

Nottingham City Council

Companies Governance Executive Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 20 December 2022
from 3.07 pm - 4.49 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Adele Williams (Items 59-61)
Councillor Linda Woodings
Councillor Audra Wynter
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis (substitute)

Absent

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

David Astill	- Operations Director, Nottingham City Transport
Councillor Graham Chapman	- Chair of Nottingham City Transport Board
Councillor Kevin Clarke	- Councillor, Clifton East Ward
Michael Hainge	- Director of Commercial Procurement
Rob Hicklin	- Finance Director, Nottingham City Transport
Robin Hughes	- NCC Improvement and Assurance Board
Councillor Andrew Rule	- Councillor, Clifton West Ward
Jiayue Wang	- Governance Officer, Shareholder Unit
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

53 Chairing arrangements

In the absence of the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the Committee agreed for Councillor Linda Woodings to chair the meeting.

54 Apologies for absence

Councillor David Mellen – personal reasons

Richard Beckett
Ian Edward
Clive Heaphy

55 Declarations of interest

In the interests of transparency, Councillor Neghat Khan declared that she sits on the Board of Futures and Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis declared that he is the Portfolio Holder for Leisure.

56 Terms of Reference

The updated Terms of Reference were noted.

57 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

58 Work Programme

The work programme was noted.

59 Council owned company discussion - Nottingham City Transport

The Committee received a presentation by David Astill and Rob Hicklin of Nottingham City Transport (NCT), which highlighted the following:

- (a) the bus industry is in a difficult position nationwide following the Covid-19 pandemic, with a number of operators ceasing trade or reducing their service. NCT has performed relatively well but has reduced bus frequencies. Ridership has returned to around 86% of pre pandemic levels;
- (b) the Bus Recovery Grant was instrumental in helping keep bus companies in business during the pandemic. This was due to finish in October 2022 but has now been extended to March 2023. The industry is pushing for a further extension;
- (c) NCT is taking part in the government scheme to cap adult single bus fares at £2 from January to March 2023;
- (d) NCT returned to freshers fairs at both Nottingham universities this year and sales of student academic year passes have increased by 80% on the previous year;
- (a) Jonathan Smallman of NCT won the Top National Bus Driver award for 2022. This is the 4th time that NCT have won the award in 8 years;
- (b) at 143 vehicles, NCT has the largest biogas bus fleet in the world. However, the focus will now be on electric vehicles (EVs) as this is where the government's ambitions are focused. NCT was awarded funding under the ZEBRA EV scheme with the aim to convert its entire single decker fleet to EVs over 2-3 years. The vehicles will be supplied by Yutong and the infrastructure by Zenobe.

During discussion and in response to questions from the Committee, the following points were raised:

- (c) the amendments to timetables does not appear to have had a direct correlation with passenger numbers. Some routes are recovering much better than others, with student routes being the slowest to recover;
- (d) diesel vehicles are currently cheaper to run than EVs or gas vehicles due to high fuel prices. However, EVs cost a lot less to maintain than diesel or gas vehicles in the long run;

- (i) discussions are happening with the government on whether the timeline for EV introduction could be extended.

60 Exclusion of the public

The Committee resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, under Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3, on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

61 Council owned company discussion - Nottingham City Transport

This item does not contain any decisions that are eligible for call-in.

The Committee received a presentation by Davis Astill and Rob Hicklin, of Nottingham City Transport.

62 Exempt minutes

The Committee confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair,

63 Council owned companies - financial update

This item does not contain any decisions that are eligible for call-in.

Michael Hainge, Director of Commercial Procurement, presented the report, updating the Committee on the latest position in respect of Council owned companies