

Nottingham City Council Executive Board

Minutes of the meeting held in the Ground Floor Committee Room, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on Tuesday 18 January 2022 from 2:00pm to 2:26pm

Membership

Present

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Sally Longford (Vice Chair)
Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Rosemary Healy
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Rebecca Langton
Councillor Sam Webster
Councillor Linda Woodings

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark
Councillor Adele Williams

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance

Councillor Andrew Rule

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| Mel Barrett | - Chief Executive |
| Matt Gregory | - Head of Planning Strategy and Building Control |
| Clive Heaphy | - Interim Corporate Director for Finance and Resources |
| Frank Jordan | - Corporate Director for Resident Services |
| Nick Lee | - Director of Education Services |
| Adrian Mann | - Governance Officer |
| Sajeeda Rose | - Corporate Director for Growth and City Development |

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions made by the Executive Board are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is **Thursday 27 January 2022**. Decisions cannot be implemented until the next working day following this date.

91 Apologies for Absence

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| Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark- | personal reasons |
| Councillor Kevin Clarke | - work commitments |
| Councillor Adele Williams | - personal reasons |

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| Malcolm Townroe | - Director of Legal and Governance |
| Catherine Underwood | - Corporate Director for People |

92 Declarations of Interests

None.

93 Minutes

The Board confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

94 Library Transformation

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Communications presented a report on proposals for the strategic transformation of the Library Service. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the transformation process for the Library Service has been underway for the last year, in the context of planning the delivery of an effective service while achieving a balanced budget. Overall, the in-person usage of physical library facilities is decreasing, but the levels of virtual access are increasing, and the Coronavirus pandemic has also had an impact on library usage. Some libraries are already operating well from Joint Service Centres;
- (b) as part of the planning process, a Library Needs Assessment was carried out to review how libraries are used and how the Service can be best delivered in the future. The results of this assessment have informed the current proposals for the strategic transformation of the Service, which aim to both rationalise and modernise the library offer, including making better use of technology;
- (c) proposals to close three libraries have been put forward as part of the rationalisation process – but the Service still aims to ensure that everyone has access to a physical library within a reasonable distance. Library closures are not a desired outcome, but the current challenging financial position requires that options are considered in all areas for the most effective management of resources;
- (d) no final decisions have yet been made. The current proposals will be taken to a full consultation, to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to comment on the transformation of the Service, including on the proposed library closures. Engagement will be carried out both digitally and face-to-face. Following this consultation, all of the feedback will be reviewed and considered fully as part of the decision-making process for the delivery of the Service in the future.

Resolved:

- (1) to note the context, evidence and information arising from the Library Needs Assessment (Phase 1), which has led to the proposed transformation of the Library Service and the set of proposals to be considered for Phase 2 consultation;**
 - (2) to agree that the proposed Phase 2 consultation exercise is undertaken for a period of 12 weeks, as summarised in Section 7 of the report, and that the outcomes from the consultation are reported to a future meeting of the Executive Board.**
- **Reasons for the decision**

The Council is responsible for 15 public libraries across the city. However, the way in which people use libraries is changing, and there is a national decline in book issues. With decreasing budgets and changes in user habits, libraries are having to redesign

their services and find innovative ways to reduce costs, while maintaining a quality provision that meets the needs of citizens. The challenge is to transform what is seen traditionally as a building-based service into a more agile offer using technology, balanced with physical access where it is most needed. The proposed consultation will provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to comment and provide views on the proposed transformation of the Library Service. Following this consultation, the feedback will be reviewed and fully considered as part of the decision-making process regarding the future delivery of the Service.

- **Other options considered**

To continue with the current network of 15 libraries: this would see no changes to the current library network, but would require the completion of investment in the New Central and Sherwood Libraries. However, this option is rejected as it is not considered sustainable for the network size, or for providing an effective and efficient service in the long-term.

To operate community-based Library Service provision, only: this would see a Library Service offer through only community-based libraries, with no Central Library. This option is rejected as the Central Library acts as the key outlet for many citizens to access services and resources, and is a key priority in the Council Plan.

To operate a further reduced library network: this Service would be focused on a Central Library, three Joint Service Centres and the four best performing community libraries, and would see the network reduced by seven service outlets. This option is rejected because it would have a significant community impact in terms of accessibility to the nearest library for many households.

To operate community/volunteer-run neighbourhood libraries: this would see the Central Library and the three Joint Service Centres continue to be fully run and staffed by the Council, with the remaining neighbourhood libraries to be managed and run by the community. This option is rejected as there is limited appetite amongst city residents to run libraries, as many feel that that libraries should be run by the Council with paid, specialist staff.

95 Nottingham Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Skills, Growth and Economic Development presented a report on the post-Covid Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan for Nottingham. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the Coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on the city's economy over the last two years. In response, a formal Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan has been co-developed in partnership with the Nottingham Growth Board and One Nottingham, to ensure full buy-in from all partners across the city;
- (b) the pandemic highlighted the challenges and exacerbated the existing inequalities in the economy, so the Plan represents an opportunity to shape a better future for Nottingham post-Coivid. The Plan sets out a vision and action plan for 'building back fairer', to achieve a city where everyone can prosper. Six key priorities have

been co-developed as part of the Plan, and a framework will now be established for how they will be funded and delivered against.

Resolved to adopt the Nottingham Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan as the strategic economic development framework for the city.

- **Reasons for the decision**

The Nottingham Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan has been co-developed in partnership with the Nottingham Growth Board and One Nottingham. This broad partnership brings the public sector, local businesses, educational institutions, the voluntary and community sector, community representatives and civic leaders together behind a shared vision of the city's future economy and common priorities. The Plan sets out a strategic framework that will accelerate the city's post-Covid economic recovery, and a clear vision for the city's economic renewal. This is essential if Nottingham is to achieve its full economic potential in a way that is both environmentally sustainable and socially just.

- **Other options considered**

To develop an Economic Recovery and Renewal Plan independently: a major benefit of a partnership approach is that the collective voice of the Council working with the Nottingham Growth Board and One Nottingham is aligned and amplified behind a single message. The potential economic impact is magnified by bringing together a greater range of partners, stakeholders and resources, and also ensures that the strategic framework has wide support, which is a requirement of major funding streams. For these reasons, this option is rejected.

To do nothing: this option is rejected as it would leave the future economic development of the city without strategic direction, and the impact of one-off projects and initiatives would be significantly less.

96 Draft Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Heritage presented a report on the Council's draft Joint Waste Local Plan. The following points were discussed:

- (a) a great deal of work has gone into the production of the draft Joint Waste Local Plan, developed with Nottinghamshire County Council. The period for the new Plan is until 2038, and it represents the third waste strategy document developed jointly with the County Council. A consultation was carried out on potential options two years ago, and the results of this have been used to shape the current Plan. The volumes of potential future waste have been forecast and the capacity for managing it have been reviewed through a Waste Needs Assessment, and this did not identify any significant gaps in capacity to be addressed;
- (b) the Plan does not set aside specific sites for development for the purposes of waste management, as it is important that the need to establish more areas for landfill is avoided. However, it does set out criteria for how planning applications for waste management activity should be assessed. The Plan establishes

challenging recycling targets that are in keeping with the Council's carbon neutrality objectives for 2028;

- (c) a Municipal Waste Strategy for Nottingham, to set out how the Council will manage the waste that it is responsible for collecting, is being developed alongside the Joint Waste Local Plan, and it is aimed to ensure as much synergy as possible between the two strategies;
- (d) the draft Plan will be taken out to consultation by both Councils for eight weeks from the start of February. It will then be reviewed and revised on the basis of the outcomes arising from the consultation, before being submitted to national Government for validation, before it can be adopted;
- (e) the Board welcomed the draft Plan and the coming consultation process. It considered that it is important that the city's Municipal Waste Strategy is linked closely to the wider Joint Waste Local Plan, and that the Council sets its targets high to meet the obligations established within it. In the area of recycling in particular, a great deal of work still needs to be carried out to encourage more people to recycle, and to recycle correctly.

Resolved:

- (1) to approve the carrying out of a consultation process for the draft Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Waste Local Plan;**
- (2) to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Heritage, to make any required minor changes to the draft Plan prior to the start of the consultation process.**

- **Reasons for the decision**

The Council is a 'waste planning authority' and has a statutory duty to maintain an up-to-date Waste Local Plan, which is prepared jointly with Nottinghamshire County Council. The current Joint Waste Core Strategy (2013) has become dated, so the two Councils commenced a review of the Joint Waste Local Plan in 2019. The results of this consultation have been taken into the draft Joint Waste Local Plan, which will move forward for consultation in accordance with the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

- **Other options considered**

To do nothing: the Council has a statutory responsibility to prepare an up-to-date Waste Local Plan, so this option is rejected.

97 Council Tax – Determination of the 2022/23 Tax Base

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources presented a report on the determination of the 2022/23 Council Tax base. The following points were discussed:

- (a) as part of the legal process for setting Council Tax, a report is produced annually to provide a breakdown of the number of chargeable dwellings in Nottingham. There are no significant changes from previous years to the current breakdown, with the vast majority of dwellings in the city falling either under Band A or Band B. As these reflect the lowest bands for Council Tax collection, this represents a significant challenge in generating income for the Council. However, there has been growth in the number of new dwellings built in the city recently, and this will be reflected in future reporting.

Resolved:

(1) to approve a Council Tax base figure of 67,540 for 2022/23;

(2) to agree that a collection rate of 97.5% be used in the determination of the 2022/23 Council Tax base.

- **Reasons for the decision**

The Council is a 'billing authority' for Council Tax purposes. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the billing authority to determine the Council Tax base to be used in the calculation of the level of Council Tax. The tax base must be calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 and be determined between 1 December and 31 January, each year. The Council (and other 'precepting authorities' such as the Police and Fire and Rescue Authorities) will use the tax base figure in their budget processes to determine the level of Council Tax for 2022/23 and apply an appropriate anticipated collection rate for the period, to determine the tax base figure to be set.

- **Other options considered**

To do nothing: the Council is legally required to set a Council Tax base using objective calculations, so this option is rejected.

98 Exclusion of the Public

The Board 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, Paragraphs 3 and 5, 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.

99 Update on Commercial Lease Arrangements

The Portfolio Holder for Skills, Growth and Economic Development presented an exempt report on current commercial lease arrangements.

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

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- **Reasons for the decision**

As set out in the exempt report.

- **Other options considered**

As set out in the exempt report.