

Public Document Pack

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council

held at the Council Chamber, Council House

on 7 March 2022 from 2.00 pm - 5.25 pm

Attendances:

✓ Councillor Dave Trimble (Lord Mayor)	
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✓ Councillor Hassan Ahmed	Councillor Rebecca Langton
✓ Councillor Leslie Ayoola	✓ Councillor Jane Lakey
✓ Councillor Cheryl Barnard	Councillor Dave Liversidge
✓ Councillor Steve Battlemuch	Councillor Sally Longford
Councillor Merlita Bryan	✓ Councillor AJ Matsiko
✓ Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark	Councillor Carole McCulloch
✓ Councillor Graham Chapman	✓ Councillor David Mellen
✓ Councillor Azad Choudhry	Councillor Sajid Mohammed
✓ Councillor Kevin Clarke	Councillor Salma Mumtaz
Councillor Audrey Dinnall	✓ Councillor Toby Neal
✓ Councillor Michael Edwards	✓ Councillor Nayab Patel
Councillor Samuel Gardiner	✓ Councillor Anne Peach
✓ Councillor Jay Hayes	✓ Councillor Georgia Power
Councillor Rosemary Healy	Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
✓ Councillor Nicola Heaton	✓ Councillor Ethan Radford
✓ Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora	✓ Councillor Nick Raine
Councillor Phil Jackson	✓ Councillor Angharad Roberts
✓ Councillor Corall Jenkins	✓ Councillor Andrew Rule
Councillor Maria Joannou	Councillor Mohammed Saghir
Councillor Sue Johnson	✓ Councillor Wendy Smith
✓ Councillor Kirsty Jones	✓ Councillor Roger Steel
✓ Councillor Angela Kandola	Councillor Maria Watson
✓ Councillor Jawaid Khalil	✓ Councillor Sam Webster
✓ Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan	Councillor Adele Williams
✓ Councillor Neghat Khan	✓ Councillor Linda Woodings
Councillor Zafran Nawaz Khan	✓ Councillor Cate Woodward
✓ Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis	✓ Councillor Audra Wynter

✓ Indicates present at meeting

68 Apologies for absence

Councillor Merlita Bryan - unwell
Councillor Audrey Dinnall – personal
Councillor Sam Gardiner – leave
Councillor Rosemary Healy – unwell
Councillor Phil Jackson – personal
Councillor Maria Joannou – personal

Councillor Zafran Khan – personal
Councillor Rebecca Langton – personal
Councillor Dave Liversidge – personal
Councillor Sally Longford – personal
Councillor Carole McCulloch – personal
Councillor Sajid Mohammed – unwell
Councillor Salma Mumtaz – unwell
Councillor Nayab Patel – personal
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos – unwell
Councillor Mohammed Saghir – personal
Councillor Maria Watson – personal
Councillor Adele Williams - personal

69 Declarations of Interests

None

70 Questions from citizens

Bulky waste

AM asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services:

If you are thinking of charging for the bulky waste collection, have you considered that this will lead to more people dumping items on street corners? This is already a problem and will only get worse. Also only having one tip for the whole of Nottingham will not work if the amount of people bringing bulky waste increases. Do you think people can afford to pay for a collection or even hire a van to go to the tip in today's current climate?

In the absence of Councillor Longford, Councillor Mellen replied as follows:
Thank you Lord Mayor and, as you say, there are a number of questions today addressed to Portfolio Holders who are not here to answer, so you will hear my voice a little bit more than usual I'm afraid.

Can I think the citizen for their question. The Controlled Waste Regulations 2012 allow local authorities to charge for items that do not fit into household bins. The collection of bulky waste is discretionary for local authorities, and many councils provide such a service and almost all choose to charge a fee to recover some of the costs. Only a handful of councils across the UK offer free bulky waste collections for some or all residents, those being Hillingdon, Hyndburn, Liverpool and Tower Hamlets and Redbridge; and until recently we offered all collections for free.

Fly-tipping is a national problem and has increased across the Country. In the last 2 years there have been 21,179 fly-tips reported to Nottingham City Council, many of which have been investigated by our Community Protection Officers in an effort to identify the perpetrator. Unfortunately, fly-tipping is often a crime of stealth and, despite investigations using CCTV cameras, door to door enquires, or by seeking information from within the fly-tip, the number of cases that are brought to justice is relatively small. Evidence shows that the lockdown triggered by the pandemic lead to increased consumption by households and to big changes in the amount of waste and recycling. This has put an additional pressure on the waste management

systems in every city and town across the UK. The increase in consumption were initially due to purchasing items in bulk or panic buying and then by many citizens being forced or choosing to stay at home for their work and make online purchases which come with large amounts of packaging. Consequently, more domestic waste was generated and this trend continues today. This has put increased pressure upon waste collection systems across the Country, and it was decided when the Council resumed white goods collection after Covid lockdown in April 2021 it would restart as a chargeable service. Since the resumption we have seen a reduction in fly-tipped fridges, probably because many white goods suppliers now take away old items. Some people have predicted that introducing a collection fee for other bulky waste items will lead to more frequent fly tipping. However, there is very little reliable evidence to support this. The Local Government Association has found no direct links between charging for a bulky waste service and fly-tipping and one of the authorities which does not charge for collections has the highest rates of fly-tipping in the Country.

Because of our sensible pricing proposal and increased opportunities offered at the point of booking to dispose of items via a third party for free, it is believed that the new charging policy will not lead to an increase in fly-tips on our streets, but of course we will need to monitor that carefully. Given that much of the material collected as bulky waste could be re-purposed or re-used, the introduction of a collection charge could be seen as a more sustainable approach to waste management by discouraging the prevailing throwaway culture and encouraging residents to consider a more sustained method of disposal of these items which others may find a beneficial use for. It is estimated that 30% of bulky waste collected nationally is suitable for re-use and our website already encourages people to consider contacting the British Heart Foundation or Freecycle as alternative means of disposing of items and there are other agencies, of course, that do that. We will develop other options over time to maximise the circular economy within the City to support our plans to be carbon neutral by 2028. We have made provision for the most vulnerable in our communities to still have access to a limited free collection service, and for others that can afford to replace furniture and carpets and other electrical goods it is not unreasonable for them to contribute to the cost of managing their old and unwanted items.

Libraries

CA asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Schools:

Please could the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Schools explain why Nottingham City Council is proposing to close three libraries in the City, namely Aspley, Basford and Radford/ Lenton and how this devastating action can be avoided?

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark responded as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank the citizen for the question. Firstly, as Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Schools, I want to say I recognise the important work that Nottingham Libraries play in our communities. Our libraries continue to provide access to learning and resources, offer safe and welcoming spaces for all our residents to help develop themselves and provide essential access to a free public computers and wifi network so that people can view information online and engage in services that can be only engaged with digitally. I am, and

remain, a strong supporter of Nottingham libraries' work. In saying that, I do think it is important that we recognise the way people are using our libraries has changed: there have been decreases in local books issued and footfall mirrors national trends and a greater number of people want to access information online.

Expectations of what people want to see in its library provision is changing and it is important that we think about our future service needs and what represents best value. Like many other councils, Nottingham City Council has faced enormous reductions in its funding and has seen increased costs around the delivery of services, especially in adult social care. As a Council we are obliged legally to balance our books and deliver our services in the budget we have available. This has meant we have had to look at taking some very difficult decisions. In order to achieve these savings a range of proposals around efficiencies were looked at and, unfortunately, includes looking at proposals for reductions in the numbers of libraries operating. At this stage, I want to emphasise that no decisions have yet been made around any closures. Up until the 24 April 2022 we are undertaking a consultation exercise to seek people's views around the proposals for savings, plus to hear and explore alternative options that people might suggest on ways that we could run the services and facilitate them to be run differently so that services minimise the impact of loss to residents. So let us know your thoughts. If you would like to have your say please complete the online survey or visit your local libraries for a paper copy. Also look out for consultation events over this period. So, what I am actually saying is that there is no decision currently made as yet because we have to wait until consultation completes on the 24 April. Thank you Lord Mayor.

71 Petitions from councillors on behalf of citizens

Councillor Georgia Power presented a petition on behalf of local residents requesting that the Council and Nottingham City Homes replace the gate next to 2 Penllech Walk due to concerns around safety, anti-social behavior and theft.

Councillor Andrew Rule presented a petition on behalf of residents of Lark Hill Retirement Village requesting more adequate recycling bins for the village to enable residents to support the Council in achieving its recycling targets.

72 To confirm the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 4 January 2022

The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Council held on 4 January 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

73 To confirm the Minutes of the last Ordinary meeting of Council held on 10 January 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

74 To receive official communications and announcements from the Leader of the Council and/or the Chief Executive

The Chief Executive reported the following:

I am pleased to announce that the Council was announced as Local Authority of the Year 2020/21 at the National Energy Efficiency Awards in February, in recognition of its work to tackle fuel poverty, generate renewable energy and lead on sustainability policy across the City and region.

The Lord Mayor made the following statement:

I want to take this opportunity to make a statement on the dreadful situation in Ukraine, on behalf of Nottingham City Council and the City of Nottingham. We have all watched the news in great horror as Russian troops invaded a sovereign European state. It will be a cause of great concern to people right across the city and we stand together with the people of Ukraine. It is an outrageous act that has huge ramifications right around the world and united the world in opposition as never before. Many Ukrainian nationals have made Nottingham their home and they too, will have grave concerns for their families and friends still in Ukraine. Nottingham is a welcoming city and will always provide refuge to those in need. We work closely with organisations in the voluntary sector such as the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum and the Arimathea Trust who offer vital support to new arrivals in our city in whatever way they can. Last week, Nottingham City Council took steps to sever friendship and twinning arrangements with both the Belarusian city of Minsk and the Russian town of Krasnodar. The severance of ties is borne out of our unwillingness to be associated with both the Russian and Belarusian governments and is not a reflection on the people of Minsk or Krasnodar. The actions taken by Russia are a regressive act, which will stifle the Russian and Belarusian people who rightly deserve much more from those whom they have bestowed their authority. This afternoon we stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and against the aggression of those who seek to undo their sovereign independence.

75 Questions from councillors - to the City Council's lead councillor on the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority

None

76 Questions from councillors - to a member of Executive Board, the chair of a committee and the chair of any other City Council body

Housing rents

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Heritage:

Can the Portfolio Holder inform us whether the nearly £4 a week rise in Council Housing rents would still have been necessary without the more than £15m taken 'unlawfully' from the Housing Revenue Account?

Councillor Linda Woodings replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor for your question. As Councillor Clarke is already aware, unlike Government budgets, NHS budgets and council budgets (including the Housing Revenue Account) have to balance every year on a revenue basis. Therefore, the rise in Council rent would have been necessary regardless of the sum transferred incorrectly into the Council's General Fund. The final sum to be repaid has yet to be determined and awaits the outcome of further

investigation. It will also need authorising by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and therefore the sum that has already been set aside for it cannot be repaid until finalised and without specific agreement. However, the 4.1% increase is necessary for the long term sustainability of the Housing Revenue Account. It is based on the lower rate of inflation in September last year and of course in January inflation hit a 30 year high of 5.5%, so this proposed increase is, even now, below the rate of inflation. Nottingham City Council has historically levied rents that are lower than those in the rest of the social housing sector and the majority of tenants are still not paying the target rent for their home. This remains the case for most of Nottingham City Council housing stock because we charge social rent on most of our houses, while most of the social housing sector now charge affordable rents which are higher. All local providers and the majority of councils nationally are increasing rents by 4.1% and it remains the case that, even after these rises, Nottingham City Council tenants will pay some of the lowest rents available in Nottingham. For almost three quarters of our tenants the rent and service charge increases will be entirely covered by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit payments, but of course we are always mindful of the people who have to self-fund their rent and I have asked the Board of Nottingham City Homes to track the arrears situation of tenants and the reasons behind evictions.

Nottingham City Council's housing stock is also ageing and requires an ongoing repair and maintenance programme to maintain the Decent Homes Standard. Soon we are expecting an enhanced New Homes Standard. New homes also need to be acquired and developed in order to replace the homes lost to Right to Buy and, although new homes will never meet the numbers lost, we just can't build them fast enough. In fact, very soon we will have lost more than 50% of our housing stock under the Right to Buy. 50% of those properties sold are now in the hands of private landlords.

The Council also needs to agree with Government what the repayment to the Housing Revenue Account will be used for, and this is likely to include improvements to existing homes, making them warmer and more energy efficient, and building new Council houses. We have 8,000 families and individuals on our waiting list and it is the most desirable form of housing giving very low rents and security of tenure. Council tenants know they can ask for a repair to their homes without the fear of eviction, an experience many in the private sector will not recognise. Nottingham also has a pledge to become carbon neutral by 2028 and for Council tenants that will mean warmer homes that are cheaper to heat. We also need to reach the Government targets to raise energy efficiency standards on our properties and that requires significant additional investment. In addition to this, the Council faces extra costs this year from new regulation - the Building Safety Bill and the Social Housing Bill which the Housing Revenue Account has to meet and, although that legislation has not yet been fully enforced, I am pleased to report that the Council and Nottingham City Homes are already getting on with the work in readiness.

As I have reported at previous full Council meetings, Nottingham has already been extremely proactive in investing money to ensure the safety of tenants in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy, where 72 people lost their lives. We have spent more than £8 million fitting sprinkler systems to ensure our tenants living in high rises are safe, not that we received any of the promised funding to cover that but it was the right thing to do and now even more Council tenants in the City will receive other

safety upgrades in their accommodation. We are also improving our complaints system, creating a post for a person to concentrate on damp and disrepair cases and another post to ensure fire safety and compliance with new legislation. All of those costs come in the context of increased building material costs to repairs and maintenance and they have increased much faster than inflation over the last 2 years, well beyond the level by which we are increasing rent. In the face of these ongoing costs, the Housing Revenue Account budget has to be set to ensure that the Council can raise a sustainable long term income stream that can meet our obligations. If the Council doesn't raise rent to meet the inflationary pressures of materials and wages now, the long term budget can never make up that loss of income and there is a limit to how much councils can raise their rents by so we can never catch up with inflation. Not doing so would mean that income falls below the inflationary curve and so the Housing Revenue Account Budget becomes unsustainable.

To some extent this has already happened: between 2016 and 2019, without warning, the Government forced all social housing providers, including us, to reduce rents by 1% per year, each year for four years. During this period the rate of inflation increased by 9.8% and that deficit meant a lower base for subsequent increases. Because Nottingham's rents were already low that was particularly damaging to the long term sustainability of the Housing Revenue Account so, as a result of the 4 year of 1% cuts and inflation-based rises since 2020, it actually means that this year's average rents are broadly at the same level as they were in 2015/16. So it is for these reasons, to ensure we have a sufficient long term trajectory of rental income, that we are raising rents by 4.1% and for the same reason, it is also almost why all other stock-owning councils are doing the same throughout the Country. Thank you.

Council Tax support

Councillor Kirsty Jones asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

While the state of this Authority's finances is a much publicised and discussed topic, it remains disappointing to see yet another maximum Council Tax rise for our already pressured people. With a seemingly constantly rising cost of living, can the Portfolio Holder outline what support and help is currently available to those who need it?

Councillor Sam Webster replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Jones for giving me the opportunity to shine the spotlight once again on the Government's record of taking hundreds of millions of pounds of funding away from the people of Nottingham - a hundred million pounds per year less in the main Government grant. Does she ever wonder why it is even when the Conservatives win a majority in the House of Commons they have fewer Councillors here in Nottingham than ever before? The reason is because people here know, they know what the Government has been done and how much has been slashed over the past decade, they know that the poorest schools have been targeted for the biggest funding cuts, they know, and you know Councillor Jones, that more people are using foodbanks in Clifton than ever before. They know that the progress made under the last Labour Government in places like ours, on child poverty, life expectancy, and NHS waiting times, on wage increases, on rebuilding schools like Farnborough Academy in your ward, like opening thousands of new Sure Start centres and like building giant service centres such as Clifton Cornerstone in your ward, is being lost. I agree with the point being made in the

second part of your question, it is indeed utterly disappointing that the Government's preferred method of funding local public services is to effectively force councils across England to increase council tax year after year. A recent report by the charity 'Age UK', and I trust Age UK, says that their analysis shows that even if you make local people pay a whopping additional 10% extra in council tax on top of the average 19% rise we've seen in the recent years it still won't give social care all the money it needs. Meanwhile, this intensifies the postcode lottery which means that older people have much more chance of getting a decent care service in some places compared to others. Social care provision, they say, is too important for too many people for its fate to depend on local tax bases. So I agree with what Age UK have said in their most recent research. The fact has been that as the Government cuts funding to local areas, many councils have had no real choice but to increase council tax.

Here's a few facts for you on council tax, and I do hope you think these facts are still important. Last year, England had an average council tax increase of 4.4% - that was the average across the whole country. But, last year in Scotland they had an average council tax increase of 0%, no increase, across the whole of Scotland. That big difference on local taxation was because of the policies and priorities of the Government at national level, the different Governments in Scotland and England - 4.4% in England, 0% in Scotland. Government has, this year, decided to implement a 10% National Insurance increase which will next year become the Health and Social Care Levy, but they have also proposed ongoing increases to council tax via the Adult Social Care Precept. So people will be expected to pay a Social Care Levy and a Social Care Precept on council tax bills. Nottingham City Council's council tax will increase by 1.99%. The Adult Social Care Precept will add a further 1%, so 2.99% in total. A total increase at our neighbouring Conservative-led local authority at Nottinghamshire County Council will be 4%. The increase in Nottingham is around 48p per week for a Band A property and the vast bulk of Nottingham's dwellings, over 90%, are the lowest Band A and Band B for council tax. This year our average council tax bill in Nottingham has been £1,179 and the average across England is £249 per year higher than our area in Nottingham. The average bill in Nottingham is the 43rd lowest out of 309 councils and in the past year we have administered almost £20m of council tax support for working age residents and £11m of council tax support for pensioners to over 32,000 households in Nottingham.

It is disappointing that the Clifton Independents consistently seek to shield the Conservative Government. Councillor Jones knows full well every household she represents in Clifton has had £320 in cash terms taken away from it in Government funding for local public services. So, every household on Southchurch Drive, Rivergreen or on Bridgenorth Drive will have had a reduction of £320, not from us - from the Government. What she should be screaming from the rooftops is this: why has the Government cut £320 per household in her City, in her neighbourhood when this figure is just £47 per household on average across the country? The truth is that her residents have been targeted by the Government and she chooses to shield Tory Ministers. I have never been convinced by the opposition's 'Independence' branding, and I am still not convinced. Sadly, what I see is opportunism rather than independence. We will continue to argue that Nottingham deserves and demands its fair share and will continue to argue against the policy of real terms cuts that have been a feature of the past 12 years. We will continue to provide finance assistance to those residents who need it most and we will continue to invest in our local welfare advice services. I will pick up more about the cost of

living crisis in my answer to Councillor Jenkins later and will speak more about the financial status of the Council when I propose our budget later as well. If Councillor Jones is proposing no council tax increase, which I take from the question, I look forward to her fully costed proposals later in the budget debate. It is essential really for the people of Nottingham that if the Opposition Group is making these points in their questions that it is backed up in their proposed amendments to the budget: anything less is either opportunism, laziness or both. Thank you.

Clifton Young People's Centre

Councillor Maria Watson had submitted the following question to be asked of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People:

It is with a deep feeling of concern that we look at the current proposals to cut the number of Children's Centres across Nottingham. Clifton Young People's Centre on Green Lane is one such centre and provides an incredible and invaluable service. We currently have multiple organisations who are volunteering to deliver activities and youth sessions, at no cost to this Council, which would provide much needed help to our whole community. We are asking the Portfolio Holder today, please will you commit to not stripping Clifton of yet another Community Asset?

As Councillor Maria Watson was not in attendance at the meeting, the question received a written response after the meeting from Councillor Cheryl Barnard. That written response is attached to these Minutes.

Resident parking permits

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion:

While savings very obviously need to be made, there is clearly a great deal of anger and opposition to forcing residents to pay to park outside of their own homes. With the Overview and Scrutiny report arguing that if the scheme were to be introduced there would be a greater requirement for enforcement, can the Portfolio Holder speak with confidence that the savings for the City will come anywhere close to being worth the extra hardship it imposes?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Clarke for his question. Currently, all resident parking permits are subsidised at 100%, making them free to all households. The saving proposal is to introduce a resident parking permit processing scheme whereby the first permit will remain free to all households within the parking scheme, and for the second and third permits residents will be asked for a contribution towards to the cost of administration. This Council has subsidised the costs of administering, managing and enforcing the scheme for a number of years. Many councils cover the costs of these schemes with a fee, for example all neighbouring councils including Nottinghamshire County Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council, Gedling Borough Council charge for first and all permits and have been doing so for many years. Extensive research into possible amounts was conducted and the amounts initially proposed are considered reasonable, fair and, in most cases, inexpensive in comparison to other council's administration fees. For example, Sheffield City Council charge £46 for the first permit and £93 for the second. With regards to enforcement, Civil Enforcement Officers will continue with our approach of targeting hotspot areas across the City and no changes are being proposed. While I appreciate there might be opposition to the proposal at this stage, I would like to

remind you of one aspect of this proposal that could potentially improve parking in most residential scheme areas. At present all permits are free, however, with the introduction of an administration fee we will see fewer second and third permits issued unnecessarily, resulting in fewer cars visiting or parking in areas where there is already limited spaces. As a City, aiming to be carbon neutral by 2028, this proposal will contribute to our carbon neutral agenda. Finally, should councillors agree to the proposal later this afternoon, the Council will need to carry out further consultation to review its Traffic Regulations Orders, which is a statutory process, and will give us the opportunity to remove unwanted areas, harmonize regulations across the City and introduce the charge where required. Thank you.

Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport and Cleansing Services:

We were delighted to hear about the £1.7m in funding secured to renovate the Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens, a cherished part of this City's landscape. At the same time, we have also noted the proposal in today's budget proposals to close the public convenience on the Victoria Embankment. Can the Portfolio Holder inform us whether the renovation of the Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens toilets will be completed prior to the closure of these conveniences, and if not, where visitors to Victoria Embankment are expected to go in the meantime?

In Councillor Rosemary Healy's absence, Councillor David Mellen replied as follows: Thank you Councillor Clarke for your question. It is indeed great news that the War Memorial Gardens will be fully restored. The work will start in April and it will be completed before March 2023. Unfortunately, the existing toilets on Victoria Embankment have already been closed and are programmed to be removed by the end of March. However, whilst we appreciate that there will be a delay, the restoration project will provide new fully accessible toilets as part of the Heritage Lottery funded project. In the meantime, I will also ask the Parks Team to provide some additional signage to direct people to the public toilets located within the Embankment football changing pavilion. The pavilion toilets are open 7 days a week and are accessible between 9am and 5pm. Thank you.

Devolution

Councillor Carole McCulloch submitted the following question to be asked of the Leader of the Council:

Following the recent publication of the Government's White Paper on Levelling Up, can the Leader update Council on the latest position on devolution?

As Councillor Carole McCulloch was not in attendance at the meeting, the question received a written response after the meeting from Councillor David Mellen. That written response is attached to these Minutes.

Cost of living

Councillor Corall Jenkins asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

The recent announcements by the Chancellor will mean people in this country are living through the worst cost of living crisis for 60 years. What impact does the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources believe this will have on the people we all represent?

Councillor Sam Webster replied as follows:

Thank you for the question Councillor Jenkins asked on behalf of the people you represent in St Anns. I answered a similar question from Councillor Patel that she raised on behalf of residents in Sherwood a couple of months ago and I set out then how serious the situation is for hundreds of thousands of Nottingham residents. This certainly is one of the top issues facing our residents right now: rising taxes, the rising cost of living and the squeeze on household finances. Since the Chancellor's budget a few months ago, a range of charities, associations and research groups have provided insight into the impact of Government policies. It is very clear from trusted sources such as the Institute of Fiscal Studies that households face a combination of significantly higher taxes and higher living costs over the coming months. This comes on top of the big Universal Credit cut that we, in Nottingham Labour, lobbied so hard against and we know will have a detrimental effect on Nottingham people, particularly the poorest children growing up in some of Nottingham's poorest households.

So far, we know that the Government is to impose a big National Insurance increase from 1 April. This means that a low paid working person in Nottingham, earning £20,000 a year, will pay £130 more each year. This is an effective tax increase of 10% on the amount of National Insurance paid. There are more big rises in council tax - the Chancellor has indicated an anticipated 9% rise over the next 3 years, which will include a continuation of the Government's Adult Social Care Precept. As I said in my previous answer, and will probably say again later today, the more the Government cuts its funding to local areas, the more they have had to increase council tax. Household energy bills were already rising at record levels before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. As we know, the energy price cap will increase from 1 April which means that people on standard tariffs paying by direct debit will see an increase of £693 just since October last year. Pre-payment customers will see an increase of £708 from £1309 to £2017 from 1 April and there are fears now that the cost of home energy could increase by another £1000 per year. The price increases we are seeing feed through from 1 April will already be unaffordable for many people, quite possibly for most people, in Nottingham.

General inflation on food and other essentials is hugely outpacing wage growth, even prior to the Russian war in the Ukraine. People are increasingly struggling to make ends meet. The current 5.5% inflation rate is set to increase even further in coming months, so it is very clear that this combination of tax increases and other economic challenges will mean that the impact on our residents is significant and will get worse when the Chancellor's taxation changes happen in April. The Resolution Foundation reported that, with all things considered, the tax burden on UK families will have risen by £3000 since Boris Johnson became Prime Minister, yet the Government still has its priorities in the wrong place. We saw the budget contain some big tax giveaways, most notably the £4billion tax cut on bank profits with the surcharge on bank profits being cut from 8% to 3%. Nottingham people are experiencing a vast chasm between the Government's rhetoric and the reality in their daily lives. Quite simply, when it comes to living standards, the Government is all talk and no delivery. Government is simply not delivering for ordinary people. The last decade has been the weakest decade for pay growth since 1930. By May 2024 real wages will have grown by just 2.4% since 2008, compared to a 38% real wage increase between 1992 and 2008. The result of this pressure on household finances means we are seeing more foodbank visits, more families presenting as homeless at the Council, more children

growing up in poverty, a growing number of people falling behind with rent and other household bills and, to give the most extreme outcome of Conservative policies, for the first time in 40 years, we have seen life expectancy falling and that was prior to the pandemic. A recent BBC article said that areas in London and the Home Counties still continue on the path of living longer but life expectancy fell in urban parts of Leeds, Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool and Blackpool where life expectancy is below 70 for men and 75 for women. By 2019, the researchers say there was a 20 year gap in life expectancy between a woman living in Camden versus a woman living in an area of Leeds, and for men there was a 27 year gap in life expectancy between areas in Kensington and parts of Blackpool. I think that pretty much sums things up showing the choices the Government continues to make: the tax burden is being very purposefully placed on low and middle income households. Now with the global turmoil caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine we will see our own Government's choices compounded. I just hope that the current desperate situation in Ukraine isn't used as an excuse for more than a decade of failure on living standards, child poverty and inequality. I will let you into a secret, none of these things will improve under a Government which has demonstrated for 12 years that it has no intention of improving them. Unless you have a Government which is determined to bring about progress for ordinary people it just won't happen. Thank you.

Hatred against women

Councillor Linda Woodings asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion:

Following the recent announcement that the Government is set to reject making misogyny a hate crime, does the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion agree that legislation is needed to tackle hatred against women?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor, and can I thank Councillor Woodings for her question. Of course, I wish it were not a question that we felt compelled to ask today in this Chamber. I wish that Councillor Woodings was instead asking me to comment on what positive and meaningful legislation around misogyny would do to protect women across our country. But instead, I'm stood here before you today highlighting yet another failure of this Government. Instead of standing here recognising the protection afforded by legislation, what we get is a Government-released advertisement campaign to challenge the perpetrators of violence against women. We know first-hand in Nottingham that it has been a long road to this point in getting our laws to recognise the misogyny women face every day. The Misogyny Hate Crime policy was first piloted by Nottinghamshire Police in 2016 after campaigning by Nottingham Women's Centre and Nottingham Citizens. In 2018, the Fawcett Society's review of existing legislation to protect women's rights recommended that misogyny be included in the hate crime framework and they have campaigned to make this happen ever since.

A year ago last week, Sarah Everard was kidnapped, raped and murdered by a serving police officer. At least 125 women in the UK have been killed since that date according to the Femicide Census, including Sabina Nessa a 28 year old teacher who was walking through a park to meet a friend in South London. As we commemorate them, we must demand more. More from this Government so that this epidemic of violence and the structures that enable it are brought to an end. In the

aftermath of Sarah's killing, women and girls were told to change their behaviour to keep themselves safe: from hailing down a bus to walking more assertively. Now, it does appear that the Government has altered the focus from victim blaming to men who attack women. Are we wrong to have expected the change in policy to be a little more direct or explicit?

The behaviour of the Metropolitan Police during the last year has done little to close the gulf in trust between the Police Force and women in particular: from the handling of a peaceful vigil for Sarah on Clapham Common; to revelations about the behaviour of officers at the murder scene of Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman; and the exposure of a culture of unchecked and often violent misogyny within the Police Force which ultimately led to the early departure of the Commissioner Cressida Dick. In response to the outcry over the killing of Sarah, there was a flurry of announcements by the Government and the Metropolitan Police promising to tackle the issue of violence against women and girls. Boris Johnson said: "we must do everything to ensure our streets are safe", as a £23.5m fund for Safer Streets was created specifically to target women's safety with money for street lighting and security. But the Government has refused to make misogyny a hate crime, a move that would categorise it alongside race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and transgender identification as a motivation for offences. Instead Priti Patel is to make violence against women a priority crime for police forces, alongside the likes of terrorism. But no amount of announcements, street lights or advertising campaigns will work unless trust is restored and the police do their job to pursue and catch the perpetrators of the violence and abuse, with the courts then bringing offenders to justice in a timely way. Last year had the lowest number of rape convictions on record according to the End Violence Against Women Coalition. The Office for National Statistics shows that there were 63,136 reported rape offences in the year to September 2021, while only 1.3% resulted in a suspect being charged. In what was an unprecedented response to a call for evidence from the Home Office, 180,000 women and girls described the sexual harassment, violence and abuse they had suffered in their lives. Many said it was the presence of myths and stereotypes related to violence against women and girls that had dissuaded them and other victims of rape to come forward to the police. While we welcome the Government's consideration of creating a new offence of street harassment as a step in the right direction, it alone is not enough. It fails to consider the underlying drivers of violence against women and girls and runs the risk of women being left invisible in hate crime law. More needs to be done.

Despite this, we will continue to lead the way in Nottingham. Having piloted the scheme in 2016, domestic abuse and sexual violence is a key partnership priority for the Crime and Drugs Partnership, and forms part of the Partnership Plan. Collaboration between key partners allows for delivery against this objective. The reduction of violence against women and girls is a key commitment in the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2022, including pledges to work with the local authorities to include healthy relationship programmes in all primary schools. Furthermore, Nottingham City Centre has recently benefitted from almost £300,000 of funding specifically to be targeted at the safety of women at night, to be used to fund measures including a Safe Spaces Pledge in City Centre venues, training for staff in these venues, promotion of the Consent Coalition and their messaging, as well as funding police patrols on the tram network and the provision of

St John Ambulance 'Safe Space' in the City Centre during weekend night time economy hours.

Following the murder of Sarah, the Government asked police forces to begin recording crimes motivated by misogyny, however only a dozen forces are currently doing so, including Avon and Somerset and West Yorkshire. Misogyny is so normalised in our society that women and girls are regularly subject to abuse and harassment. Making misogyny a 'hate crime' would send a strong public message that challenges the attitudes making our society a safer place. Finally, Lord Mayor I would like to say that one year on after Sarah Everard's death there is a need for more urgency if anything is going to change.

Covid-19

Councillor Georgia Power asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health:

Does the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health believe the abandonment of proven public health measures such as face coverings, testing and isolation is based on scientific evidence or political expediency?

In the absence of Councillor Adele Williams, Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Power for her question. Our Prime Minister wants to pretend that we have beaten Covid because, for reasons that we will all understand, it is a difficult subject for him. Whilst we have made great strides in the NHS, local authorities, social care, the pharmaceutical sector, public health and in our businesses and communities in learning to limit the spread, to vaccinate and treat Covid, as anyone from the Queen to a ten year old on your street will tell you it is still with us, albeit currently at a less impactful variance. Looking around the Chamber today, not just at those of us that are here, but also those who are not, it is self-evident from those of us who are ill and those chosen to keep the rest of us safe, that Covid is very much still with us.

The pace and scale of the changes made are in my view driven by political expediency with little concern for their implementation of what the impact will be on public health. Political, because it fits with Mr Johnson's 'everything's fine' narrative; political because it is more about placating and soothing his backbenchers than it is about the health of the nation; and political too because it widely reported that the changes were Treasury-driven in a bid to drive down the cost of the pandemic. Whilst the political narrative from Government has been effectively 'it's Freedom Day', Mr Johnson knows as well as we do that Covid hasn't gone away, but for reasons that have little to do with science he has opted to govern as though it has.

In fact, face coverings are still required in care homes and health care settings and we are pleased to see that our bus companies and tram company and other public transport operators continue to encourage people to wear them. However it's not surprising when the messages are very mixed from the top that not everybody does. Why do our transport companies do this? Well, because it is a pragmatic response to where we are in our relationship with Covid. It is not an infringement of your liberties to wear a face mask for the length of your bus journey and the Government should be ashamed of its members who have spent the last year trying to crank up a culture with divisive nonsense like that; that could well have cost lives. So face coverings

remain a helpful plank in the defence against Covid and in crowded indoor spaces like this, unless you are exempt, we recommend that people continue to do so as they are asked - in fact that still remains Government advice, though the rhetoric might suggest not.

You can still get free PCR tests if you have any of the three main symptoms: a high temperature; an ongoing cough; or a loss or change of sense of taste or smell but this, incredibly, will end on April 1 for most people along with universally accessible lateral flow tests. This will leave many people ignorant as to whether they are spreading Covid to others or not, and that might be more vulnerable to serious illness and Covid. Testing is such an important tool and lateral flow tests are going to cost £20 a box after April. I can't think of other medical tests for infectious diseases that are paid for, but I am used to our Conservative friends raking money in out of the NHS through lucrative contracts, but this is actually a challenge to the principle of health care that is free at the point of delivery and availability to all, regardless of wealth. People are already choosing between eating and heating, where will testing to keep vulnerable relatives or other people in your community be when all this comes into place? The Government is generating so many words about tackling health and inequality but their deeds don't back this up.

Also from 24 February we are no longer legally required to isolate following a positive test and, of course in another month, people may not be able to find out whether they have Covid anyway. We are instead advised by Mr Johnson, with the assurance of a man who has never had to worry about paying for anything, that we should take a leaf out of the German workforce book and stay at home if we are ill. Will that be the German worker who gets sick pay from day one at 100% of their salary? Britain has amongst the worst sick pay conditions amongst countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2 million people in Britain are ineligible altogether because they are badly paid. Employers' organisations and the Trade Unions Congree agree this makes relying on people to make the responsible choices they can't afford to make reckless in the extreme. When the National Insurance hike, gas prices, petrol prices and knock on food inflation hit in earnest, how easily will people in this City be able to make the choice to stay at home because they might have Covid? The NHS, Directors of Public Health and the scientific community were noted in asking the Government to pull back on this, but though it wasn't the right time for the Country and is not the right time for Nottingham, it was the right time for the Prime Minister and here we are with our citizens being put at greater risk than they need to be.

Fuel poverty

Councillor Michael Edwards asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste:

We are facing shocking energy price rises. Could the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste outline what advice and support is available in the City for residents who need to cut their energy use, to reduce fuel poverty?

In the absence of Councillor Sally Longford, Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thanks you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Edwards for his question. It is frightening to hear how the price hikes that people are already facing and it is truly shameful that our Government is not acting decisively to protect our citizens from the

worst impact of the crisis, particularly when energy companies are recording record profits. In contrast, in France, energy companies are being forced to hold price rises to 4% which is much more manageable. As you know, we have always been committed to reducing fuel poverty in the city and although progress has been made over the few year's people are facing unprecedented difficulties. The energy services team, here at the City Council, are working together with a variety of organisations have a number of initiatives that people can access to help them with their energy bills. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate our team in Carbon Reduction and energy services for recently winning the National Award at the Energy Efficiency Award Ceremony. Their expertise and ability to attract funding plays a vital role in our ability to support citizens. Using funding from the local authority delivery home upgrade grant scheme, we are making energy efficiency improvements households of low-income families across the city.

We are targeting homes that are difficult to keep warm with insulation and renewable energy generation measures, such as solar panels. As part of the Sustainable Warmth Competition, Nottingham City Council has received more than £6m of funding which will be used to improve almost 700 homes. The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund will provide energy efficiency improvements to nearly 300 social homes across the city, with external wall insulation being added to all of the properties to help keep homes warm.

We have supported over 6,000 residents with fuel vouchers to help them with their electric, gas, water and district heating costs. This has been through three schemes: the Covid Winter Grant Scheme, the Covid Fuel Voucher Scheme, and the Vulnerable Household Support Fund.

The Warm Homes Hub is collaboration between Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, E-ON, and charity organisations such as Age UK and that has supported over 700 homes in Nottingham to access £2.3m of support services, energy efficiency improvements and advice. We hope that this support can continue, and we expect to hear the results of our funding bid next month.

Our heat metering engineers and customer support staff are trained to identify the signs of fuel poverty and can signpost those in need of assistance to our energy saving advice partners. Over 10,000 residents have been supported through home visits, through resident forums and the 24/7 customer contact centre. Advice is also available through our network of advice Nottingham centres across the city including Bestwood, Clifton and St Anne's. The priority services register allows vulnerable people to register with us, ensuring that they are prioritised in the face of an emergency. We currently have over 2,000 people registered, and we have proactively contacted them to check in to see if they needed additional support. We recently received funding to host a small number of outreach events in communities targeting areas where rates of fuel poverty are high and local advice is harder to come by. These events in Top Valley, Aspley, Hyson Green in March will be helping residents to get access to the support available, alongside partner and charity organisations. Using social media, email newsletters and other communications channels, we regularly signpost residents who need support with their energy bills to information on grants available on a national level, for example Warm Homes Discount, as well as to organisations who can offer support and advice. In your own ward Councillor Edwards, I am sure you know about the Greenmeadows local partnership lead by Nottingham Energy Partnership and Mozes that has received £1.5million of National Lottery funding and is committed to making

the Meadows a carbon neutral neighbourhood. They are working to spread the word about the climate emergency and supporting local people in making changes including helping to make homes more energy efficient with fortnightly workshops and training. So Councillor Edwards, you can see there is a lot going on and hopefully we can help in a relatively small way to reduce the pressures on our citizens and help them to prepare for an expensive winter next year.

Levelling Up Fund

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Following the Council's success in securing £18m from the Government's Levelling Up Fund, can the Portfolio Holder confirm what part councillors will play in shaping how these funds will be allocated to deal with local priorities in their respective wards?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Rule for his question. The City Council was successful in securing £18m from the Government's Levelling Up Fund for the 'Renewing Local Streets' transport programme for delivery over the next two years. This was a competitive process and I want to thank and congratulate those officers involved in the successful bid. The Renewing Local Streets programme is about capitalising on the shift to more active travel that has occurred as a result of the Covid pandemic and giving a much needed lift to neighbourhoods through providing investment into residential streets across the City of Nottingham at the same time making a positive contribution to reducing our local carbon footprint.

The project is split into three main investment themes. The first one is Streets for People: Pedestrian and cycle improvements to local streets in residential areas and local centres comprising minor works across the city aimed at adding to our existing inadequate maintenance projects to improve the condition of existing footways, repair potholes in streets and cycle ways, and install more dropped crossings to help people with mobility impairments to cross the road, improving our subways as well as adding in new links where required to improve access to wider networks. The project will include a review of signage to remove old signs and unwanted street furniture, and to improve direction signing together with the provision of new street name plates. The addition of street trees and landscaping, together with upgrading the condition of footways and cycle ways will help to make sustainable travel more attractive. The allocation of these funds will involve consultation and recommendations from local ward councillors, work on which should start later this month or in April. We are keen to use this funding to address local priorities and improve some of the worst footpaths and road surfaces as much as we can within the funding envelope. The second part of the project is entitled School Street. This involves measures to reduce traffic around schools. This programme will build on the success of the Active Travel Fund programme which put in place a number of trial measures to encourage the use of walking, scooting and cycling to schools during lockdown. The Council will expand work with residents and schools to make sure areas around schools can be made safer, and make it easier to walk or cycle to schools by introducing more Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. New road crossings will also be included in this package of work to make it easier to cross the roads. The third part of this project will be called Greener Streets. This is part of the programme focuses on a large scale upgrade of our street lighting to bring the lamps up to modern LED standard. It will be applied on an area-

wide basis and contribute to significant energy savings whilst maintaining high quality lighting standards.

We will also expand our network of publically accessible electric vehicle charging points in residential areas with limited off-street parking. In terms of delivery, the Highways Department has already identified maintenance priorities by ward across the City for footways and carriageways. Traffic colleagues have also been engaged and are working through known local transport priority lists which they will share with local councillors in the next few weeks. Schemes involving Traffic Regulation Orders are generally more complicated and take longer to deliver than straightforward asset renewal schemes and due to capacity constraints the number of more complex transport schemes will have to be constrained with a greater bias given to capital maintenance type works. The intention is to have a combined priority list prepared over the next few weeks, as I have said, and during the rest of March/April Highways colleagues are intending to meet all ward councillors to go through the prepared lists which will give choices to us as councillors and invite us to make comments on priorities and determine whether we want any further schemes investigating to further add into the programme. This inclusion will, of course, depend on deliverability, design acceptability and value for money. Supporting communications material is also currently being prepared for councillors on the programme objectives and each of the three strands of projects and guidance for identifying ward priorities. The intention is to seek Executive Board approval in July for the first wave of agreed schemes but it is also recognised that it may take longer in some areas to make sure that that is the work that is needed and in these cases a follow up approval report, probably in September, will complete any gaps. There will also be an opportunity to refine the programme again in December through a year one review process.

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services:

I am sure the Portfolio Holder will join me in welcoming the £14m award from the Conservative Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to finance energy performance improvements to the City's social housing stock. Can she comment on what contribution this will make to the Council's goal of reaching net zero by 2030?

In the absence of Councillor Sally Longford, Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you to Councillor Rule for his question. I do, of course, welcome the award of £14million from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. The question suggests that this is all going to improve Nottingham's housing stock and that is not correct. The funding has been allocated to the Midlands Energy Hub, or Zero Carbon as it will be known in the future, and the £14million is to cover the whole of the Midlands consortium and will administered by the Hub. The City's share will only be a part of that. Nottingham City Council is expected to receive about £2.8million of the award, which will be used to improve energy efficiency in 298 social houses in across the City. Improvements will focus predominantly on measures such as external wall insulation, and upgrades are expected to be completed by the end of March 2023. Nottingham's allocation is expected to deliver improvements to 298 homes with solid wall insulation and loft insulation where require: all of the homes will see their energy performance rating increased to level C, each household will save approximately £300 per year on energy bills and 25 'green' jobs will be supported by this scheme and it will provide 2 additional apprentices. The location of the homes

will be spread across three wards: Mapperley, Bestwood and Dales. Improving the energy efficiency of homes is a crucial measure in helping us meet 2028 as net zero ambition, which I think is a couple of years earlier than you said, with carbon reduction and reduced energy consumption being a key priority within the action plan. However, we need much more. We need consistent funding, not short term grants that we have to go through a 'beauty parade' to get which creates a greater stop-start approach, great uncertainty in the supply chain and wastes valuable money continually bidding and re-bidding for the funding. So a message from Councillor Longford, when you are speaking to your friends in Government: can Councillor Rule tell them that Sally says thanks but she's not quite ready to party yet.

77 Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23 and Capital Strategy 2022/23

Councillor Sam Webster, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, presented the report proposing approval of a series of strategies relating to treasury management and capital investment for 2022/23, following the recommendation of Executive Board. The report was seconded by Councillor David Mellen.

Resolved to:

- (1) approve the 2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy, including the borrowing strategy, debt repayment strategy and investment strategy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (2) approve the Prudential Indicators and limits from 2022/23 to 2024/25, as set out in Section 5.1 of Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (3) adopt the current Treasury Management Policy Statement, as set out in Section 5.3 of Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (4) approve the 2022/23 Capital Strategy including the Voluntary Debt Reduction Policy Statement, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.**

78 Budget 2022/23

Councillor Sam Webster, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, presented the report proposing approval of a Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 to 2025/26, as recommended by Executive Board. The report was seconded by Councillor David Mellen. Councillors debated the report.

Councillors voted on the recommendations in the report as follows:

	For	Against
Councillor Hassan Ahmed	✓	
Councillor Leslie Ayoola	✓	
Councillor Cheryl Barnard	✓	
Councillor Steve Battlemuch	✓	
Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark	✓	
Councillor Graham Chapman	✓	

Councillor Azad Choudhry	✓	
Councillor Kevin Clarke		✓
Councillor Michael Edwards	✓	
Councillor Jay Hayes	✓	
Councillor Nicola Heaton	✓	
Councillor Patience Ifediora	✓	
Councillor Corall Jenkins	✓	
Councillor Kirsty Jones		✓
Councillor Angela Kandola	✓	
Councillor Jawaid Khalil	✓	
Councillor Gul Khan	✓	
Councillor Neghat Khan	✓	
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis	✓	
Councillor Jane Lakey	✓	
Councillor AJ Matsiko	✓	
Councillor David Mellen	✓	
Councillor Toby Neal	✓	
Councillor Anne Peach	✓	
Councillor Georgia Power	✓	
Councillor Ethan Radford	✓	
Councillor Nick Raine	✓	
Councillor Angharad Roberts	✓	
Councillor Andrew Rule		✓
Councillor Wendy Smith	✓	
Councillor Roger Steel		✓
Councillor Sam Webster	✓	
Councillor Linda Woodings	✓	
Councillor Cate Woodward	✓	
Councillor Audra Wynter	✓	

Resolved to:

- (1) approve the Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26, incorporating the revenue budget for 2022/23 and the recommendations contained therein;**
- (2) note the recommendations of the Interim Corporate Director of Finance and Resources in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purpose of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves;**
- (3) delegate authority to the Interim Corporate Director for Finance and Resources to finalise the 2022/23 revenue budget for publication;**
- (4) approve the capital programme 2022/23 to 2026/27, noting the revenue implications of the capital programme;**
- (5) note the authority's council tax base of 67,540 for 2022/23, calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, as approved by Executive Board on 18 January 2022;**

- (6) approve a council tax requirement of £132,062,312 including the calculations required by Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act), as set out below:
- a. £1,027,753,083 being the aggregate of the expenditure, allowances, reserves and amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act;
 - b. £895,690,771 being the aggregate of the income and amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act;
 - c. £132,062,312 being the amount by which the aggregate at 6a exceeds the aggregate at 6b, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year.
- (7) approve a City Council Band D basic amount of council tax for 2022/23 of £1,955.32 being the amount at (6c) divided by the amount at (5), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (as set out in Section 6 of the report);
- (8) note a Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner precept at Band D for 2022/23 of £254.25;
- (9) note a Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority precept at Band D for 2022/23 of £84.57;
- (10) approve the setting of the amounts of council tax for 2022/23 at the levels below:

Band	City Council £	Police and Crime Commissioner £	Fire and Rescue Authority £	Aggregate Council Tax £
A	£1,303.55	£169.50	£56.38	£1,529.43
B	£1,520.80	£197.75	£65.78	£1,784.33
C	£1,738.06	£226.00	£75.17	£2,039.23
D	£1,955.32	£254.25	£84.57	£2,294.14
E	£2,389.84	£310.75	£103.36	£2,803.95
F	£2,824.35	£367.25	£122.16	£3,313.76
G	£3,258.87	£423.75	£140.95	£3,823.57
H	£3,910.64	£508.50	£169.14	£4,588.28

- (11) approve the retention of the Council Tax Support Scheme currently in operation, amended to disregard the Government's £150 Energy Rebate Scheme payments for the financial year 2022/23 as required by The Council Tax (Demand Notices and Reduction Schemes) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2022; and
- (12) approve the making of the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2022/23 in the terms of the previously adopted and amended Scheme, except for

adjustments to mirror nationally determined rates for pay awards and travel and subsistence (as applicable to officers) and for carers allowances.

79 Decisions taken under Urgency Procedures

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, presented the report detailing urgent decisions that the Council is required to note, which have been taken under provisions within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Access to Information Rules. The report was seconded by Councillor Linda Woodings.

Resolved to note:

- (1) the following decisions taken under the Call-in and Urgency provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules:**

Decision reference	Subject	Decision taker	Reason for Urgency
DD4512	Enviro Energy Capital Works	Leader of the Council	To enable statutory health and safety obligations to be met within required timescales.
Executive Board Minute ref: 107	Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26 – element of decision relating to Housing Revenue Account only	Executive Board	To meet the requirement of the Housing Act 1985 that tenants must receive 28 days notice of a proposed rent increase.

- (2) the following Key Decision taken under the Special Urgency provisions of the Access to Information Procedure Rules:**

Decision reference	Subject	Decision taker	Reason for Special Urgency
DD4512	Enviro Energy Capital Works	Leader of the Council	To enable statutory health and safety obligations to be met within the required timescales.

80 Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/2021

Councillor Audra Wynter, Chair of the Audit Committee, presented the Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21. The report was seconded by Councillor Michael Edwards.

Resolved to:

- (1) note the work undertaken by the Audit Committee during 2020/21; and**
- (2) accept the Audit Committee Annual Report 2020/21, as set out as Appendix 1 to the report.**

81 Annual Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023

Councillor Hassan Ahmed, Vice Chair of the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee, presented the report proposing approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23. The report was seconded by Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark.

Resolved to:

- (1) approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23, as set out as Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (2) note that the Statement may need to be amended in-year to reflect any changes that the Council may wish to adopt and that any such changes will be presented to Full Council for approval.**

Note: Following the meeting, an error in the report to Council was identified. Details of this error and the correct information are set out in an addendum to these Minutes.

82 Committee membership changes

It was noted that Councillor Maria Joannou had been removed as a member of the Planning Committee.

83 Dates of future meetings

Resolved to:

- (1) hold the Annual General Meeting on Monday 9 May at 2pm; and**
- (2) note the proposal to meet at 2pm on the following Mondays:**
 - a. 11 July 2022**
 - b. 12 September 2022**
 - c. 14 November 2022**
 - d. 9 January 2023**
 - e. 6 March 2023**

The Meeting concluded at 5.25 pm

CQ3

This question received a written response because Councillor Maria Watson was unable to attend the Council meeting to ask the question.

Question to be asked by Councillor Maria Watson of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 7 March 2022

It is with a deep feeling of concern that we look at the current proposals to cut the number of Children's Centres across Nottingham. Clifton Young People's Centre on Green Lane is one such centre and provides an incredible and invaluable service. We currently have multiple organisations who are volunteering to deliver activities and youth sessions, at no cost to this Council, which would provide much needed help to our whole community. We are asking the Portfolio Holder today, please will you commit to not stripping Clifton of yet another Community Asset?

Councillor Cheryl Barnard replied as follows:

Let me begin by clarifying that Clifton Young People's Centre is not a Children's Centre but a Youth and Play facility. We are having to make some very difficult decisions to ensure that we are able to present a balanced budget to Council today. Cutting delivery of the current youth sessions at the Clifton building is part of the proposals. Indeed, myself and officers have met with Clifton councillors to discuss services in Clifton and how they will be provided going forward. This will include maximising the reach of our team by working out of one base and delivering sessions and targeted work across the City. Youth workers will also be working closer with our partners from the Voluntary and Community Sector to reduce overlap and duplication and ensure a co-ordinated offer to our young people,

It is imperative that we reduce the number of buildings across our Early Help services to reduce financial costs and protect jobs so that we can continue to deliver direct services where we can. With regards to the building referred to; we are aware that there are community providers that are interested in accessing Clifton Young People's Centre. We are clear that we welcome discussions with community providers willing to take on the responsibility for maintaining access to this or any other of our other Youth Centres, Play Centres and Children's Centres across the City. They are community assets and we are keen to see their continued use.

CQ6

This question received a written response because Councillor Carole McCulloch was unable to attend the Council meeting to ask the question.

Question to be asked by Councillor Carole McCulloch of the Leader of the Council at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 7 March 2022

Following the recent publication of the Government's White Paper on Levelling Up, can the Leader update Council on the latest position on devolution?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you to Councillor McCulloch for her question. Last month the Government published its long awaited proposals to progress its stated aim to make the country more equal. On face value, the Government's Levelling Up White Paper offers opportunities for much needed investment in our region. The East Midlands has been left behind other areas in the amount that the Government has invested in our region.

In recognition of the joint work on possible devolution opportunities between Nottingham and councils within Nottinghamshire over the last year, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire were named in the White Paper as one of the 9 areas with whom the Government is ready to have discussions about the devolution of powers and resources to our region to help in their words 'level up' our places and economies. In Nottingham we must balance the risks and the opportunities involved in this Government offer. It is important we consider all options and garner wide support for any future devolution deal. We should seek to guarantee consistent investment in Nottingham and work in the best interests of our citizens.

We have met both with our neighbouring county, city and district council colleagues across Nottinghamshire, and with council leaders in Derby and Derbyshire to consider the options available to us as a region, and there have been initial discussions between senior council officers and Government officials.

At this stage it is still too early to say where these discussions will lead, although the government is wanting to have early indications as to whether areas are interested in combined authorities and the possibilities of regional mayors as are found in several other areas across the country.

We have made it clear that we are open to joint working, because we can see how collaboration between us and with our partners could bring significant benefits to local people. It is clear that the East Midlands has not had its fair share of government funding for a number of years so it is important that we explore every avenue to maximise the benefit for Nottingham.

Questions from Councillors requesting a written response

WQ1

Question asked by Councillor Andrew Rule of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Heritage at the meeting of the City Council held on 7 March 2022, requesting a written response

Could the Portfolio Holder confirm the total licensing fees received by the Council for its Selective Licensing programme and provide a breakdown of how it has been allocated between the following areas:

- Licence issue
- Inspections
- Enforcement action

Councillor Linda Woodings replied as follows:

1. The total fee income received to end of January 2022 for the Selective Licensing scheme is £17.4million.
2. The scheme runs from July 2018 until July 2023. The majority of the income has been collected in the first 3½ years, and the majority of the costs have been in licensing issuing during this time. The projected spend over the next 1½ years is not on license issuing but inspections and enforcement.
3. The Council has set the fees it charges in accordance with the legal framework within the Housing Act 2004 and the published guidance ‘*Open for business: LGA guidance on locally set licensing fees*’, published by the LGA in 2017. (This is available at https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5%2013%20%20OpenForBusiness_02_web.pdf). The Council includes different elements within the fee that do not fall within the elements identified below. These include, for example, on costs, set up costs, management costs, support costs, training.
4. Licensing issuing has taken precedence, firstly to deal with the large numbers of applications in the first 2 years of the scheme, and secondly with the restrictions on inspections due to Covid.
5. To January 2022 the following has been spent:

July 2018 - January 2022	Total £
Licence issue costs	5,427,929
Inspections	2,015,656
Enforcement Action	1,824,632
Total	9,268,217

6. The expenditure does not match the income. The scheme still has 1½ years to run. There are other costs aside from the three listed above, premises, transport, IT, supplies and services, support services, equipment, plus another 1½ years of staff costs which accounts for the difference in income to date, £17.4 million, and expenditure to date on licensing issue, inspections and enforcement.

	Latest Forecast to scheme end (5 years)
Predicted Revenue Income	19,798,621

Staff Expenditure	14,766,731
Premises costs	679,295
Transport costs	34,173
Supplies/services	472,838
Support services	1,484,127
Set-up costs	982,670
Predicted Revenue Expenditure	18,419,834

**License and inspection activity
August 2018 – January 2022**

Internal inspections	1797
External Inspections	2155
Licence holder self-audit	616
Compliant letters sent to licence holder on receipt of satisfactory response to compliance checks.	241
Total number of dwellings (including flats in blocks) where final licences issued and fit and proper assessments have been undertaken	27,292
Properties improved (category 1 hazards removed) ¹	235
Properties improved (category 2 hazards reduced)	308
Properties improved proactively by landlords	123
Number of improvements made to properties through licensing	666
Number of inspected properties the 666 improvements related to	446
Percentage of properties inspected that were improved (446/1797)	25%
Number of properties compliant with licence conditions at inspection	630

¹ Housing Act 2004 Part 1

Addendum to the Minutes

Minute 81 Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023

Following the meeting of Council on 7 March 2022, an error in the Pay Policy Statement 2022-2023 report to Council was identified. The details of this error and the correct information is set out below. The published Pay Policy Statement will reflect the correct information.

In Section 7.6 of the Pay Policy Statement it stated: 'The relationship between the median Chief Officer's pay excluding guaranteed payments (£89,369) and that of the Council's (non-Chief Officer) median earner excluding guaranteed payments (£26,797) is 3.33:1'.

This has been corrected and is as follows:

The median Chief Officer's pay excluding guaranteed payments is £92,293.

The Council's (non-Chief Officer) median earner excluding guaranteed payments is £23,541.

Based on these corrected figures, the pay multiple between the median Chief Officer's pay excluding guaranteed payments and that of the Council's (non-Chief Officer) median earner excluding guaranteed payments is 3.92:1.

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