always, for what is in the interest of the City's long term future and, if we think about what has happened in our City Centre over the last period of years, Councillor Edwards took a report I understand to the City Centre Area Committee the other week, where he looked at various things that had been achieved since we last drafted a City Centre Master Plan. You can include the alterations to Maid Marian Way, the Turning Point, Lace Market Square, Trinity Square, improvements in Hockley, most recently, and we will talk about this later in today's meeting, the development of Sneinton Square, the delivery of Nottingham Contemporary, our fantastic internationally renowned art gallery, and various improvements up to as far as Canning Circus and improvements around Hockley; a whole list of achievements undertaken by this City in order to make our City Centre an attractive place.

So far from 'finishing off the City Centre' I think that in Nottingham we can be rightly proud of all that is happening in this City to create growth and jobs for local people, despite the efforts of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat government to cut too far and too fast, choking off demand and risking recession.

Annual Audit Letter

Councillor Morley asked the following question of the Leader:

The Council's Annual Audit Letter is particularly damning regarding the Nottingham Jobs Plan. Now the fanfare for the Working Nottingham Partnership Plan of the October meeting has died down, can the Leader of the Council explain why these failings occurred and how will he ensure these mistakes are not repeated in the future?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

Councillor Morley is wrong to suggest that the Council's Annual Audit Letter is damning in its judgement of the Nottingham Jobs Plan. Indeed, the District Auditor goes out of her way to suggest the opposite, and I quote:

"There is much to commend the Council for bringing forward so quickly two large City-wide programmes to support the creation of 1,600 jobs in total."

The District Auditor's comments refer to a report drafted in response to allegations made through a former Liberal Democrat Councillor and his friend at the Nottingham Post suggesting both illegality and impropriety in the way contracts were allocated for work placements within the programme. A report that, in officer time and audit fees, will probably have cost local tax payers around £100,000. The allegations were the latest in a series made against the Council to various organisations and agencies on a range of issues presumably in the hope of gaining some political advantage, and to create stories for a declining newspaper. All together, the District Auditor, Standards Board for England, the Information Commissioner, the Police and the Council's own officers have spent a great deal of time and £100,000's of public money responding to them. It appears that the DA originally believed the allegation, suggesting, that as a result she may have to issue a public report on the matter. However, as she proceeded with her investigation, it became clear that they had little substance leading the DA to conclude that there was, and I quote:

"No evidence of inappropriate allocation of contract contrary to the law or the Code of Conduct."

The report also acknowledges that the Portfolio Holder, and again I quote:

“Complied with the requirements of the Code of Conduct on registration of interests and declaration of interests at formal Council committees and Executive meetings.”

The report referred to in the Annual Audit Letter does, however, identify failings in the way that decisions were taken and recorded and suggests how these should be addressed. Officers accept that there should have been some sharper processes and record keeping in place at the time and changes have already been introduced. Members will, for example, remember amendments to delegations made at the September meeting of full Council and note that a record of all decisions to the value of £25,000 or more, together with details of how they have been approved, is now published monthly through the Executive Board.

Lord Mayor, Nottingham City Council implemented one of the most successful Future Jobs Funds programmes in the country responding very effectively to the opportunity presented and finding employment for over 1,000 people across the City. No other city achieved such a success. We have continued with that work, which is why we have launched the Nottingham Jobs Fund, and a range of other initiatives, which will see the Council invest a further £1 million over the next three years supporting 240 young people into work. Our focus is on helping people stay in, or get into, work, in the interest of the wider economy as a preoccupation that the current government may do well to share.

68 ELECTORAL SERVICES: REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES 2011

The report of the Deputy Leader, as set out on pages 207 to 216 of the agenda, and the appendices which had been circulated separately, was submitted.

RESOLVED that, on the motion of Councillor Chapman, seconded by Councillor Collins, the City Council’s current scheme of polling districts and places be amended by the revisions set out in Appendix 1 to the report and for the reasons stated in each case.

69 TREASURY MANAGEMENT – 2011/12 HALF YEARLY REPORT AND PROPOSED INVESTMENT STRATEGY CHANGES

The report of the Deputy leader, as set out on pages 217 to 229 of the agenda, was submitted.

RESOLVED that, on the motion of Councillor Chapman, seconded by Councillor K Williams:

- (1) the treasury management actions taken in 2011/12 to date, detailed in sections 3.1 to 3.6 of Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;**
- (2) the proposed changes to the 2011/12 investment strategy, detailed in section 3.7 of Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.**

70 ST ANNS AND MAPPERLEY DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACE ORDER

The report of the Portfolio Holder for Area Working, Cleansing and Community Safety, as set out on pages 230 to 240 of the agenda, was submitted.

Part way through consideration of this item Lord Mayor left the room and the Chair was taken by the Sheriff. Lord Mayor resumed the Chair prior to the resolution being passed.

RESOLVED that, on the motion of Councillor Norris, seconded by Councillor Healy:

- (1) it be confirmed that Council was satisfied that nuisance or annoyance had been caused to members of the public, and/or disorder had arisen, which was associated with the consumption of alcohol in the area covered by the Order;**
- (2) the Corporate Director for Communities and Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make and advertise the Order in accordance with the relevant statutory processes;**
- (3) the Order shall take effect from 16 January 2012.**

At 4.00 pm the meeting was adjourned for the Extraordinary meeting of Council to take place and reconvened at 6.05 pm.

71 BYELAWS FOR GOOD RULE AND GOVERNMENT IN RELATION TO SNEINTON SQUARE

The joint report of the Portfolio Holders for Planning and Transportation and Area Working, Cleansing and Community Safety, as set out on pages 241 to 248, was submitted.

RESOLVED that, on the motion of Councillor Urquhart, seconded by Councillor Liversidge:

- (1) Council approve the adoption of Byelaws in the terms outlined in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (2) the Corporate Director for Development and Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to take all such steps as may be necessary to make, seal, advertise and obtain confirmation of the Byelaws so as to bring them into effect.**

Councillors Aslam, Culley, Khan, Morris and Spencer left the room prior to consideration of the remaining items.

72 MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR BALL

Moved by Councillor Ball, seconded by Councillor Liversidge:

“Given the increasing pressure on all housing sectors in Nottingham and the important role that the Private Rented Sector (PRS) plays in housing provision in the City, it is all the more important that the City Council supports the PRS to deliver a good service but also helps tenants to tackle poor landlords. The Council will therefore:

- establish a Nottingham City wide kitemark for standards in private rented accommodation to expand the coverage of landlord accreditation which recognises existing work carried out through Unipol and other schemes;
- create and promote a register of landlords and properties that meet this standard;
- respond to complaints from citizens and take appropriate action including enforcement to protect citizen health, safety and wellbeing;
- increase and improve engagement with PRS landlords through the Housing Strategic Partnership and the Landlord Liaison Panel.”

RESOLVED that the motion be carried.

73 APPOINTMENT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITIES – URGENT ITEM

The Lord Mayor was of the opinion that this item, although not included on the agenda, should be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, as waiting until the February meeting of Council would delay permanent appointment to the post.

The report of the Chair of the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee, as circulated in advance of the meeting, was submitted.

RESOLVED that, on the motion of Councillor Neal, seconded by Councillor Clark, the City Council accepts the Appointments and Conditions of Service recommendation and offers the post of Corporate Director for Communities to John Kelly, on the terms and conditions approved by the Committee.

The meeting concluded at 6.45 pm