

# Public Document Pack

## Minutes of the meeting of the City Council

held at the Council Chamber, Council House

on 13 November 2023 from 2.00 pm - 5.08 pm

### Attendances:

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✓ Councillor Carole McCulloch (Lord Mayor)	
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✓ Councillor Saj Ahmad	✓ Councillor Sam Lux
✓ Councillor Liaqat Ali	✓ Councillor Sulcan Mahmood
✓ Councillor Leslie Ayoola	Councillor Farzanna Mahmood
✓ Councillor Cheryl Barnard	Councillor AJ Matsiko
✓ Councillor Steve Battlemuch	✓ Councillor David Mellen
✓ Councillor Graham Chapman	✓ Councillor Sajid Mohammed
✓ Councillor Kevin Clarke	✓ Councillor Fozia Mubashar
✓ Councillor Audrey Dinnall	✓ Councillor Salma Mumtaz
✓ Councillor Michael Edwards	✓ Councillor Sana Nasir
✓ Councillor Nadia Farhat	✓ Councillor Devontay Okure
✓ Councillor Faith Gakanje-Ajala	✓ Councillor Nayab Patel
✓ Councillor Samuel Gardiner	Councillor Georgia Power
✓ Councillor Sam Harris	✓ Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
✓ Councillor Jay Hayes	✓ Councillor Ethan Radford
✓ Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora	✓ Councillor Nick Raine
✓ Councillor Imran Jalil	✓ Councillor Eunice Regan
✓ Councillor Corall Jenkins	✓ Councillor Sarita-Marie Rehman-Wall
✓ Councillor Maria Joannou	✓ Councillor Samina Riaz
✓ Councillor Kirsty Jones	✓ Councillor Andrew Rule
✓ Councillor Kirsty L Jones	✓ Councillor Naim Salim
✓ Councillor Helen Kalsi	✓ Councillor Michael Savage
✓ Councillor Angela Kandola	✓ Councillor Matt Shannon
✓ Councillor Anwar Khan	✓ Councillor Hayley Spain
Councillor Zafran Nawaz Khan	✓ Councillor Maria Watson
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan	✓ Councillor Adele Williams
✓ Councillor Neghat Khan	✓ Councillor Linda Woodings
✓ Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis	✓ Councillor Audra Wynter

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✓ Indicates present at meeting

### 42 Apologies for absence

Councillor Gul Khan (unwell)  
Councillor Zafran Khan (unwell)  
Councillor Farzanna Mahmood (unwell)  
Councillor AJ Matsiko (unwell)  
Councillor Georgia Power (personal)

### **43 Declarations of interests**

None

### **44 Questions from citizens**

#### **Councillor Conduct**

A citizen asked the following question of the Chair of the Standards and Governance Committee: In circumstances where one councillor is employed by another councillor, what guidance has the Standards and Governance Committee put in place to ensure that undue influence is not exerted on the employed councillors by their employer?

Councillor Kirsty L Jones replied as follows:

In line with legislative requirements, Nottingham City Council has agreed a Councillor Code of Conduct which all councillors are required to comply with whenever they are acting in the capacity of a councillor. The Code outlines arrangements for the management of the registration and declaration of any interests held by councillors. All councillors are required to register their interests, including any employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation they hold, with the Council's Monitoring Officer. These registers are published on the Council's website. Any registered interests and any other interests held by a councillor that impact upon Council business in which they are involved must be declared and where such interests would impact their decision-making they must not take part in that business. The Code of Conduct also requires councillors to impartially exercise their responsibilities in the interests of their local community. Article 4 of the Constitution also refers to the expectation that councillors, when acting in their capacity as a councillor, are expected to act in accordance with the 7 Nolan Principles of Public Life – namely, acting with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. Training was provided for all councillors as part of their induction process on the Code of Conduct and the requirement to register and declare interests. All councillors have submitted registers of interest and these are available on the Council's website. Any breach of the Code of Conduct, including a failure to declare interests or to impartially exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the local community, will be dealt with in accordance with the Councillor Complaints Procedure, which is also available on the Council's website.

#### **Victoria Market**

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: Does the Council wish to take the National Market Traders Federation up on their offer to act as negotiators, free of charge, compared to the £25,000 wasted on Bruton Knowles, to negotiate a fair compensation package for the Victoria Market traders, to help exit their lease from the Victoria Centre?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord-Mayor. Can I thank the member of the public for the question. I would like to reassure the member of the public that Bruton Knowles has extensive background and experience in leading negotiations of this nature. They have been involved in this project for some time and have made a positive contribution to establishing the requirements of traders as part of the Council's work to seek an agreed exit. The National Market Traders Federation offer is noted, and their support

of traders as part of the process is recognised and welcomed. However, the Council appreciates that some traders are members of the National Market Traders Federation, therefore the Council wishes to guard against potential claims of conflicts of interest. Thank you.

### **Mobility Passes**

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport and Planning: I believe that more can be done to ensure that all citizens with a mobility pass are aware of its full 24/7 scope. In March 2023 the then Portfolio Holder answered a similar question but eight months on there has been very little action. Could I ask the new Portfolio Holder to order a marketing and publicity action plan on the mobility pass scheme as a matter of urgency, to include the following low or no-cost actions: arrange for the rolling bus (and tram) electronic messaging systems to promote the 24/7 benefit of the Mobility Concessionary Card, as hundreds of people with the cards are still unaware, as many wait until 9:30 to board buses and trams due to this lack of transparency; request that the local Travel Concession Authority (TCA) organise a standard system email to all existing Mobility Card holders (with perhaps a braille letter where applicable) informing entitled residents of the fact that their card is valid 24/7; arrange for an article in the in-house magazine 'The Arrow', explaining the additional discretionary benefits in operation, and which transport operators are covered including the Medilink service; and organise a topic headline with a detailed explanatory article in a forthcoming *My Nottingham News* email reiterating the 24/7 nature of the Mobility Card.

Councillor Angela Kandola replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor. The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme allows Nottingham City Mobility Card holders to receive free travel from 9.30am until 11pm on Mondays to Fridays, and on all times on weekends and bank holidays on local bus services. Local agreements also enable Mobility Pass holders a similar level of concession on tram services and to receive free travel before 9.30 in the morning and after 11pm Mondays to Fridays. The Council has put these additional concessions in place, recognising the difficulties affecting people of getting medical appointments and to work, hardship issues due to increased travel cost, social exclusion with restrictions of activity and barriers to groups with certain disabilities. It is my view that sufficient information has been provided to Mobility Pass holders on the availability of the pre-9.30am concession. The information is clearly stated on the Council's website and on the website of the main public transport operators in the city. When a card is issued or renewed, the covering letter also details the availability of the concession, and the majority of passes have been renewed since the concession was reintroduced. Unfortunately, we are currently not in a position to reprint the Mobility Concessionary Card leaflet due to the current severe financial restrictions at the Council. But we are happy to promote the pre-9.30am Mobility Concession through a number of other channels mentioned in the question as part of the wider campaign to promote the use of public transport in the city. This will be rolled out in the next coming weeks. Thank you.

### **Mobility Passes**

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport and Planning: Once a citizen with a Concessionary Mobility Pass becomes an Old Age Pensioner (OAP) they are automatically transferred to a Senior Concessionary Pass. This would be ok if both schemes delivered the same benefits under the

English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS), but that's not the case in Nottingham City, where the Mobility Pass allows for 24/7 travel under 'discretionary arrangements' agreed by Nottingham City Council. Neither mobility problems nor other disabilities magically disappear on reaching senior citizenship, so why should the passes? This is discriminatory and I would ask the Portfolio Holder to investigate this matter, and request that she overturns this policy with relevant Mobility passes re-issued for all those affected.

Councillor Angela Kandola replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord-Mayor. The current arrangement of Mobility Pass holders transferring to an Elderly Concessionary Pass at state pension age has been in place for approximately ten years, and this reflects the fact that one of the main objectives of providing the pre-9.30am Mobility Pass Concession is to help people with the cost of their journey to work and educational establishments. This will generally be achieved by providing a pass for people under the age of 66. I acknowledge that this arrangement isn't perfect and it is something that could be reviewed in the future, but unfortunately the Council isn't in the position to make a change to this scheme that will increase its cost at this moment in time. Thank you, Lord-Mayor.

### **Sherwood Library**

A citizen asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: Could I ask the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture to provide an update on the re-opening of the new Sherwood Branch Library as the Sainsbury's Local on the ground floor is due to open on Thursday 9 November?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord-Mayor, and thank you to the citizen for their question. Through our Major Projects Team we have a Project Manager working to help drive the development forward who is undertaking regular visits looking to progress final works on the site. So there's the contractor there, there's a person on the Libraries Service that makes sure that contract is moving along so that we are able to take the space back from them – the contractors that are there – as quickly as possible. Whilst we can see progress taking place, this has been slower than we would have anticipated originally. We are aiming to see the new library opened as early as in 2024. Hopefully with the completion of Sainsbury's this will now enable the developer to quickly complete outstanding jobs on the library space area and we can move on to start the fit-out process. Thank you.

### **Publication of information**

A citizen asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: A recent appeal against the decision of Nottingham City Council to withhold publication of a publicly funded report conducted by Ernst Young was refused. Is it the view of the elected members of the Council that there is no 'public interest' in releasing this report? If so, why? Specifically, could the Leader of the Council explain why it might be the case that a report paid for by residents of Nottingham on the handling of finances in the city might not be of interest to the public?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank the citizen for their question. As part of the Financial Improvement Plan, the Council's Corporate Director of Finance and Resources commissioned an external assessment to look at compliance with the

controls for ring-fenced funding after it had previously identified an unlawful breach in relation to the Housing Revenue Account over a number of years. The outcomes of the assessment were reported to a meeting of the Council's Audit Committee on the 30 June. The Committee is a key part of the Council's corporate governance, providing an independent focus on the audit assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards. The assessment carried out by Ernst Young was instigated to provide Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditor, with assurances in relation to the risk of management overriding controls. The assessment identified significant weaknesses in the internal control environment that required to be addressed to provide the necessary level of assurance. It is important to be clear that there is nothing specifically identified within the samples tested in the assessments that suggest that any allocated fund had been misspent or that funding was not used for its overall intended purpose. The assessment identified a number of serious concerns, including a weak control environment, some ineffective systems and associated management information. Wider improvements to the Council's financial governance is ongoing as part of the Financial Improvement Plan. The findings and recommendations of the assessment form a key part of the existing plan, with work being carried out to ensure changes are made as quickly as possible. The report remains with the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources and has not been shown to myself and other councillors. I'm confident that this is a technical report commissioned by officers for officers, and I'm satisfied with the summary overview and subsequent highlighting report that has been presented to senior councillors as well as the Audit Committee. Indeed, the Audit Committee report goes into significant detail about the assessment the Council commissioned from EY and is explicit and transparent about the serious concerns identified and the actions being taken to address them.

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

None

#### **46 To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of Council held on 11 September 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

#### **47 To receive official communications and announcements from the Leader of the Council and/or the Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive made the following announcements:

I am pleased to report that Green Rewards, a partnership initiative involving nine local councils including Nottingham City Council, has won a national Association for Public Service Excellence award for Best Collaborative Working. The scheme enables local residents to accumulate points and earn prizes via an app and web platform for everyday activities that help to lower their carbon footprint.

Last week, the Council's Public Health Team was successful in winning the Local Government Chronicle Workforce Award for Best Retention Strategy. The judges

made specific reference to the tangible difference that the Team is making to reducing health inequalities, together with a real sense of kindness and compassion.

The tragic loss of the Nottingham Panthers ice hockey player Adam Johnson has shocked everyone in the city and our hearts go out to his family, friends and teammates. The Council's Leader has written to the Club to offer our condolences and support, and the Deputy Leader and other Councillors attended a vigil at the stadium on Saturday evening, laying a wreath on behalf of the Council. Nottingham Panthers holds a special place in the life of our city and we stand with them as our local team at this sad time.

We also remember Pauleen Davies MBE and Leonard Gelblum. Pauline, who died on 11 October, founded Radford Care Group in 1968 and right up until earlier this year, had always been involved in the charity, dedicating a huge part of her life to enhancing the lives of older people in Nottingham. Her legacy lives on with the work the charity continues to deliver. Leonard Gelblum died on 27 October. As part of his involvement with Nottingham Rotary Club, Leonard started the Nottingham Dolly Parton Imagination Library with the Council after his involvement in bringing the book-gifting charity to Nottingham in 2009. The scheme has benefited more than 10,900 children and delivered almost half a million free books in the city.

Councillor Adele Williams spoke in tribute to Adam Johnson, Councillor Linda Woodings spoke in tribute to Pauleen Davies and Councillor David Mellen spoke in tribute to Leonard Gelblum.

A minute's silence was held.

**48 Questions from Councillors - to the City Council's lead Councillor on the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority**

None

**49 Questions from Councillors - to a member of Executive Board, the Chair of a Committee and the Chair of any other City Council body**

**Ukraine**

Councillor Michael Savage asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Would the Leader of the Council outline his continued support for the Ukrainian community in Nottingham today, as the invasion of the country by Russia continues and on what will this month be the 90th anniversary of the terrible famine in Ukraine that led to the death of millions of Ukrainians?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord-Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Savage for his question. The ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russia continues to be a global tragedy. Throughout the conflict, our Council and our City have stood firmly in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and strongly oppose the unprovoked actions from Russia. As the invasion continues and stretches from weeks to months and now years it is sometimes easy to grow fatigued or even for us to switch off from the suffering that is being inflicted on people. What was once headline news is now less frequently mentioned in the media. So it is right that we take another opportunity today to reaffirm our support for

Ukraine and I'm pleased to do that formally within this Chamber. It is important to do this because we must never become desensitised from the suffering of others. We must not turn away from what is happening today, and we must not forget the lessons of history. That is why we stand with Ukraine today, but also join them in remembering this month the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the appalling famine that was inflicted on their nation in the 1920s-30s. Millions of Ukrainians starved to death in this imposed famine 90 years ago.

So I would like to thank the members of the Nottingham Branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain – in particular the organisation's Chief Executive Fedir Kurlak who gave a deeply moving presentation to councillors several weeks ago about the terrible famine inflicted by the former Soviet Union in the 1930s. The presentation included moving video testimonies from people who lived through the hardship as children but carried on with them into old age the memory of the hunger, the desolation and the deaths that resulted from the forced famine. There are different theories as to why the famine started, whether it was started deliberately or whether it was a result of collectivism under Stalin. But whatever your view, starvation clearly became a weapon that the Soviet Union used against Ukrainians with devastating consequences. As always, with so many conflicts of this nature, it is everyday families that will suffer and the most: the women, the children, the old, and the vulnerable. It is right that our councillors pay tribute to their suffering, and I would like to offer my thoughts to the descendants of those who endured those terrible acts, in particular those who have made Nottingham their home.

As a Council we are committed to support the people from Ukraine in our city. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine started in February 2022 an estimated 70,000 Ukrainian people have been killed and a further 100,000 people injured. Not only this, but it is believed that 11 million Ukrainian people have been forced to flee their homes and find refuge elsewhere and some have arrived here in Nottingham. Lord-Mayor, the measure of a city is how well we respond to tragedy and how we support those in their direst need. Since the outbreak of war we have, with the support of local people giving their homes to be shared with people from Ukraine, welcomed 353 Ukrainians to Nottingham. As the war has become so protracted we are looking to support those families to find work, learn English, and live independently. We have supported 65 people to return to Ukraine and a further 32 households are now renting privately. Our Council is working with landlords and the voluntary sector to support those who have more recently arrived in our city. I'm proud of this response and I'm proud to reiterate: we stand in solidarity with Ukraine at this difficult time.

### **Devolution**

Councillor Liaqat Ali asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Could the Leader of the Council please update us on the progress being made on devolution and the creation of a Combined East Midlands Authority with an elected mayor?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord-Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Ali for his question. The Council Chamber has been kept well up to date with the progress being made towards a Combined Mayoral Authority for the East Midlands over the past couple of years with two previous reports in October 2022 and March earlier this year outlining the

benefits that the Combined Authority will bring to the people of our region by creating more jobs, improving transport infrastructure and creating more homes for local people. Consultation which took place at the end of last year and earlier this year showed that a majority of residents in Nottingham are supportive of the plans for a Combined Authority working alongside councils in Nottinghamshire, Derby City and Derbyshire. Devolution has the potential to make a significant difference and I am pleased that the plans are progressing. The East Midlands has been left behind in the amount of money allocated to infrastructure projects and for strategic transport across our region. We will be able to influence the spend of the Adult Skills Budget to ensure that our young people in particular are given the chance to acquire the right skills for the jobs of the future. The plans for the Combined Authority include a regional mayor and I look forward to supporting the Labour candidate Claire Ward, who I believe will do an excellent job representing the best interests of the people of Nottingham and our wider combined authority area.

I am pleased to say that the enabling legislation, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, received Royal Assent on the 26 October. This enables us and the other three constituent authorities to move forward in seeking Full Council consent for three important next steps. Firstly, it will allow us to give the Order which will establish the East Midlands Combined Authority approval. Secondly, it will give approval to hold the inaugural mayoral election on the 2 May next year. Finally, it will seek approval to appoint the Returning Officer for the May 2024 election. Subject to Council approval, which will be considered later on today's agenda, the meeting to consider these issues will take place on the 7 December. The Authority will now move into a shadow period. Councillors from the two cities and counties will be joined by four district and borough representatives from across the two counties. The formal processes and work needed to establish the shadow authority is underway with a small, dedicated interim officer team in place to work with the constituent authorities in putting in place policies, strategies and mechanisms in readiness for the Combined Authority following the formal May elections. The resources that were allocated as early money will continue to be used to retrofit homes and will help to tackle the pressures on local Councils to deal with homelessness. The Combined Authority continues to represent a key opportunity for Nottingham and the wider region to leverage significant additional investment to our region which is badly needed.

### **Gaza**

Councillor Nick Raine asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Does the Leader of Council agree with many of our citizens that there should be an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, an end to the blockade and the cessation of all hostilities as a precursor to negotiations for a just peace?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Raine for his question - an important question that is pertinent to people living in this city, many of whom are shocked and horrified with what is happening in Israel and Gaza in the last few weeks. To answer your question directly: yes, I do believe there should be a ceasefire. I would like to be unequivocal about that being the starting point for any meaningful negotiations for a sustained and just peace. I joined Labour colleagues in this Chamber some weeks ago in calling for a ceasefire and more recently Nottingham Labour Councillors have written directly to the Leader of the Opposition asking him to take the same position. We have condemned the use of violence against civilians, including indiscriminate



bombardment. It is clear that cutting off food supplies, water and electricity from the people of Gaza is collective punishment and against international law. Over the last few weeks it is estimated that more than 10,000 people have been killed in Gaza including more than 4,000 children. Lord-Mayor, in a city where we are seeking recognition from UNICEF to be a child-friendly city we watch from afar as thousands of children are not being protected or nurtured as they should, but losing their lives in this awful conflict. There also remain more than 200 Israeli hostages held by Hamas and their release is surely a key factor in achieving a longer lasting peace. Former US President Barack Obama recently urged people to see the whole truth in this conflict, saying 'what is true is that what Hamas did is horrific and there is no justification for it, and what is also true is that the occupation and what is happening to Palestinians is unbearable. What is also true is there is a history of the Jewish People and the madness of antisemitism, and what is also true is there are people who now are dying who having nothing to do with what Hamas did.' These truths co-exist with each other and it is important that it is emphasised that only through a recognition of acceptance of different narratives can a meaningful dialogue help to establish an Israeli state and a Palestinian state which live alongside each other peacefully. The situation in the Middle East is complicated. It is difficult for us in the West to identify how it can be solved, and it will need humility and willingness to work together if it is ever to happen. Nearer to home we have seen the work in Northern Ireland where the Good Friday Agreement has ensured a lasting peace in which co-operation and reconciliation are cornerstones. There is hope, but nothing is easy. My fear is that the decision makers on both sides are not committed to this approach. In Israel we have Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu who is propped up by extremist far-right politicians who wish to continue the expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank. In Gaza we have Hamas, the terrorist organisation whose aim is the destruction of Israel. More must be done to elevate more moderate voices on both sides that are committed to peace, justice, and reconciliation.

In the meantime, the shockwaves of what is happening in Gaza ripple across the world and are felt here too in Nottingham. As the Leader of the Council, where my responsibility has to be the cohesion of our City, I call not only for peace in Gaza but also for citizens in Nottingham to stand shoulder to shoulder and echo that call for peace. We are a diverse city built on tolerance and respect and we must continue to stand together at this difficult time. This conflict thousands of miles away must not be used as an excuse to nurture islamophobia and antisemitism in Nottingham. Using this conflict as a reason to target and threaten democratically elected members of this Chamber and call them war criminals is not only ridiculous, but it is also dangerous, and we will work with the police to bring those keyboard warriors hiding behind their anonymous social media posts into the open and stop these actions of hate. In the meantime Lord-Mayor, we play our parts in calling for peace. We hope and we pray that the violence will cease in Gaza and we can continue to promote respect here in our city.

### **Carbon Neutral**

Councillor Helen Kalsi asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Does the Leader of the Council agree that the Government's decision to walk back from Carbon Neutral 2030 pledge is shameful and will this decision have an impact on Nottingham City Council's ambition in reaching Carbon Neutral 2028?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord-Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Kalsi for your question. I do agree that the Government has backtracked on its agreement to reduce carbon emissions and it might harm our city's ambition to protect the environment for generations to come, but we cannot allow that to happen. Nottingham is committed to becoming the first carbon-neutral city in England by 2028. Not only is this a key pledge from our recent Labour manifesto, it is also in the Council Plan. Why would we aim for anything less? Time and again we are let down by the Tory Government. In September the Prime Minister announced that the Government has extended the deadlines for selling new petrol and diesel cars and phasing out of gas boilers. Allied to this was subsequent announcements that included granting further licenses for more oil and gas extraction from the North Sea. The Prime Minister also stated that the Government remains committed to delivering Net Zero for the UK by 2050. But the Government is moving backwards literally this morning with the appointment of the new Foreign Secretary. They lack ambition and vision. It is time for a General Election so that the country can choose a new Government – a Labour Government that can offer hope for the future not just for our country but for the planet.

However, in Nottingham we remain committed to continuing our hard work and doing all we can to deliver this ambitious pledge to the people of our City. Many of the actions undertaken directly by the City Council to reduce carbon emissions such as transport improvements and improving energy efficiency of housing rely on Government grants which so far thankfully do not appear to have been affected by the recent announcements. Nottingham City Council also hosts the Government-funded Midlands Net Zero Hub which works closely with the Council and wider Midlands region to support and drive forward the low-carbon agenda, delivering over £420m of Government funding for the low-carbon agenda, including retrofit skills training and community energy. The Hub will also shortly be launching a community energy fund providing grants of up to £140,000 for developing low-carbon energy projects which will be available to community groups in the city who meet the eligibility criteria. The ambition to reach carbon neutral by 2028 is delivered through a collective action plan in partnership with organisations, businesses, and citizens across the city. The City Council cannot achieve this target alone. The actions of the Council account for only 2% of the emissions of the city so we need to work with businesses, homeowners and other institutions to get to our target. This means that the city's Green Partnership, which meets quarterly bringing partners from all quarters together, is vital in ensuring that collective progress continues to be made towards Nottingham's ambitious target. There is a risk that the UK Government's recent stance on green issues could have a detrimental effect on attitudes and behaviours from some groups across the city through a perceived reduction in prioritisation of the Net Zero agenda by the Government. There are also potential impacts which could present financial challenges as a result of the extension of the requirements for markets and supply chains to adapt to the changes for a further five years ahead as a result of the extension of these deadlines. The Council will continue to work with the city's partners, businesses, visitors, residents and students to reinforce and spread information on the benefits of reducing our carbon footprint as well as to deliver all it can to help reach carbon neutrality by 2028 in our city.

### **Central Library**

Councillor Samina Riaz asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: Can the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture inform the Council of plans to open the new Central Library?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord-Mayor, and I thank Councillor Riaz, my co-councillor, for her question. I'm pleased to inform Council today that the new Central Library will open its doors to the public on 28 November. We will look forward to welcoming everyone to this incredible facility which is here for now and for future generations to come. The Central Library is a milestone for the redevelopment of the south side of our City, and it constitutes an offering which belongs to the people of Nottingham. Libraries and education are considered the pillar of any civilized society because they constitute spaces serving a collective purpose which ultimately accelerates cultural, social and economic progress. It allows people of all ages to learn, and by learning to improve themselves, and by improving themselves to improve society and the world around them, to develop a civic spirit that doesn't only focus on individual gain but on social enrichment as well. This much-anticipated Central Library will serve the person that needs to apply for a job; it will serve the student that wants to find a quiet place to study for her exams; it will serve the organisation that needs to arrange a meeting using the latest modern facilities; it will serve the resident that wants to borrow a book to relax or to learn something new. Diverse businesses will use the library to get support around intellectual property rights, domain names and other areas using the VICP service, driving economic growth in start-ups and small and medium sized enterprises. Historians and researchers will use the Local Studies Library to conduct research related to our city's history. Our café facility will be space for people to relax and socialise, and our new exhibition space an area of discovery and commemoration to excite peoples' imagination. This will be a social space for all those who live in our city and beyond.

As with any project, there have been many factors that we considered could delay the opening of this important asset which has been missed from Nottingham for a few years following the closure of Angel Row Library. I'm proud therefore to be able to stand here today saying that what it takes to deliver a project like this is a sense of love and service for our city. It takes a team effort which brings together our Labour leadership, which sets the vision, and a team of skilled officers who help translate that vision to reality. It's a team effort that puts Nottingham citizens' needs first. It should be acknowledged that this has been a project that has been in the making for about 10 years now. It was actually in 2013 that the plans for the Central Library were first discussed, and work commenced around looking at promoting Nottingham as a UNESCO City of Literature. This work seeking to recognise not only our city and the city's rich literary heritage but also its rich theme of contemporary poetry and writing: we are the home of Byron and T.H. Lawrence. A key plank of Nottingham's bid to obtain this UNESCO City of Literature status was an ambition to develop a new Central Library, helping to replace Angel Row Library. In 2015, the Council's plan identified the priority to look at developing a proposal and scheme to replace Nottingham Central Library. Within the subsequent Council plan in 2019 - 2023 we turned it into a definite commitment to build a new Central Library. So it is now fitting that we are now able to mark this historic achievement and see this new library open its doors. In reaching this point, I want to thank many of my former Portfolio Holder colleagues in promoting and supporting the delivery of the Central Library and for their continued support for our Library Service. Perhaps a special thanks from me goes to my predecessor and mentor, as well as good friend, former councillor Dave Trimble, who worked hard on this project. Thanks are also due to Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark who led on culture for this city for a number of years. Thanks is also

due to the unwavering support of both the present as well as the last leadership of this Council to the plans and proposals that are now materialised. For my part, I am privileged to have worked alongside a committed team of exceptional public servants overseeing the fit-out phase of this modern facility. I'm proud to have asked a few weeks ago for a date to be put forward of 28 November for the grand opening of this new Central Library. There are always risks and barriers in any project like this, but effective leadership always strives for the delivery of good outcomes no matter the odds. Leadership should not be about seeing barriers to delivery as insurmountable; it should see them as questions to be answered, problems to be resolved. It should be about serving the public good and delivering on our manifesto promises to the best of our abilities. Thank you.

### **Rough Sleeping and Homelessness**

Councillor Audrey Dinnall asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing: Since 2010 rough sleeping has gone up by 75% and homelessness has vastly increased. Does the Portfolio Holder for Housing believe that this Conservative Government is serious about its promises to halve rough sleeping, build affordable houses and improve the rights of renters?

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor, and Councillor Dinnall for your question. In short, my answer is no, I don't think that the Government have got any plans or commitment to tackling the housing crisis. You just have to look today at the bottom of the seventh bin they've scraped out the last remains of their party and put that person in as their Foreign Secretary – the same person who put us on this path forward of policies that are seeing rough sleeping increase and the lack of vision from Government is having an impact on Nottingham. We are seeing an increase in people on our waiting list, which sits at above 10,000 wanting a Council property. We have more families in temporary accommodation, staying longer in bed and breakfast accommodation and hotels, putting more pressure on our budgets. This is just not happening in Nottingham – it is also happening across the country. Liverpool has got 500 households in temporary accommodation; Sheffield, 700; and Leicester, just over 300. Another emerging problem issue for local authorities and housing is the treatment of new asylum seekers in this country. The Government is fast-tracking thousands of applications and giving asylum seekers seven days' notice to get their benefits, to find a job and to get a house. That is impossible for myself, for anybody who is living in this country, never mind people who are fleeing war and persecution. Then we are seeing rough sleeping, increasing numbers of people out on the streets. We have seen more people rough sleeping now than we have since the pandemic. We have seen a flood of people coming into our city from outside because what we offer here in Nottingham is not necessarily available or accessible in other local authorities or cities. Of course, we know what the previous Home Secretary said: that rough sleeping is a lifestyle choice. It is not. I do not think anybody chooses to be out on the street. Any of us here could have a health problem, we could lose our job, lose our business, go bankrupt and be out on the streets ourselves. We are not far from it ourselves. What is impacting rough sleeping is when you take away and under-fund the resources that many of those people rely on: the mental health, the drug and alcohol substance misuse programs, the healthcare being taken away is adding to people ending up out on the streets.

So, what is causing all of this? Why are we seeing this rise in homelessness? Well, in the UK private sector rents have increased by 5.1%. They are increasing faster than pay is. The Local Housing Allowance has not increased, and people with low-income, who are in work, are having to find between £300 to £400 extra per month to be able to pay for a private rented property. The private sector is also shrinking, because of inflation and interest rates, landlords in the private sector do not have confidence in the housing market and they also have a lack of support from the Government. While the Government is not doing anything about it, we in Nottingham are. The Government scrapped housing targets, we have put them in. Last Council term we built 1,000 new homes and we have pledged to do the same again. In Basford, my ward, there are hundreds of new Council homes being built and I am pleased to say that we have families moving into those properties. We have transformed our services, reformed Housing Aid into Housing Solutions and undertaken a recruitment process so we can turn it into more of a preventative approach to try and capture people early when they are given a Section 21 Notice to offer that better support. We take this housing crisis seriously and will offer support to all those who need it regardless of this Government. Thank you.

### **Financial Controls**

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Does the Leader of the Council agree that it would appear that the Ernst Young report into management override of controls requires a safe space of such breadth that elected members are excluded from it?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord-Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Clarke for his question, although colleagues I am sure will remember that Councillor Clarke asked a very similar question in the July meeting. There are so many questions that the Leader of Opposition could ask. I wonder why he has to waste one of his questions on a question he has already asked. Maybe he thinks that everything else is going well in the city and that this is the only question that there is to ask. Anyway, as I said in my response in July: I have not seen the report prepared by Ernst Young (EY) which was developed to give technical advice and opinions to officers as to the effectiveness of financial controls. As is appropriate given the complex and serious issues that arise from the commission, I was guided by the professional advice of the Section 151 Officer. As I also said in July, the remit of officers is clearly outlined in Section 5.5 of Article 5 of the Council's Constitution, and I remain confident that EY's findings have been explained to councillors through the briefings delivered by senior officers that have enabled us to understand the content and implications of the report. I would like to remind Councillor Clarke that Audit Committee, which includes in its membership his colleague Councillor Rule, has not underplayed the seriousness of the issues found and indeed confirmed over three years reviewed that there have been numerous incidents of control breaches leading to the assessment that the Council is operating with a weakened control environment that needs to be sorted. It remains my view that developing proportionate and timely mitigations is where our collective attention should be focused.

### **Town Centre Fund**

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Skills, Growth, Economic Development and Property: Does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that promoting and delivering a safe environment for shoppers and business

owners alike is a key objective in helping the City's shopping precincts to thrive and flourish; and that the £20m recently awarded to Clifton from the Government's Town Centre Fund will provide a welcome additional resource to meet that objective?

Councillor Steve Battlemuch replied as follows:

Thank you for your question. Safety in our city centre and neighbourhoods is crucial for the vitality of the retail sector, and that applies across the city and all our neighbourhoods. The Towns Fund allocations are predominantly used for capital expenditure although a small proportion of revenue can also be supported. The current thinking from Government is that will be a 75:25 split weighted towards capital for the Towns Fund. We are still awaiting final details from the Government about how the eligible expenditure from the Towns Fund allocation for Clifton can be spent. Obviously, we are also keeping an eye on who is in Government, hourly at the moment, to see whether the Towns Fund continues I suppose. What we do know is that proposals for how the Towns Fund will be used will be made by a Towns Board that will be set up by spring 2024. The priorities for using the funding will need to go through appropriate and robust governance overseen by the Towns Board and submitted to Government for approval via an investment plan, so not a quick process. We need to work out with the people of Clifton that this announcement from Government might not lead to immediate money being spent there. The process for setting up a Towns Board is being considered by officers and will evolve once we get the final guidance, which we still have not got. There is significant partnership work underway, as you are all aware in Clifton, not least through the Clifton Impact Initiative which includes strong links with the police on the public safety agenda. This existing activity can provide a platform, and the police will have a place on the Board. Finally, as you are aware Councillor Clarke, we met with all councillors who represent Clifton wards and further meetings will take place on the Towns Fund as soon as we get more information.

### **Land maintenance**

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services and Parks: Could the Portfolio Holder explain the rationale and how much is anticipated to be saved from the Council stopping maintenance on parcels of land across the City, in Clifton Grove and Barton Green, it has previously maintained in some cases for the last 40 years?

Councillor Corall Jenkins replied as follows:

Thank you Lord-Mayor, and thank you Councillor Rule for raising the question. I must say that I have been working on this for a couple of weeks now with Councillor Spain. We have raised these issues and we are in the middle of responding to a number of residents on this issue. In terms of your question on grounds maintenance around the Fabis Drive area, I can say that the cessation of groundworks operations in the area is not driven by budget savings, but is part of the review of Green Space Operational Services and its landholdings to ensure that appropriate maintenance activity is being carried out in accordance with funding provided for each parcel of land. One aspect of this review has been to check and confirm ownership of each parcel of land and the Service has identified that Fabis Drive has not been in Council ownership. The land in question, according to the Land Registry Record, is in the ownership of the Crown Estate. We believe that the developers have gone into administration. If any land in the country does not have an owner, then the ownership is passed on to the Crown. We appreciate that the Council has been maintaining the

land on Fabis Drive for some years, and we also appreciate that withdrawing the grounds maintenance operation from the area is causing some concern to local residents, however the recent review has found that the Council has no responsibility or legal duty to either maintain or access the land in question as it is not in Council ownership. Given the financial position of the Council, we do not have the capacity to continue to maintain any land beyond the Council's legal and contractual responsibility, but as I stated, we are working with officers to get something out to residents on this. Thank you.

### **Flood Planning and Prevention**

Councillor Maria Watson asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services and Parks: The Portfolio Holder will be aware that the Council has a statutory responsibility for flood planning and prevention, can the Portfolio Holder explain how the Council discharges this duty?

Councillor Corall Jenkins replied as follows:

Thank you, Lord-Mayor, and thank you Councillor Watson. Nottingham City Council has a statutory role as the lead local flood authority, which has certain duties and responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Whilst the Council does not have a duty to resolve flooding it should undertake the following: work closely with other risk management authorities such as Highway England, the Environment Agency, water and sewage companies and district and borough councils; use powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 to regulate ordinary water courses through consenting works for third-party organisations and enforcement against landowner asset owners to ensure flow is maintained through water courses; develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk - a local flood risk management strategy; investigate flood incidents that identify the organisation with relevant flood risk management functions; act as a statutory consultee on planning applications; and develop and maintain a register of flood risk management assets and features. In terms of preventative actions and works, Section 19 investigations have helped develop a flood hotspot priority list which we use for targeted bulletins ahead of forecast storm events. We also manage and maintain a number of culverts to make sure they are kept clear and some of these have sensors fitted and alerts set up when certain water levels are reached. The Council also has plans to mitigate, as far as it can, the effects of flooding. The Council's Emergency Planning Team maintain, with other partners in the Local Resilience Forum, a number of plans to deal with the effects of flooding. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum is a multi-agency body of public and private sector organisations that co-ordinates responses to major emergencies. The Forum has an overarching or county-wide flood plan which considers all sources of flooding, and includes a number of more specific plans, one of which is the Nottingham City Flood Plan. This details the possible effects of flooding in this city from the River Trent, River Leen and Daybrook. In addition to specific flooding plans, the Forum and the City Council maintain other plans which may be needed during major flooding incidents, for example critical infrastructure plans for failure of gas, water and electricity, large-scale evacuation, humanitarian assistance, communicating with the public, and recovery. During Storm Babette the Emergency Planning Team helped co-ordinate the City Council and Forum's response to flooding alongside the Flood Risk Management Team and the Highway Teams. The City Council's officers attended and facilitated many of the forums, strategic and tactical, co-ordinating group

meetings to ensure we had the latest river levels and assess how that would impact on the city. Thank you.

### **Bonfire Display**

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture: Can the Portfolio Holder explain why he has failed to proactively source an external sponsor, from the business community, to cover the Council's share of costs of hosting the bonfire display at Forest Recreation Ground?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor, and may I thank Councillor Rule for his question. I will start my response by saying that even though efforts were made to achieve increased sponsorship for Bonfire Night, the prices have gone up so significantly since 2019 that the event was simply not viable, neither for us nor for our commercial partner. The fact that the Bonfire Night event takes place in the dark offers limited opportunities for a sponsor to activate their brand. This is unlike other events we hold, for example Riverside Festival or Light Night. I would actually argue that although our teams are experiencing capacity pressures at the moment, they continue to secure sponsorship for events very successfully. Recent examples of this include the sponsorship we received for the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in 2022, as well as the Department for Culture, Media and Sport funding we received to do the screenings of the Eurovision contest and the King's Coronation in the Castle grounds. In terms of Bonfire Night, part of the cost of the event has previously been met by a commercial partner in lieu of commercial rights for food and beverage and fairground rides at the event so the costs of staging that event had already been shared in that sense. The issue, not just for Bonfire Night but for all events, is that inflationary cost pressures and increasing demands on events organisers mean that costs have increased, for example costs for the Bonfire Night doubled compared to 2019. This made the event unviable. The event cost £30,000 in 2019 and would have cost £60,000 in 2023. Some of the component costs such as traffic management, health cover and fire safety, have seen an increase more than 80% since 2019. Lord Mayor, in answering Councillor Rule's question with the best of intentions I cannot help sense a good amount of opportunism from the Group opposite. Is Councillor Rule unaware, for example, of the wide list of cities and regions in the UK that have cancelled Bonfire Night events this year? These include Glasgow, Manchester, Suffolk, Norfolk, Norwich, a number of locations in London, and the list goes on. In fact, I should note that the list of cancellations includes Broxtowe and Gedling Gedling. The reason for the display being cancelled there is it was rained off. It is highly likely, taking into account the weather of the day locally, this could have made it difficult for our own fire display as well, never mind the price increases that I previously outlined. Councillor Rule of course knows all that but raising the question now is, I suppose, politically convenient. Not to mention of course if we take into account the previous Nottingham Independents' motion on fireworks and animal safety, it goes to show it is not really about asking meaningful questions, it is about speculation, isn't it? It is about opportunism, making a headline, isn't it? Thank you.

### **Ultra Low Emission Zones**

Councillor Michael Edwards raised a point of order stating that, in his opinion, the question asked with notice by Councillor Kirsty M Jones, as set out in the agenda papers, did not comply with the requirement set out in paragraph 12.32 of Article 12 (Council Standing Orders and Committee Procedures) for questions to be factually



accurate. As Councillor Jones was unable to provide assurance as to the accuracy of the question, the Lord Mayor invited her to reword the question.

Councillor Kirsty M Jones asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Contrary to statements made by the Labour Deputy Leader in the media that Ultra Low Emission Zones are coming to every street, can the Leader of the Council rule out any further zoning in the City Centre or the City's neighbourhoods?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Jones for her question. Air pollution is a significant threat to public health and road traffic emissions continue to be a big part of that. Improving air quality therefore continues to be an important priority and I make no apologies for working towards a greener, cleaner city for our citizens. The Council has worked with officials from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department of Transport to identify the most suitable measures to reduce the levels of pollution to comply with legal air quality limits that resulted in the publication of the Nottingham Air Quality Plan in November 2018. It was recognised that good progress is being made in Nottingham to improve air quality through delivery of sustainable transport such as the electric tram, the electric and biogas buses and investment in walking and cycling facilities, but some additional targeted measures are required to achieve compliance. The Plan included retrofitting 170 buses with exhaust technology to reduce emissions further, funded through the Government's Clean Bus Technology Fund; and changing the age and admission policy for Hackney Carriages and supporting an increase in low-emission taxis, with £100m from the Government used to provide a licensing discount for drivers, taxi electric charging points, fund home chargers and expand a try before you buy scheme. In addition, funding from the Government was used to support the conversion of our own fleet, including replacing heavy and high-polluting vehicles such as bin lorries with electric vehicles. The plans were assessed by Government officials and cleared by Ministers who issued a Ministerial Direction for the Plan to be implemented. Ongoing monitoring shows that air quality in Nottingham is continuing to improve, but there are locations where further monitoring is required. Depending on the outcome of this monitoring, it may be necessary to implement further measures that could include a low-emissions zone or clean air zone type scheme should that be necessary in future, but for now, though the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party is correct that these zones will be introduced across many areas, they are not needed at this time in Nottingham. This is because the need for these zones is based on air quality monitoring along with an assessment for whether any alternative measures can achieve the same level of improvement required for the specific location. Because of the work of Labour members in this Chamber in the past, at the moment this measure is not necessary in Nottingham, unlike many other urban areas in the country. So I hope, Councillor Jones, you will recognise and be grateful that the Labour-run Council has put measures in place in good time which have improved the quality of the air for adults and children in Nottingham, and I commit that we will continue to do so using whatever measures are appropriate to maintain and improve the air quality in our city.

## **50 Decisions taken under Urgency Procedures**

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, presented the report informing Council that no decisions had been taken under the Call-in and Urgency provisions of

the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules since August 2023 and no Key Decisions had been taken under the Special Urgency provisions of the Access to Information Procedure Rules since April 2023. The report was seconded by Councillor Audra Wynter.

**Resolved to note that no decisions had been taken under urgency provisions within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Article 11) and Access to Information Procedure Rules (Article 13) in the Constitution since the last report to Council in September 2023.**

## **51 Nottingham Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2023 - 2026**

Councillor Sajid Mohammed, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion, presented the report seeking approval of the Nottingham Community Safety Partnership Strategy for 2023 to 2026. The Strategy had been developed to satisfy the statutory duty to co-operate in order to formulate and implement strategies for the reduction of crime and disorder, for combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, for the reduction of re-offending, for preventing people from becoming involved in serious violence and for reducing instances of serious violence in the area. The Strategy had been approved by the Nottingham Community Safety Partnership on 29 September 2023. The report was seconded by Councillor Neghat Khan.

**Resolved to approve and adopt the Nottingham Community Safety Partnership 2023 – 2026, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.**

## **52 Review of Statement of Licensing Policy**

Councillor Audrey Dinnall, Chair of the Licensing Committee, presented the report seeking approval of a new Statement of Licensing Policy, to inform individuals making applications for licences of the Authority's standards and values in promoting the licensing objectives within the framework of the Licensing Act 2003 and approved guidance issued by the Home Office. The consultation draft had been approved by Council on 10 July 2023 and consultation took place between 27 July and 20 September 2023. Amendments had been made to the Policy as a result of responses received during the consultation. The report was seconded by Councillor Sajid Mohammed.

**Resolved to adopt the Statement of Licensing Policy, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, with effect from 7 January 2024.**

## **53 Amendments to the Constitution**

Councillor Sam Harris, Chair of the Housing and City Development Scrutiny Committee, presented the report proposing amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Housing and City Development Scrutiny Committee to reflect changes to the Council's housing management and maintenance responsibilities as a result of the passing of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. The report was seconded by Councillor Sarita-Marie Rehman-Wall.

**Resolved to add the following words to the 'Purpose' section of the Housing and City Development Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference: "regarding housing, contribute towards providing assurance and oversight of the Council's statutory responsibilities in the context of regulatory compliance and tenant satisfaction."**

#### **54 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23**

Councillor Leslie Ayoola, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, presented the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23 which provided an overview of the activity undertaken by the Council's scrutiny committees during municipal year 2022/23 to fulfil their terms of reference, and the outputs and impact of that work. The report was seconded by Councillor Neghat Khan.

**Resolved to accept the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23.**

#### **55 Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/2023**

Councillor Samuel Gardiner, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23 which summarised the work undertaken by the Committee during municipal year 2022/23 and explained how the Council had fulfilled its designated role within the Constitution and how that work related to its core responsibilities. He stated that, in his view, the Committee had carried out its role effectively during 2022/23 and complied with the CIPFA position statement with only slight improvements required, which will be undertaken during 2023/24. The report was seconded by Councillor Nayab Patel.

**Resolved to:**

**(1) note the work undertaken by the Audit Committee during 2022/23; and**

**(2) accept the Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23.**

#### **56 Motion in the name of Councillor Audra Wynter**

Councillor Audra Wynter moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Ethan Radford:

Nottingham City Council notes:

- that there is a crisis in local government funding with many councils facing severe budget problems. The Local Government Association (LGA) has calculated that the funding gap for local authorities in 2023/24 is £2.4 billion;
- that the main reasons for these problems are cuts in central government grant since 2011 combined with unfunded additional pressures in adult care and children's services, as well as recent rises in homelessness;
- that the poorer the area that the council represents, the greater the pressures, the greater the grant loss. The better off the area the fewer pressures, the less an area has lost. Nottingham between 2011 and 2023 has lost £915 per

household, more affluent areas in the country, especially in the south, have lost less funding.

Nottingham City Council believes that the Government must move to a local government financing model that meets the demands of basic services, an ageing population and children in need and not, as now, on the basis of political expediency.

Therefore, Nottingham City Council resolves to:

- agree with other East Midlands Labour Authorities to collectively write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to highlight the severe underfunding that local authorities generally are facing, but in particular the gross unfairness of the distribution of grant between local authorities;
- work with organisations like the Local Government Association, the Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA), and unions to campaign for a move towards a revenue funding model based on need and not on politics.

Councillors debated the motion.

**Resolved to carry the motion.**

## **57 Committee Membership Changes**

The following changes to committee membership were noted:

- (1) Councillor Neghat Khan had replaced Councillor Ethan Radford as a member of the Housing and City Development Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) Councillor Zafran Khan had stood down as a member of the Communities and Environment Scrutiny Committee;
- (3) Councillor Ethan Radford had been appointed to fill a vacant seat on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee;
- (4) Councillor Neghat Khan had been appointed as a named substitute for the Corporate Scrutiny Committee;
- (5) Councillor Nadia Farhat had stood down as a member of the Housing and City Development Scrutiny Committee and Greater Nottingham Light Rapid Transit Advisory Committee and as a named substitute for the Planning Committee and Communities and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

## **58 Extraordinary Council Meeting**

**Resolved to hold an Extraordinary Council meeting on 7 December 2023 at 6pm to seek Council's consent to the draft Combined County Authority Order, thereby proceeding with the next stage of the process to establish the East Midlands Combined County Authority.**

The Meeting concluded at 5.08 pm

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**Responses to Questions from Councillors requiring a written response**

**WQ1**

**Written question to be asked by Councillor Maria Watson of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services and Parks at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 13 November 2023**

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Can the Portfolio Holder provide a breakdown of the amount spent on the provision of sandbags to prevent flooding for domestic residences and businesses by the Council split out by year since 2019?

Councillor Corall Jenkins replied as follows:

There is not a statutory requirement for a local authority to provide the public with sandbags. It has been agreed by all local authorities in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire that in some circumstances sandbag provision is a service that they would like to provide. Nottingham City Council keeps a limited supply of sand and sandbags in stock for prioritised use across the City and operate in accordance with the Local Resilience Forum Sandbag Policy Guidelines. The Council does not guarantee to be able to provide sandbags to the public in an emergency. There is a commitment to help, but may not be able to reach properties quickly enough and we may need to prioritize our limited resources to those in greater need. Highways Maintenance at Nottingham City Council do not have dedicated budgets for sand bags or the provision of sand bags. On reviewing financial records there is some recorded spend on sand bags in 2022 in the sum of £982 for replenishment of stock. There is no other recorded spend specific sand bags in 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2023. It should be noted that further costs will have been incurred by the service including for materials, sand purchase and provision and resources (these costs cannot be confirmed specific to sand bags).

**WQ2**

**Written question to be asked by Councillor Kevin Clarke of the Portfolio Holder for Housing at the meeting of the City Council to be held 13 November 2023**

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Can the Portfolio Holder provide a comparison of the amount spent by Nottingham Housing Services on its housing repair team versus the amount spent on external contractors?

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

The total budget for repairs is approximately £23m, of that budget approximately £5.2m is currently delivered through external contractors to support the internal workforce delivering corrective works to occupied and empty homes. This includes

specialist works that would not represent best value to directly deliver due to volume or specialism.

### WQ3

#### Written question to be asked by Councillor Kirsty Jones of the Portfolio Holder for Housing at the meeting of the City Council to be held 13 November 2023

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Can the Portfolio Holder provide a breakdown of the number of Council tenanted properties with boilers by type i.e. electric, gas, combination that fall into the following age brackets:

- 1 – 3 years
- 4 – 6 years
- 7 – 10 years
- Over 10 years old

Councillor Jay Hayes replied as follows:

Type	0 - 3 YEARS	4 - 6 YEARS	7 - 10 YEARS	OVER 10 YEARS OLD	Grand Total
Ground Source Heat Pumps (Electrical)		36			36
Communal Gas Boilers	81	82	95	46	304
District Heating	92	4	268	2275	2639
Domestic Gas Boilers	3350	3076	2985	11771	21182
Air Source Heat pumps (Electrical)	17				17
Electrical Heating	84	39	75	308	506
Grand Total	3624	3237	3423	14400	24684

### WQ4

#### Written question to be asked by Councillor Andrew Rule of the Portfolio Holder for Finance at the meeting of the City Council to be held 13 November 2023

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Could the Portfolio Holder provide a breakdown of what income is generated by the Council from the 7% of Loxley House that is occupied by external parties?

Councillor Audra Wynter replied as follows:

The total income received by the Council from lettings to third party occupiers is £502,597.39. A detailed breakdown of the income received from individual parties is exempt from publication under paragraph number 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. It is not in the public interest to disclose this information because it



relates to commercially sensitive information the disclosure of which could adversely prejudice the outcome of future discussions and negotiations.

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