

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

held at the Council House, Nottingham,

on Monday 10 September 2012 at 2.00 pm

### ATTENDANCES

✓ Councillor Unczur	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 Urquhart
✓ Councillor Jenkins	✓ Councillor Watson
✓ Councillor Johnson	✓ Councillor Wildgust
✓ Councillor Jones	✓ Councillor K Williams
✓ Councillor Khan	✓ Councillor S Williams
✓ Councillor Klein	✓ Councillor Wood

### **38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dewinton and Johnson.

### **39 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interests were made.

### **40 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS FROM CITIZENS**

#### **Questions from citizens**

The following questions from citizens were received:

#### **Bringing employment back to Bilborough**

The following question was asked by Ms Ann Worthington to the Portfolio Holder for Jobs, Skills and Business:

What are you proposing to do to bring back employment to the area with all the factories on Glaisdale Drive now closing down due to the Workplace Parking Levy and a very poor infrastructure? The area is becoming derelict and it appears that Bilborough has the least money spent on it and I would like to know what is intended to be done about the problem.

Councillor McDonald replied as follows:

Can I firstly thank Ms Worthington for her question, which addresses an extremely important issue.

Regarding Glaisdale Drive itself, the position is that the Council owns some of the freehold interests, it does not own the lease on the buildings. Rather, these belong to private lease holders. However, recognising the challenging circumstances faced by businesses, the Council is currently dealing with several enquiries from long lease holders who have leases with less than 50 years to run, as we recognise they may be having difficulty obtaining bank finances or selling their property. The Council is, therefore, negotiating new longer lease terms that will assist the property owners and that will assist sales, redevelopment, and expansion.

But, of course, Ms Worthington is right to be concerned about this issue, and if I may make a more general point, the Council is also, of course, extremely concerned to ensure that all areas of the City in which there is a high concentration of employers are well supported. I would like to assure Ms Worthington that Glaisdale Drive, as with all such areas, is a focus for our efforts to retain existing businesses and attract new ones.

No one should be under any illusion that this is easy in a recession. However, the Council's inward investment team has actually seen enquiries from companies wishing to relocate to Nottingham increase. That doesn't indicate to me that the Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) is having the negative impact on business retention or relocation. Indeed, the Council is not aware of a single example of a business that has closed down or relocated because of the WPL.

And let's also remember exactly what the WPL is, and what it is for. The WPL is a contribution from business to the development of our City. The WPL secures half a billion pounds in the vital infrastructure investments of the NET Phase Two and railway station improvements, which will, in turn, create thousands of jobs in Nottingham, new business and help ensure our City is a modern, clean, competitive European city.

It also part funds the W3 Worklink bus and the L3 Locallink bus. Neither of these would exist without the WPL.

Of course businesses do not like paying taxes, but nor do they like, and nor do they choose to locate in, cities that lack the ambition to continue to develop and improve. I am very sure that any new business, any new customer, or any client of any new business, would rather they arrived at a shining new station, served by three lines of a world class tram service, rather than a station that is decrepit and falling to bits. WPL is a contribution by Nottingham businesses to that future.

Ms Worthington rightly highlights the challenge we face as a city. This country's economic climate makes it a challenging time for many businesses. We have zero growth in our economy, and a chancellor who seems unable to grasp the importance of doing what this Council is doing, investing in infrastructure to create growth, and using its levers to create demand in the economy, something badly lacking in all cities across the UK.

The challenge is not just to survive in a zero growth economy, it is to compete and, as Ms Worthington rightly notes, and I thank her for making this important point, bringing employment to our estates, as well as the City Centre, is incredibly important.

Last year I visited a company on the Glaisdale Industrial Estate who, despite these challenges, was still trading well. The major issue that they highlighted to me was the ability to recruit skilled young people and that is why we are placing a huge emphasis on skills in our Growth Plan. We are prioritising this through the Nottingham Jobs Fund and through the Employer Hub. This is in addition to the massive investment we announced earlier this summer through the City Deal so that we can bring more employment to areas like Glaisdale, and, in doing so, ensure that those employment opportunities are filled by people from this City.

### **Armistice Day collection**

The following question was asked by Mr K Donlan to the Deputy Leader:

The LMS-Patriot Company thanks former Lord Mayor, Councillor Michael Wildgust, for hosting the publicity event at the Council House on 20 April 2012. Nottingham became the first City in Britain to support 'The Unknown Warrior' National Memorial Railway Locomotive. This project is to be completed in time for the centenary of the Armistice in 2018. The Royal British Legion have endorsed this project as the new National Memorial Locomotive. The LMS Patriot Project thanks Lilian Greenwood MP who, with the support of Graham Allen MP and Chris Leslie MP, represented the City in Parliament at this publicity event.

All Councillors have received material regarding this project, membership is open to individuals, but not to organisations. The LMS Patriot Project is asking Nottingham City Councillors and Council for support. Could the following be considered:

1. Could Councillors show their commitment by taking an Armistice Day collection each year until 2018? Although the funds are welcome, the gesture of support is of the highest value. This sponsorship, at no cost to the public purse could be included in the sponsorship list included in 'The Warrior' newsletter. Could the Lord Mayor co-ordinate the collection at the next Full Council meeting? If each Councillor donated £1 in each annual collection, £385 would be raised by 2018 towards the £1.5 million cost of the memorial

locomotive. This would give positive publicity for the City and be an example for other local authorities to follow.

2. Publicity in the 'Nottingham Arrow', perhaps a photo of the Lord Mayor handing over a cheque to the LMS-Patriot Company Ltd, emphasising that this is at no cost to the public purse.
3. Could reference be made to the City Council's support of this project on the City Council website?
4. Perhaps some publicity associating the City Council with this project could be arranged for Armed Forces Day, 29 June 2013.
5. Any other support that the Councillors or Council could give.

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and can I thank Mr Donlan for his question.

I have been very interested to read the work he has been doing, and working co-operatively with our ex Lord Mayor, other Councillors and MPs. It is an interesting project and I wish him well on it. Nottingham City Council's commitment to showing our respect for the armed forces is highlighted today by the military covenant motion which this group, and I'm sure the group opposite, will be supporting later on.

On the specific questions he asks I will, of course, ask our Communications team to liaise with Mr Donlan about publicity in the Nottingham Arrow, I hope that a timely arrangement can be mutually agreed.

The same commitment stands for our website. I'll also ensure officers work with the Armed Forces Day organisers to provide the project with a platform. I hope that it will be a success.

As for the question about a commitment to taking an Armistice Day collection each year, I would be hesitant to take money away from other organisations which more directly support our veterans and armed forces such as the Royal British Legion. So the answer to that is I don't think we can be very helpful on that.

Nevertheless, in other respects, I do wish Mr Donlan well on his project.

### **'Time to Change' campaign**

The following question was asked by Mr Mick Newton to the Leader:

Is the Leader aware that one in four people will suffer with some form of mental illness during their life and that the national 'Time to Change' campaign is currently seeking an end to discrimination of people who suffer with a mental health illness? Is he also aware that next month plays host to the National Mental Health awareness week and would he highlight how the City Council intends to promote the 'Time to Change' campaign? Would he also explain how the City Council intends to improve policy to end discrimination both internally and externally within the wider community?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and can I thank former Councillor Newton for the opportunity to respond to a health question.

As he knows, Time for Change is a campaign to end stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness, and is led by national mental health charities. So far, it appears that just one Local Authority is signed up to it, and that's not Nottingham, but I am sure that Nottingham, along with other Local Authorities and public bodies will be considering a specific response to this. I know that Nottingham Mental Health Awareness Weeks fall this year, next month, between the 8 to 19 October, and coincides with World Mental Health Day on 10 October. A range of events are planned by the third sector across the City to raise awareness of mental health issues.

We have known for some time that mental wellbeing plays a crucial role, not just in the health of our citizens, but in the impact it has on the ability to achieve at school, secure good employment and support a happy family life. We also know that issues such as unemployment, anti-social behaviour, housing and the quality of the local environment in our neighbourhoods have an impact on mental wellbeing.

According to our annual Citizen Survey, the proportion of people with positive mental wellbeing in Nottingham appears to be in line with the rest of England at present. However, we are concerned that positive mental health continues to be a priority during a time when many families and communities are experiencing the financial pressures of the recession and changes to the benefits system. This will help prevent, and reduce, the high rates of mental illness in our City. Our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment shows that we have approximately 46,000 adults

experiencing a common mental health problem, with some 23,000 requiring treatment.

For these reasons, we've identified mental wellbeing as a priority within the Nottingham Plan. The Health and Wellbeing Board has also identified targets for improving mental wellbeing and, at its meeting on 29 August, agreed to adopt mental health as one of the four broad priority areas for its statutory Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Council is also working with the health service and other partners to develop and finalise a new mental health strategy, which includes tackling the issue of stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness.

Further work will take place over the coming weeks to identify the specific initiatives which can have the greatest impact in this area, and we will continue to take a partnership approach to improve mental health, with other agencies, and look as to how we can reduce stigma and discrimination relating to it.

### **Petitions from Councillors on behalf of citizens**

Councillor Watson submitted a petition on behalf of 147 signatories regarding providing equipment for the park on Firbeck Road, Bilborough.

### **41 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the ordinary and extraordinary meetings held on 9 July 2012, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Lord Mayor.**

### **42 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

The Acting Chief Executive reported the following communications:

#### **Green Flag and Green Flag Community Awards 2012**

Nottingham City has been awarded 25 Green Flag and Green Flag Community Awards for 2012 and is now the highest achieving Authority in the East Midlands and in the top 3 of all the Core Cities in this regard.

The Award Scheme is the country's national quality standard for green spaces. Its criteria promote improvements in grounds maintenance,

security, environmental sustainability and community engagement within parks and green spaces.

Nottingham has once again retained and improved the number of its Green Flag quality parks and green spaces. The City Council was awarded 16 Green Flags and the two universities also secured the award for University Park and the Clifton Campus. The City's Community Green Spaces also achieved 7 Green Flag Community Awards.

### **The Charter for the Bereaved – Gold Standard Award**

The City Council has been awarded The Charter for the Bereaved at the Gold Standard Award level in recognition of the standard of service provided by our Cemetery and Cremation Service.

The Charter sets out the standards of service for the bereavement industry. It also helps authorities set out priorities for future development and improvement alongside demonstrating our commitment to providing excellent service designed to meet the needs of our citizens at a difficult and sensitive time.

### **Decent Homes**

The City has been awarded £45 million worth of funding for the next phase of Decent Homes programme.

£24.8 million for 2013/14 and £20.8 million for 2014/15 is the phasing of that money.

### **National Institute of Adult Continuing Education Community Innovation Fund**

The Museum and Galleries Service, working with citizens from the BME Forum, has secured almost £65k from The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education Community Learning Innovation Fund. This will be used to fund the Universal Roots project, running from September 2012 to July 2013, which aims to strengthen Nottingham's local communities. It does this by engaging learners from diverse cultures to champion community cohesion.

Colleagues will engage groups and individuals from across Nottingham to record oral histories and to produce a world class exhibition and



programme of events inspired by Nottingham's unique World Cultures Collection.

Local people from our diverse local community organisations will steer, and participate in, the whole of the project. Learners will be engaged from priority and hard-to-reach groups including: BME groups, people who consider themselves to be disabled, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and both older and younger people.

### **Least car dependent City in England**

Overall Nottingham was placed third for the least car dependent city in England.

### **Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Wave 2**

The last of the Wave 2 BSF projects, the Farnborough School and Technology College PFI, was signed off on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

### **Lawrence House**

The conversion of former Council offices Lawrence House by Study Inn to high quality student accommodation has been completed in time for the new academic year.

### **Former Councillor Sylvia Parsons**

The Council was informed of the recent death of former Councillor Sylvia Parsons.

Sylvia Parsons was elected to represent the Lenton Ward on 2 May 1991 and served as a Councillor until 2000. She held the position of Lord Mayor in 1995.

Councillors Gibson and Culley paid tribute to former Councillor Sylvia Parsons.

The Council stood in silent tribute to her memory.

## **43 QUESTIONS**

### **Deputy Police Commissioner**

Councillor Culley asked the following question of the Chair of the Police Authority:

Would the Chair of the Police Authority inform the Council whether he will accept the position of Deputy Police Commissioner should it be offered to him by the Police and Crime Commissioner after the November election?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

I suppose I should start by thanking Councillor Culley in advance for her admission that neither of the two Conservative candidates that are standing for the post are actually going to win, because presumably that's the basis on which she's asked this question.

However, what I would say is that it does actually beggar belief that it's just a coincidence that Councillor Culley and Councillor Packer are asking me basically the same question, on the same rather obscure issue, at the same Council meeting, and rather makes you think that someone has asked them to ask me the question. So, in the circumstances, can I suggest to both Councillor Culley and Councillor Packer, that they go back to that person and suggest that he plucks up the courage to come and ask me himself, rather than to get two stooges to do it for him.

### **Raising education standards**

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

Would the Portfolio Holder update Council on progress in raising education standards in Nottingham, in relation to this summer's results, to the overall achievement of Nottingham as a Local Education Authority and the improvement since 1998.

Councillor Mellen replied as follows:

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

I am pleased to be able to give Council my usual report at this time of the year, and again it's great to be able to report on improvements in standards across all ages.

The current year's data has not yet been validated, but from the information available to us, we are looking at making significant improvements on last year.

So, in 2012 at early years foundation stage 57% of pupils were assessed as having a good level of development compared with national rates of 59%, that rate has improved from 42% in 2007, a faster increase than the national average.

For 7 year olds, 82% of them have reached level 2 or higher in reading, up from 80% in 2011. 77% of 7 year olds reached level 2 or higher in writing, up from 76% last year, and in Maths the figure for 7 year olds is 87%, up 1 percentage point from 86% last year.

At Key Stage 2 the proportion of our 11 year olds gaining level 4 or better in both English and Maths was 74%, up from 71% last year.

For our school leavers, 49.5% of our 16 year olds achieved GCSE grade C or better in 5 subjects including English and Maths, up from 46.7% in 2011. At the level 2 grade, that means 5 good GCSEs irrespective of subject, 79% of pupils achieved this level, compared with 77% last year.

And finally then, at A Level, 98.2% of our candidates achieved 2 or more A Level or equivalent passes, up from 97.6% last year.

These indicative figures show significantly increasing proportions of Nottingham City pupils achieving the government's expected levels of performance at Key Stage 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Whilst in no way can we be complacent, and we haven't yet got the comparative figures with other authorities, and there is clearly much more to do, neither would I want to underplay the considerable efforts of our young people, their teachers, parents and governors, in achieving yet another significant increase in results in the City. I want to echo the

message that was on the front of this building until last evening, and offer this Council's congratulations to all of them on their achievements.

Lord Mayor, in 1998 when we became an education authority, we were shocked to find that just 26% of young people achieved 5 GCSE good grades. This year that number has more than tripled to 79% of our youngsters leaving school with those 5 good grades that will lead them to be able to get into higher education and into the world of work. In 1998 only 18.5% of children achieved the level of 5 GCSEs including English and Maths, we expect that that figure will be very near to 50% this year, once all the results have been ratified. You can see there are very significant improvements that we have brought about, in partnership with our schools, in the 14 years in which we've had the responsibility for educational achievement.

Similar increases have taken place at primary level, in 2005 when the measure of English and Maths at level 4 was first introduced, just 57% of our children got that grade, and this year we're looking at 74%, a significant increase yet again.

In answering this question it's natural that I use percentage figures, but in looking at percentages you can forget that this is real children, real young people whose lives have been improved. For example, since 2009, 159 more children have reached the expected level at the end of primary school and will be able to access secondary education curriculum more effectively, and with a far more secure position than previously. This is all the more impressive since the actual cohort size was smaller than last year.

Here in Nottingham, around 70% of our schools are rated "Outstanding" or "Good" by Ofsted. When I get the chance to visit schools I see a great deal of outstanding teaching and a real commitment from the staff to do the very best for the children and young people of our City. The children I meet are generally well motivated and really engaged in their learning.

So, to conclude, since this Council took control of its schools in 1998, we have seen a dramatic improvement in outcomes, and, at a time now of massive change in the school system, where the role of local authorities is changing, we as a Council are determined to ensure that by building strong partnerships with schools and academy sponsors and by doing all that we can to support children and their families, this rising trend of results will be maintained.

## **Temporary relaxation of planning regulations**

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

Would the Portfolio Holder care to comment on the Conservative and Lib Dem Government's announcement of a temporary relaxation of planning regulations.

Councillor Urquhart replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you, Councillor Edwards for your question.

I'm very pleased to comment, though not pleased overall by the proposals that I have so far heard. It really, to me, shows grave economic illiteracy for the Tory/Lib Dem Coalition to claim that building extensions will bring us out of recession. The conservative party clearly believes that the only thing stopping people putting up that extension, employing a local builder, is planning permission, not money, not worry about job security or financial security, not worry about their future pension, or their children's university fees. And they clearly haven't talked to people living in densely packed urban environments, where planning controls are crucial to enable development to be reasonable, rather than excessive, and where family homes and open space needs preserving. But, of course, if your nearest neighbour is the game keeper somewhere else on the estate, then perhaps those concerns don't matter so much.

So a package of measures is proposed to increase permitted development rights i.e. development for which planning permission is not required for homes and business premises for a period of up to 3 years. Apparently a full consultation document is expected next week, but it is anticipated that these changes will go ahead and would allow the length of a single storey rear extension on a detached house to be 8 metres, that's double the current length, on a terraced or semi detached house it will be 6 metres, again, double the current permitted development right. Shops are to be allowed to extend by up to 100 square metres and industrial units by 200 square metres. Some of these proposals relate to the lower end of the development spectrum, but there is potential for such developments to have significant implications for neighbouring premises and residents, and those permissions will be taken out of the

Council's control. So your neighbour, our neighbour, anyone in this Chamber's neighbour could decide to extend their house with an 8 metre building, and local citizens would have no route to make their views known. I have some serious concerns about the possible impact that this could have on our City in terms of loss of family homes, loss of outside space, local neighbour disputes, and change in local environments.

If we simply look at the latest weekly list of planning applications, I've got it here. We all get it in our emails or on paper regularly. Shall we have a look? In Leen Valley someone wants to convert a chalet bungalow to be a two storey house with a two storey front extension, significant change in character for that property, so presumably we're all happy with that kind of thing going ahead with no planning permission. In the Dales ward someone wants to put up a conservatory to the rear of their property, that's alright then, our economy is saved. In my own ward, in Sherwood, somebody wants to install roof lights at the front, the side and the rear of a building, all of those neighbours who would then potentially be overlooked, how would they be feeling if there's no notification, no planning permission needed for those works.

Given that these changes to planning regulations are supposed to promote economic and housing growth, the benefit of extending permitted development rights as is being suggested is questionable, and has the potential to harm more individuals than would benefit from such a relaxation of those rights. So, potentially, instead of creating an economic boom in local builders, it could be local lawyers who would benefit, with any wider economic impact being small, and the neighbourhood impact huge.

Relaxing rules on extensions to commercial premises may, in some certain locations, be helpful to growth, however, and there is a need to look at how to introduce flexibility, but there is not a need for a chaotic system where uncertainty about development is created. We in Nottingham, of course, want development to take place and we know that planning decisions in the southern end of our City Centre, for example, are crucial. Do we really want a chaotic system where anything goes which could risk undermining our City Centre and the retail offer that it presents? The uncertainty of planning without rules could easily stifle investment, rather than stimulate it.

In terms of affordable housing too, removing the requirement for affordable housing, because that may make development commercially

unviable cannot be the only yardstick. If affordable housing is critical in certain locations, without it the community could become unsustainable then, of course, affordable housing has to be part of the development in that community. If they're 'a nice to have', but in a location where affordable homes do exist in reasonable numbers, then perhaps it could be right to remove slavish requirements. Many planning authorities, including our own, are already being very flexible with requirements in order to get development moving anyway, so we did not need to have a government announcement to enable our planners to take a pragmatic view. What we do need is real investment.

Putting poorly performing planning departments into special measures is a headline grabbing distraction, it would be appropriate in, maybe, one or two exceptionally dysfunctional authorities. The real issue regarding the lack of delivery of new developments is less about the effectiveness of planning departments and more about a slump in demand from the development industry and consumers. In general, planning departments run well, they're not a barrier to growth; they're stimulating development to meet need in a sustainable way and to bring associated economic development, that's what they're about. Let's not forget the wider point made by the Tory led Local Government Association (LGA), who have reminded us that there are, of course, already 400,000 prospective homes that have planning permission, that need finance in order to get those developments going.

Additionally, Sir Merrick Cockell, not someone with whom I usually have a great deal of affinity, but he has said "to get Britain building again we need to address the lack of liquidity in the finance market and tackle the shortage of mortgages for struggling first time buyers". And, of course, locally and elsewhere, we have many school improvements, for example; these are ready to go, it's not the planning permission that's the problem, it's the money and the financial investment that's needed to achieve the buildings.

So, there might be some aspects of the announcements that could be more welcome. Apparently there's £10 billion to underwrite house construction, £300 million to provide 15,000 affordable homes and bring back empty homes into use, and potentially, £280 million to extend the First Buy Scheme. So, all of those, if they turn out in the way that they appear, could be applauded, a potential contribution to getting more homes built and purchased. But, of course, we've yet to see any detail.

In the majority of cases, planning authorities and their planning officers, are already working extremely hard to make things happen, to provide sustainable development, and to move towards stimulating economic growth.

The majority of these announcements, I fear, risk an abandonment of reasonable planning controls with no evidence that this will have the economic impact that has been claimed. These changes could have a lasting and negative impact upon our communities, but are the conservatories going to pull us out of recession, I don't think so, no more than the Conservatives, whose economic policies have plunged us even deeper into the double dip, double glazing isn't going to be the way out.

## **Foodbanks**

Councillor Morris asked the following question of the Deputy Leader:

Would the Deputy Leader tell us how many food banks are now open across Nottingham and provide Council of his opinion on why we're seeing this growth?

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

Establishing the number of foodbanks has been more difficult than expected, and I thank the Labour members who've helped over the weekend to try and establish how many there were.

On current information, there are 8 banks with another on the way. They are:

- West Nottingham, with collection points in Beeston, Lenton Abbey, Broxtowe estate and there are also plans for collection points in Stapleford, Wollaton and Bilborough. This is one run by Hope Nottingham;
- Bestwood and Bulwell, currently with a collection point at St Philip's, Bestwood, but with plans for more, including Basford;
- Clifton opens on 20 September at the Hope Church;
- Sherwood and Arnold opening sometime in the Autumn at Daybrook Baptist Church.



All of these operate on a voucher system and provide 3 day food parcels, usually no more than 3 parcels per person or family.

Other foodbanks:

- NG7 at the Sumac Centre;
- Salvation Army in Aspley and Sneinton;
- the Friary;
- the Arches also gives out food parcels.

There is also work to establish an East Nottingham foodbank aiming for collection points in The Meadows, St Ann's, Sneinton and Carlton, working with the churches in that area and St Ann's Advice Centre, amongst others.

These, as you can tell, are mainly run by religious organisations, including the Trust, a Christian charity, and for this we are extremely grateful. I've no doubt that the temples and mosques are also providing the same sort of service.

Foodbanks are not a Nottingham phenomenon. There are now probably over 3,000 in the UK. They are serving not only those in temporary crisis, but more and more, those in permanent poverty. Nor are they confined, and this is very very important, they are not confined to the workless, they are increasingly catering for the working poor. I am told that one day last week in Bulwell, of the seven sets of people who presented themselves, six were working in low paid jobs. They are a phenomenon that, up until recently, I've always associated with other countries, with inner-city USA, with Asia, with South America. There is no way that they should be a phenomenon of 21<sup>st</sup> Century UK, with the level of national wealth at our disposal. I am ashamed, and genuinely ashamed, that this is happening, and it reminds me of the shame I felt over 15 years ago, in fact even 20 years ago, when I helped found Shelter in this City, when we had so many rough-sleepers, and which in this City, over subsequent years, this Council and the last government, managed to get rid of. I'm sure people can remember Sir George Young who used to step over the homeless on his way to the opera, he's just been promoted apparently, or demoted, whatever way you want to look at it.

The party opposite are one of the reasons why there were so many rough-sleepers, it coincided with their period of office. They are also part

of the reason why foodbanks are now having to spring up. I hope they are feeling suitably ashamed.

### **Council reserves**

Councillor Arnold asked the following question of the Deputy Leader:

Would the Deputy Leader care to comment on the Conservative Chairman of the LGA's view that: "If councils plundered their reserves to cover the cuts, the cupboard would be bare within five years and there'd be nothing left to invest in the growth promoting projects Britain desperately needs."

Councillor Chapman replied as follows:

Thank you. The remark was made in response to Eric Pickles' exhortation to spend their reserves to compensate for the cuts that he is implementing. Now, Eric Pickles does not do detail, Eric does not do subtlety, and Eric does not do nuance. This leads him to make, what I would call, injudicious statements. For example, only this week, as we have heard, he has threatened to take planning powers from councils without having any mechanism to deal with those powers once they're taken away. In this particular case his off the cuff statement was that councils should use their reserves to pay for spending cuts from central government. Now I know what will have happened, he'll have got out of bed one day and he'll have had a bright idea and, as some of us do, we'll ring up and ask officials and ask for a solution, and he'll have asked how much is in council reserves and he'll have got the answer and he will have thought that he'd ended up finding a pot of gold, 'cause they've told him about all the reserves that councils have got. He will have then reached for his megaphone and the airways and he will have given us all the benefit of Eric's considerable wisdom. What he patently didn't do was to ask sensible questions, and the first sensible question that Eric should have asked was 'how many of these reserves are uncommitted?', had he have asked that question, he would have found that the vast majority are in fact committed. In unitaries and counties, for example, the chances are that the biggest reserve will be the schools reserve. Now Eric wouldn't want us to raid the schools reserve, in fact, I don't think we could statutorily. You wouldn't want us to raid the schools reserve would you? But he couldn't do that statutorily because it's actually not our money, it belongs to the schools. In Nottingham, other reserves are for tram payments, which we couldn't raid, street lighting PFI, which we

couldn't raid, and other holding accounts for government grants, and I don't think Eric would want us to spend the holding accounts for government grants.

So, we do, however, have £9 million unallocated. So the second set of questions he should have asked is 'if we spend them all at once to compensate for cuts, how long will they have an impact for and what happens if something unforeseen happens?' Well the answer to the first element is that you can only spend them once, and after they've gone, you still have the same ongoing revenue problems, and it's naive to think otherwise. It's basic business and accounting practice that you need reserves, you only spend them once, and you don't spend them on revenue. The second point he should have made is 'how long is it likely that they would last if we spent them?' and, actually, Merrick Cockell is right, the maximum it would last would be 5 years, and we would not be able to use them for some of the things that we need to use them for. There are three areas that we would need them for. One is we are about to undergo changes in the Business Rate system, we do not know how much that is going to cost, we do not know what the shortfalls are going to be, and we need reserves for that. The second reason we need reserves, and we are beginning to spend some, is for economic development, precisely what Merrick Cockell said. The government have got rid of the RDAs, it's got rid of EMDA, we're the only bastion left in order to get public investment going and, therefore, we need some for that. I can see someone on the front bench nodding vigorously. We also need some just in case there are serious problems with the Council Tax benefits, so we need reserves for that.

Finally, the District Auditor, were we to go below £9 million, which is below 4%, would be asking very serious questions. So, to summarise, we have a minister who, to quote AA Milne, is a bear of little brain, and we have a Tory council leader who is a bear of much greater brain, it is a shame for the nation that the roles are not reversed.

### **City Deal funding and publishing expenditure**

Councillor Culley asked the following question of the Leader:

Will the Leader of the Council agree with me that due to the lack of transparency and accountability of the former New Deal for Communities and the Future Jobs Fund that resulted in considerable controversy,

there needs to be clarity over the use of the £60 million City Deal funding?

Will he assure the Council that all expenditure will be published publicly and clearly on the Councils website, be made eligible for call-in before all expenditure relating to this funding be agreed and, subject to the agreement of the Chair, be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor.

The answer to the question in the first paragraph is no, and now that EMAS means that we are regularly publishing Council expenditure details at little or no cost, that information will be available on the new Open Nottingham website.

### **Empty shops in the City Centre**

Councillor Morley asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Jobs, Skills and Business:

Following media reports on empty shops in the City Centre, I am pleased that the Portfolio Holder shares our concerns about Nottingham's national retail reputation. However, does he agree that it would be more constructive to reduce rents and reverse decisions to increase parking charges rather than complain about the methodology of a particular report if we want to reinvigorate Nottingham's retail sector?

Councillor McDonald replied as follows:

Can I thank Councillor Morley for her question, and can I say it is pleasing to hear that the Conservatives in Nottingham do care about Nottingham's national reputation after all. Given the failure by the Conservative Group to provide any response at all to the consultation we recently undertook in relation to our Economic Growth Plan, I was beginning to worry that they perhaps didn't see it as an important issue, or perhaps hadn't caught the story in the Post. It is rather funny how they can be completely silent on the issue whilst the rest of the City is having an extended debate about the future of the City's economy, but suddenly spring into life when one negative survey is published.

Still, your new found interest is very welcome, I hope you keep it up.

Councillor Morley rightly raises the issue of methodology of that report. The methodology is highly questionable and has been publicly challenged by, not just us, but property owners, property agents and the Association of Town Managers, who called it deeply flawed. You only have to walk around the City Centre to realise that it is obviously wrong to state that one in three shops in Nottingham City Centre is empty. In fact, some reports, independent reports I should add, have placed that vacancy rate at about 11%, well below the national average.

However, as I said publicly last week, and will say again now, I personally don't want to quibble about methodology, because I think, I know we all think, there are too many vacant shops in Nottingham City Centre at present. The reasons a business fails are often very complicated, but the most important one is the difficult economic circumstances that the country finds itself in. As I said previously earlier, this country's economy has zero growth in it at present, and the policies of this government, led by Councillor Morley's party, have killed demand in the economy. That is fundamentally why shops across the country are increasingly empty. That's also why this Labour Council is trying to find new ways to do what it can, and it must be said, until Councillor Morley's party bucks its ideas up and starts dealing with this recession, what this Council can do will have its limits, why this Council is doing what it can to find new ways to tackle the problem.

We recognised the importance of a vibrant City Centre as being key to transforming the City's economy, as has been clearly outlined in the City's Growth Plan, and this is why we are taking other actions to help develop the City Centre. Let me list some of them. Undertaking a retail review with business to better understand how to improve Nottingham's retail offer. Developing a new spatial plan to better define areas of our City. Developing a rent guarantee scheme to help stimulate development. Using powers under the Localism Act to create a new business rates model, as Councillor Chapman previously mentioned. Creating a Creative Quarter in the heart of our City, an inner-city enterprise zone to encourage new businesses and create jobs. Dealing actively with hotspot areas of vacancy, like Derby Road, to increase occupancy and regenerate the area. Finding new ways to promote Nottingham's excellent retail and leisure offer alongside the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). We are also now starting to announce pop up shops in Nottingham, which, of course, will almost certainly mean us

looking at rent reductions in some of those properties. In fact, I am pleased to announce that an empty City Centre restaurant is to be transformed into the first science 'pop-up' shop in October.

And then, of course, there is parking. And what I will say about parking is this. Firstly, the basic structure of our parking policy is sound, and an independent survey by the BID has found it to be sound, but there is some need for some change, which Councillor Urquhart and I both recognise and are proposing to implement. So it seems that, once again, the Conservative Group are a little behind the story here. We are, in fact, proposing to change City Centre parking policy, but rather than just reducing the prices as Councillor Morley suggests, we have actually thought about the issue, we've spoken to private sector partners, we've worked with the BIDs and we've come up with something that is actually quite radical and far-reaching. Yes, we are proposing the reduction of on-street parking prices, we're proposing to make them simpler, we're reviewing zones, and we're working with the BIDs to improve the City's off-street car parks. But we are also proposing, and I think this says a lot about this Council's ability to be bold, and try new things, we are also proposing to become the first big City in the UK to remove all maximum stay times for on-street parking. I think that is a very smart thing for us to do, and I think it will send out the right message to traders and to shoppers.

So, in answer to your question Councillor Morley, yes your government is making it difficult for retailers, but this Labour Council, unlike your government, actually has a plan to make things better.

### **Emission free electric buses**

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

I join the Portfolio Holder in welcoming the arrival into service of NCT's 8 new emission free electric buses and ask whether replacing the entire fleet in this manner might have been a more cost effective update to public transport in the City rather than persisting with the tram?

Councillor Urquhart replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Councillor Parton, for your question and may I say how pleased I am that the Tories do seem to be

supporting a public transport initiative this time, rather than bemoaning the fate of car drivers, as seems to be more usual.

The 8 electric buses were, in fact, recently purchased by the City Council, and not Nottingham City Transport, because they are an addition to our Link Bus fleet. The Link Bus service, of course, transports millions of people every year to places that cannot be served by commercial bus routes, places of work, to a large extent, and, of course, the Link Bus network is funded by the Workplace Parking Levy, so can I assume that your enthusiasm for a wholly electronic bus fleet means that we have your support in order to fund it through the Workplace Parking Levy?

Electric buses, of course, are appropriate at the moment, at this stage of their development, for only low capacity services. The current battery technology has yet to develop for larger capacity services which could be operated by bigger electric buses, or even double deckers, so, in order to carry the numbers of people, and remember Line One carries millions and millions of passengers per year, to carry the number of people who will come to use Lines Two and Three of the tram, I suspect that the sheer numbers of electric buses we would need would be enormous. You might suggest that we would have to put them together in some kind of row, perhaps they could be linked together and then there would be more capacity and, perhaps, they would need to follow a set route in order that they could get to the right places, and then they'd need to be recharged wouldn't they? And they'd need the electricity, perhaps that could be carried in wires overhead, I don't know. Anyway, the number of buses could be enormous, and perhaps they would themselves cause congestion.

Of course the tram is being introduced to replace some of those larger capacity services with electrically powered tram vehicles, greener than conventional diesel buses. Passenger demand on those routes is forecast to remain high for the next 25 years, and so enabling us to have a fixed route with dedicated highway priority, increasing reliability and journey speeds, is important.

Electric buses, of course, would still get stuck in traffic, where as the tram does not. Reliable, modern public transport does make a difference to people. It enables people to decide whether they should switch out of their cars and, of course, we're building those two new tram lines to drive our economy, both through the jobs created already, at over 100, many

going to local people, and the contracts for work, about £10 million worth of local contracts already to local firms, not to mention the economic boost once the tram lines are built. This is why, of course, local business supports the building of two more tram lines, it's why Councillor Parton's Tory and Liberal Democrat government recognised an excellent project and gave us the go ahead to start construction. Even David Cameron could see that a tram network providing a connected city with a transport infrastructure fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is worth having. It's a shame that our local Tories in Nottingham don't seem to show the same level of ambition for our City.

So, yes, adding electric buses to the Link Bus fleet is good news, it's one part of a well thought through integrated public transport network. But electric buses are not the answer to our long term transport or economic needs, and so two more tram lines is a cost effective, economically sensible, and environmentally sustainable way for Nottingham to continue to be a leader and, for us, on this side of the Chamber, to show that we will lead our City with ambition, building the tram for our economic sustainability, being part of a City that does business, a City that attracts business and knows what is needed for the future.

#### **44 DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER THE URGENCY PROCEDURE**

The report of the Leader, as set out on pages 157 to 160 of the agenda, was submitted.

**RESOLVED that, on the motion of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor Chapman, the urgent decisions taken, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.**

#### **45 POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ARRANGEMENTS**

The report of the Leader, as set out on pages 161 to 169 of the agenda, was submitted.

Councillor Culley proposed that recommendation (c) be amended to say "the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the minority party" to ensure representation from the opposition members.

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



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

- (1) the Panel arrangements, set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved;**
- (2) the appointment of Nottinghamshire County Council as Host Authority for the Panel be noted;**
- (3) Councillor Collins and Councillor Norris be nominated as the Council's representatives on the Panel;**
- (4) Council noted that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services would make any necessary amendments to the Constitution arising from the report.**

#### **46 CITY CENTRE GOVERNANCE**

The report of the Leader, as set out on pages 170 to 181 of the agenda, was submitted.

**RESOLVED** that, on the motion of Councillor Collins, seconded by Councillor McDonald:

- (1) the City Centre Area Committee be disestablished with immediate effect;**
- (2) a City Centre Forum be created as an advisory body with the terms of reference and membership, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, with the date of the first meeting to be confirmed;**
- (3) the Leader's executive action be noted in appointing a Committee of the Executive Board (the Executive Board City Centre Committee) with the terms of reference and membership, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, with the first meeting taking place on 18 September 2012 at 6.00 pm;**
- (4) that consequential amendments be made to the Constitution to reflect resolutions (1), (2) and (3).**

#### **47 MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR CHAPMAN**

Moved by Councillor Chapman, seconded by Councillor Piper:

“This Council believes that the Government’s intention to transfer responsibility for council tax benefits to local authorities is being carried out in an unfair way which severely disadvantages some of the most vulnerable people in Nottingham.

It resolves to lobby the Government to re-think its position both in terms of current funding allocation and future uprating.”

**RESOLVED that the motion be carried.**

#### **48 MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR LIVERSIDGE**

Moved by Councillor Liversidge, seconded by Councillor Wildgust:

“Nottingham City Council pledges its support to the Armed Forces Community Covenant and will work with the Armed Forces community and Service Charities, to promote awareness of the Covenant throughout Nottingham.

The Covenant will encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community, promote understanding of issues affecting the armed forces community, and formally recognise and remember the sacrifices made.

We will work in partnership to ensure that projects are put forward to secure funding from the Community Covenant Grant Scheme, set up by the MOD.”

With the agreement of the meeting, the wording in the motion considered by Council was slightly amended to the original motion, as it removed the reference to the Royal British Legion and replaced it with “Armed Forces community and Service Charities” in the first paragraph.

**RESOLVED that the motion be carried.**

#### **49 MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR CULLEY**

Moved by Councillor Culley, seconded by Councillor Parton:

“Nottingham City Council recognises the achievements of Team GB during the London 2012 Olympic Games, and takes particular pride in the 4 medals that the county of Nottinghamshire itself delivered during the most successful Games for British athletes since 1908.

The Council also proudly acknowledges the achievements of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire’s Paralympians.

The Council also acknowledges the foresight of Sir John Major’s government in setting up the National Lottery in 1994, and the role played by the National Lottery in funding sports development in the UK ever since.

This Council pledges to do its part to ensure that the games have a lasting legacy of excellence in sport through:

- ensuring people become more active at an early age through the promotion of competitive sports at schools;
- the development of local and regional Schools Olympics events;
- support for local sports clubs, and encouragement to provide training facilities for all;
- protection of existing sports facilities including school sports fields;
- the continued provision and development of sporting activities for post Olympian age groups ensuring a healthier old age for citizens.”

Moved by Councillor Trimble by way of an amendment and seconded by Councillor Mellen that:

After:

“Sir John Major’s”

Insert:

“Conservative”

After:

“...role played by the National Lottery in funding sports development in the UK ever since.”

Insert:

“In addition the Council commends the work of the Labour Government, Ken Livingstone and Lord Coe in winning London the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games and building the platform for their success.”

After:

“The Council pledges to do its part to ensure that the games have a lasting legacy of excellence in sport

Insert:

“and hopes that future funding of Olympic and school sport is protected and enhanced by the Government. In order to widen participation the Council will develop a Council Sports Participation Plan to build on the Olympics’ ‘Inspire a Generation’ legacy.”

As part of this the Council will consider:”

Delete:

“through”

Amended motion to read:

“Nottingham City Council recognises the achievements of Team GB during the London 2012 Olympic Games, and takes particular pride in the 4 medals that the county of Nottinghamshire itself delivered during the most successful Games for British athletes since 1908.

The Council also proudly acknowledges the achievements of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire’s Paralympians.

The Council also acknowledges the foresight of Sir John Major’s Conservative government in setting up the National Lottery in 1994, and the role played by the National Lottery in funding sports development in the UK ever since. In addition the Council commends the work of the Labour Government, Ken Livingstone and Lord Coe in winning London the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games and building the platform for their success.

This Council pledges to do its part to ensure that the games have a lasting legacy of excellence in sport and hopes that future funding of Olympic and school sport is protected and enhanced by the Government. In order to widen participation the Council will develop a Council Sports Participation Plan to build on the Olympics’ ‘Inspire a Generation’ legacy.

As part of this the Council will consider:

- ensuring people become more active at an early age through the promotion of competitive sports at schools;

- the development of local and regional Schools Olympics events;
- support for local sports clubs, and encouragement to provide training facilities for all;
- protection of existing sports facilities including school sports fields;
- the continued provision and development of sporting activities for post Olympian age groups ensuring a healthier old age for citizens.”

After discussion, the amendment was put to the vote and was carried.

Moved by Councillor Culley by way of an amendment to the amended motion and seconded by Councillor Morley that:

After:

“The Council also proudly acknowledges the achievements of”

Delete:

“Nottingham and Nottinghamshire’s Paralympians.”

And Insert:

“Team GB during the London 2012 Paralympic Games and takes particular pride in the 10 medals Nottingham and Nottinghamshire’s Paralympians delivered.

After:

“...host the 2012 Olympic Games and building the platform for their success.”

Insert:

“The council also recognises the particular success of the 2012 Paralympic games, the tremendous response from the British public, and the role that this country has played in the Paralympic movement which began with the Stoke Mandeville Games, established in 1948 by Sir Ludwig Guttmann.”

Amended motion to read:

“Nottingham City Council recognises the achievements of Team GB during the London 2012 Olympic Games, and takes particular pride in the 4 medals that the county of Nottinghamshire itself delivered during the most successful Games for British athletes since 1908.

The Council also proudly acknowledges the achievements of Team GB during the London 2012 Paralympic Games and takes particular pride in the 10 medals Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's Paralympians delivered.

The Council also acknowledges the foresight of Sir John Major's Conservative government in setting up the National Lottery in 1994, and the role played by the National Lottery in funding sports development in the UK ever since. In addition the Council commends the work of the Labour Government, Ken Livingstone and Lord Coe in winning London the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games and building the platform for their success.

The Council also recognises the particular success of the 2012 Paralympic games, the tremendous response from the British public, and the role that this country has played in the Paralympic movement which began with the Stoke Mandeville Games, established in 1948 by Sir Ludwig Guttmann.

This Council pledges to do its part to ensure that the games have a lasting legacy of excellence in sport and hopes that future funding of Olympic and school sport is protected and enhanced by the Government. In order to widen participation the Council will develop a Council Sports Participation Plan to build on the Olympics' 'Inspire a Generation' legacy.

As part of this the Council will consider:

- ensuring people become more active at an early age through the promotion of competitive sports at schools;
- the development of local and regional Schools Olympics events;
- support for local sports clubs, and encouragement to provide training facilities for all;
- protection of existing sports facilities including school sports fields;
- the continued provision and development of sporting activities for post Olympian age groups ensuring a healthier old age for citizens."

After discussion, the amendment was put to the vote and was carried.

**RESOLVED that the amended motion be carried:**

**Nottingham City Council recognises the achievements of Team GB during the London 2012 Olympic Games, and takes particular pride**

**in the 4 medals that the county of Nottinghamshire itself delivered during the most successful Games for British athletes since 1908.**

**The Council also proudly acknowledges the achievements of Team GB during the London 2012 Paralympic Games and takes particular pride in the 10 medals Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's Paralympians delivered.**

**The Council also acknowledges the foresight of Sir John Major's Conservative government in setting up the National Lottery in 1994, and the role played by the National Lottery in funding sports development in the UK ever since. In addition the Council commends the work of the Labour Government, Ken Livingstone and Lord Coe in winning London the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games and building the platform for their success.**

**The Council also recognises the particular success of the 2012 Paralympic games, the tremendous response from the British public, and the role that this country has played in the Paralympic movement which began with the Stoke Mandeville Games, established in 1948 by Sir Ludwig Guttmann.**

**This Council pledges to do its part to ensure that the games have a lasting legacy of excellence in sport and hopes that future funding of Olympic and school sport is protected and enhanced by the Government. In order to widen participation the Council will develop a Council Sports Participation Plan to build on the Olympics' 'Inspire a Generation' legacy.**

**As part of this the Council will consider:**

- ensuring people become more active at an early age through the promotion of competitive sports at schools;**
- the development of local and regional Schools Olympics events;**
- support for local sports clubs, and encouragement to provide training facilities for all;**
- protection of existing sports facilities including school sports fields;**
- the continued provision and development of sporting activities for post Olympian age groups ensuring a healthier old age for citizens.**

**50 CANCELLATION OF OCTOBER MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the meeting scheduled for 15 October 2012 be cancelled.

**51 ADDITIONAL ITEM – AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12**

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 100(b)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, to allow for timely consideration of the Annual Report for 2011/12.

The report of the Chair of the Audit Committee, as circulated in advance of the meeting, was submitted.

**RESOLVED** that, on the motion of Councillor K Williams, seconded by Councillor Piper, the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2011/12 be received.

The meeting concluded at 7.00 pm



## **ADDENDUM**

### **COPY OF WRITTEN QUESTION TO BE ASKED BY COUNCILLOR PACKER OF THE LEADER AT THE MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2012**

Would the Leader inform Council if he intends to stand as the Deputy Police Commissioner after the November 2012 election?

Councillor Collins replied as follows:

No