

# Public Document Pack

## Minutes of the meeting of the City Council

held at the Council Chamber, Council House, Old Market Square

on 10 January 2022 from 2.00 pm - 4.55 pm

### Attendances:

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

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✓ Indicates present at meeting

### 55 Apologies for absence

Councillor Rosemary Healy – unwell

Councillor Phil Jackson – unwell

Councillor Rebecca Langton – personal

Councillor Dave Liversidge – personal

Councillor Sajid Mohammed - unwell

## **56 Declarations of Interests**

None

## **57 Questions from citizens**

### **Clifton**

JC asked the following question of the Leader of the Council:

In 2019, the Leader of the Council responded to a question from a member of the public who was concerned that the Leader of the Opposition had described the Clifton area as being in a state of 'demise'. Now, with almost three-years having passed since this question was asked, would the Leader of the Council please provide an update regarding the work that he and the Council as a whole have undertaken to ensure the success of Clifton — in spite of the pandemic — and advance the interests of its citizens?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

I am grateful for the citizen's question and the opportunity to talk about this Council's commitment to investment and regeneration across our neighbourhoods. Firstly, let me say that Nottingham City Council has invested significantly in Clifton, in the face of disproportionate Government cuts to Council funding over the last ten years. Like all our neighbourhoods, we're committed to making it a desirable place in which to live, learn, work and play. Whether that's through retrofitting energy efficient provision in housing stock, or delivering the obvious benefits of having the tram serving the area, providing a vital link to the city centre, the Queens Medical Centre, the north and the west of the city, and attracting fresh investment into Clifton. We've continued with our commitment to improve and maintain the housing stock in Clifton with approximately £5m spent on maintenance since 2019, which includes £1.4million spent on 25,000 repairs, £1million on boiler installations, £208,000 on housing adaptations and £200,000 spent on a sprinkler system for Southchurch Court. Through the Decent Neighbourhood Programme, within Clifton alone we've repaired footpaths to Homewell Walk, Bramford Avenue, Ridgmont Walk, Dungannon Road and Wilkin Gardens, with additional car parking refurbishments at Barkla Close, South Church and Fleming Gardens. The Council is also investing £6.39million in the development of 36 new homes at the newly built Keiron Hill Court due for completion in October this year.

Clifton remains one of the priority areas and we will continue to look for opportunities to enhance the local area and create jobs. Clifton's commercial retail centres are currently in a very healthy condition. Following a comprehensive survey in the late summer of last year there was only one single vacant unit in the three main shopping parades of Varney Road, Central shops and Holy Trinity. There are two units available on the newly developed Clifton Triangle site but there is currently commercial interest in both units from new businesses wanting to come into the area. Covid restrictions over the last two years have been a major disruptor as staff from the Economic Development team working in the Clifton area were diverted to lead on the processing and payment of approximately £100 million of much needed grants to businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. This helped thousands of businesses across the city area, including many in Clifton, survive during this very difficult period. This process has had to be repeated several times during the various lockdowns and the numerous grants that have been available at various stages

through the pandemic. The process has just started again with the grants now being made available for hospitality and leisure businesses most impacted by Omicron. Economic Development and the Markets and Fairs teams are always looking at ways to improve the Clifton outdoor traditional market on a Friday and Saturday but the varying restrictions over the last two years have made it difficult to implement. However, unlike many markets across the country, we kept Clifton market running to make sure the traders' businesses survived. We followed guidance and allowed essential and non-essential retailers to trade when the varying restrictions permitted. We are currently exploring interest from new potential traders to create a vibrant market that offers a balanced retail mix.

Economic development, through Nottingham Jobs, continue to run jobs fairs in the area and held a well-attended Jobs Fair on 18 November 2021 at the Highbank Community Centre in the southern part of the estate to help Clifton residents look for work or training. Nottingham City Council has expanded the Nethergate Academy in Clifton by 48 extra places for additional provision for young people with special needs or disabilities across the city. This involved an approximately £2.5m investment that was completed in September 2020.

The Public Realm and Park Service has had a long standing programme of park and play area improvements within both the Clifton wards. Our programme of improvement since 2019 has continued but this should also be viewed in line with the improvements that have also been carried out within the Clifton wards over the last 10 years, for example since 2010 every play area within the Clifton area has been completely refurbished. Since 2019 there have been smaller capital works which have included the Ruddington Lane play area improvements, benches and picnic tables at Ironmongers Pond along with additional signage, and railing painting and improved signage at Clifton central park.

Of course, our commitment to regenerating communities applies to the city as a whole with the following council housing schemes having been delivered:

- Marlstones, Bulwell – 13 homes;
- Tunstall Drive, Basford - 17 homes; and
- Knights Close, Top Valley - 20 homes.

Currently on site at Eastglade, at the Woodlands Office in Radford, and 21 apartments at the former Meadows Police Station. Additional schemes in the pipeline in the Bestwood area include the Padstowe and Beckhampton schemes. Finally, I'm pleased to say that through our neighbourhood regeneration schemes we've also achieved many other successful developments, whether it's working with Blueprint, other developers or in partnership with registered providers to provide new housing in Colwick, the Meadows, Lenton, Bilborough and Mapperley; securing new funds for schools in Colwick and at the former Clarendon College site; or the prospect of the new library in Sherwood, positive change and improvement have been seen across Nottingham

So, whilst people will often see the cranes in the city centre delivering flagship infrastructure for future generations to enjoy, such as the Castle, the College Hub or the new Bus Station and Car Park and the Island Quarter, we are proud that we can also deliver real and lasting change in our neighbourhoods in Nottingham, including Clifton, which has seen significant investment from this Labour Council. Far from

being in a state of demise, this area of the city has seen significant investment and improvement. Thank you.

### **John Carroll Leisure Centre**

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

I understand that the popular 'The One Show' on BBC1 recently filmed footage at Mellers Primary School for possible broadcast over the coming days. I have spoken to some of the parents and teachers at the School, which used to walk their pupils to John Carroll but now have to hire a rickety old double-decker bus, adding to their costs, to drive their pupils on a 10-mile round journey to Harvey Hadden Leisure Centre instead. Swim England's usage data supplied to me over spring 2021 showed that figures for the swimming pool at John Carroll (at 95% capacity) were very good considering its imminent closure, and the subsequent knock-on effect on Djanogly (the closest Leisure Centre to John Carroll) means that the swimming pool there is now effectively operating at saturation point, which is probably why Mellers School now has to use Harvey Hadden. How does the situation affecting Mellers School, Swim England's Primary School of the Year 2021, align with the Council's oft-cited green credentials?

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark replied as follows:

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Mellers School for their Swim England award this year and also congratulate the City Council's own team who deliver school swimming who were awarded School Swimming Lesson Provider of the Year 2021. These awards show the strength of commitment and quality in the city for teaching children to swim. With regard to Mellers, it was their decision where they wanted to swim once the decision to close John Carroll was made and actually worked well for the school as the larger shallower water space offered by Harvey Hadden and longer lesson time has led to a better overall experience for the children to learn to swim. Our figures show that the pool has never operated at 96% capacity during the past 5 years. The new timing we have been able to put in place, with more classes sharing a bus, has kept the number of journeys to a minimum, which supports the Council's carbon neutral agenda. So I would like to welcome this decision and hope that the school will continue to show that swimming is important to the health and wellbeing of the children who attend Mellers Primary School. Thank you Lord Mayor.

### **John Carroll Leisure Centre**

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

John Carroll was initially created as a partial community centre. It was a place where seniors suffering from loneliness remained rooted in their community, and where young people, who have had opportunities stripped away after a decade of austerity, were supported by community groups to build their skills, maintain their confidence and help to avoid the risks of an alternative life of crime. This crucial community cohesion role of the leisure centre was not taken into account by Nottingham City Council. The closure of John Carroll along with cuts to other local facilities has led to an increased sense of abandonment and social isolation within the community. Can the Council now commit to undertake a genuine equality impact assessment taking into account the disproportionate impact of the closure including on community

cohesion, health inequality, loneliness, ethnic minorities, disabled citizens and anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark replied as follows:

Thank you again Lord Mayor. As the citizen mentioned in their question, the original design of John Carroll Leisure Centre did include a community centre. This closed many years ago and the area was converted in to a fitness studio. As part of the consideration of closure of the leisure centre, an equality impact assessment was completed which took into consideration the impact of closure would have on the wide range of citizens. During last year's consultation process we worked hard with sports and community organisations to explore alternative options but unfortunately these were unsuccessful. However, whilst John Carroll Leisure Centre was the Council's lowest attended leisure centre facility, I am pleased to say that the vast majority of its citizens and users have been able to move to other facilities to continue their activities. Thank you.

### **58 Petitions from councillors on behalf of citizens**

Councillor Cheryl Barnard presented a petition on behalf of citizens regarding proposed alterations to Old Edna's shop at 129 Bannerman Road.

### **59 To confirm the Minutes of the last Ordinary meeting of Council held on 8 November 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2021 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

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

The Chief Executive reported the following:

I would like to start by extending my congratulations to all those citizens recognised in the Queen's New Year's Honours List, including Mark Fowles, John Buckley, Professor Anthony Avery, Professor Robert Mokaya, Amanda Smith and John Clarke.

I am pleased to report that the City's digital campaign, led by the Council's Communications Team, to encourage Covid vaccination take up particularly by those from ethnic minorities and younger age groups who might be hesitant about the vaccine or not normally see Council communication channels won Gold at the Public Service Communications Awards.

I am also pleased to report that the Education Services' School Swimming Service won School Swimming Lesson Provider of the Year at the recent Swim England Awards for their provision of a comprehensive swimming experience for primary school children in the City. I would also like to congratulate Mellers Primary School in Radford on being awarded Swim England Primary School of the Year for its commitment to swimming and water safety.

I am sad to report the death of former employee Karl White from Covid-19. Karl worked in the Youth Services Team for 32 years prior to his retirement, including

running the Meadows Youth Centre. He has always put the needs of his local Meadows community first and has most recently been organising football for local children, having previously established local team FC Cavaliers. My thoughts are with his family, friends and all those who feel his loss.

It is with sadness that I also report to Council the passing of Kristian Murden, a much liked and respected Area Housing Manager at Nottingham City Homes. Kristian worked across Nottingham, particularly in Aspley, Strelley, Arboretum and Broxtowe, as Housing Patch Manager and Area Housing Manager. He was well regarded by colleagues, partners and councillors alike. I would also like to report the passing of another very popular colleague, Simon Forrester, who was one of Nottingham City Homes' Estate Caretakers who sadly passed away shortly before Christmas. We remember both of their lives and contributions to public service this afternoon.

Councillor Wendy Smith spoke in tribute to Kristian Murden and Simon Forrester.

Councillor Michael Edwards spoke in tribute to Karl White.

A minute's silence was held.

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

None

**62 Questions from councillors - to a member of Executive Board, the chair of a Committee and the chair of any other City Council Body**

**Community Centres**

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

It has come to our attention that there is a proposal for a significant increase in the rent charged by the Council for Nottingham's Community Centres, including Highbank Community Centre in Clifton. Can the Portfolio Holder inform us whether it is true that the Council is proposing this policy to hugely increase the rents charged to Nottingham's few remaining Community Centres, and if so, how does she expect them to continue to operate under these conditions?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Clarke for his question. The Council has a number of properties that are let to community groups for minimal rents, often where this is the case without the renting organisation being responsible for either building liabilities or associated community outputs. As part of the Together for Nottingham Plan, previously known as the Recovery and Improvement Plan, which councillors will see later on today's agenda, we are changing our approach to community asset leases to ensure asset values are maintained and community assets fully utilised. This will include consideration of transferring full repairing and insuring leases as standard and consideration of applying fair market rate to community asset leases. Historically, our community centres have been on extremely low rents, resulting in them being propped up and subsidised by the Council. Colleagues are aware of the significant challenges officers are facing to ensure that

we have a balanced budget. Unfortunately, we will need to have a broader vision which looks at how we use our non-essential services to support the core essential services. While I appreciate that some financial changes will impact on centres such as Highbank, I must be clear that we are in a very difficult financial position and we can no longer sustain a blanket approach for all community centres meaning that we must start making our assets pay for themselves and not remain empty and unused at significant cost to the tax payer. Councillor Clarke, you make reference to Highbank Community Centre in Clifton where the current management committee has made the Council aware it wishes to dissolve and hand the keys back to the Council. This is not due to rent, as Councillor Clarke is aware. The group currently pay £10 a year and have paid that figure for over 30 years without any inflation cost. Currently only one group is using the building. With any new group taking over this, they will need a new lease as we cannot just carry over the old lease. We are applying fair market rates, however if a group can demonstrate outputs that benefit the community then the Council could consider reductions based on community outputs that groups would deliver. This Council has always been committed to sustainable community led initiatives and that will not change, but what I can say is that must balance with our drive to bring about financial stability to this Council. Its what council tax payers across the city will expect from a sustainable Council. Thank you Lord Mayor.

### **Youth Services**

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

While the precarious nature of this Authority's finances is clear, it is with sadness that we see the proposals to cut youth services in the city. These services are essential for the wellbeing and development of thousands of young people across Nottingham and we firmly believe that we should be investing in youth, not stripping them of yet further resources. Can the Portfolio Holder give details on how the City proposes to meet the very real needs of its young people in the face of such drastic cuts?

Councillor Cheryl Barnard replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor, and thank you Councillor Watson for asking this question. Putting forward a proposal to make reductions in our play and youth services has been a very difficult decision and, like Councillor Watson, I do believe that we should be investing in the wellbeing and development of our children and young people. However, this work is not valued or funded by our Government and is not a statutory service. Given the very real pressure on the budget for Children's Integrated Services and the need to balance the Medium Term Financial Plan, the proposed reductions have gone forward for consultation. Going forward, the Youth Service will be made up of a small team of experienced, qualified, and skilled Youth Practitioners. The 13 full time staff will include an Operational Manager, two Youth Work Specialists, four Youth Development Workers and six detached Youth Workers. This team will be based together at Bulwell Riverside and will coordinate and deliver services across the city. Sessions will be targeted and themed to ensure that issues like child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and serious youth violence are addressed with vulnerable young people. Sessions will be delivered in locations around the city depending on identified needs. The team will be agile enough to respond and be deployed when there's been a serious incident or there are local concerns or risk issues are being displayed. A key part of the team's role will be working with partners from the community, voluntary and faith sector and with schools. We will also

strengthen our work with recipients of our Area Based Grant funding to ensure that delivery is aligned to the Council's funding objectives and priorities. The lead roles and responsibilities within the team include researching and developing alternative funding opportunities alongside partners as we recognise the potential for our partners to access funding streams that are not open to statutory bodies. The aim is to support and build capacity of the voluntary and community sector to ensure that resources to deliver youth work are maximised and effectively coordinated thereby mitigating any loss of service across the city. The service will also work with colleagues in strategic assets and properties to enable partners who express an interest to take over the running of sites currently being used to deliver services. Where there are suitable partners available to take up this opportunity we will work with them to develop and deliver their services.

### **Green Lane, Clifton**

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

At the Full Council meeting in July, we asked a question of the Portfolio Holder regarding Clifton's Green Lane and its level of traffic. The Portfolio Holder committed that we as a Council could undertake a new traffic survey once the expected powers to enforce moving traffic offences are granted to Local Authorities. With these powers expected to be implemented shortly, can we get confirmation from the Portfolio Holder that she will support this move?

In Councillor Healy's absence, Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:  
Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Jones for her question that I'm answering in Councillor Healy's absence. My understanding is that the main concern for the residents on Green Lane is the number of heavy goods vehicles that travel along that road rather than general traffic flows in that area. The latest update from the Department of Transport indicates that the new moving traffic enforcement powers are planned to be put in before Parliament in late January this year, to then come in force by the end of March 2022. We do know, however, that plans from Government in relation to dates of expected legislation are often moved back. So it might be that you need to address your question to the Ministers in the Conservative Government because we are limited by what happens there in terms of those powers being implemented here in Nottingham. They're not automatically transferred to local authorities at that stage. This is because there is a complex application process that must be completed along with a set of prerequisite conditions that have to be met in order for the official powers in the form of a Designation Order to be issued. The Department for Transport is expected to receive applications from some authorities as early as February this year in preparation of Designation Orders being approved by April. Nottingham City Council is currently developing its moving transport enforcement policy and strategy documentation for approval at Full Council, ahead of the required public consultation and communication process. The other preconditions would then be completed ahead of our application to the Department for Transport. We are currently programmed to make our application by 1 July this year. Subject to approval, we would then expect the new powers to be available from September. Traffic management options could then be considered to help restrict the movement of heavy goods vehicles along Green Lane by enforcing any new restrictions with CCTV enforcement cameras in conjunction with the new moving traffic enforcement powers. However, I would expect that local budgets will be called upon for that to take place and I look forward to the Independent Group confirming that they would be



willing to put money from their budgets into this work if it is seen as a local priority. The traffic survey could then be commissioned to determine if these new restrictions are having the desired effect in reducing the number of heavy goods vehicles traveling along Green Lane.

### **Central Library**

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Can the Leader of the Council provide an update on the progress of Nottingham Central Library? Can he provide a firm opening date and if not, can he inform us when he expects to be able to?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Clarke for his question. Firstly, I want to reiterate that the delivery of a new Central Library still remains a key priority for this Council, and its development remains part of the City Council's capital programme moving forwards. The building which will house the new Central Library is there for all to see, as part of the building which houses the Broadmarsh car park, which opened a few weeks ago, and the new bus station which should open in the next few months. As I outlined in my response to you Councillor Clarke in July, this Council believes very strongly in the role and work of libraries, and it is important to ensure that this project is completed. After the closure of Angel Row it is vital that we have a replacement Central Library as soon as is possible. To this end, I am pleased to report that at the moment specialist fit out contractor Overbury is working with Morgan Sandall on market testing construction prices for the replacement Central Library fit-out and will be producing a contractor programme to complete the necessary fit-out works required. These prices, along with their programme is expected to be provided back to the Council in late February this year, and at this point the level of finance needed for the scheme will be considered against the capital programme. As I stated in July, this scheme will, of course, need to be delivered within our current expenditure constraints. I remain proud of the continued commitment that we have to be able to make over the last decade, to improve library provision in Nottingham and our ambition around this provision of a new Central Library remains undiminished. Alongside the new Central Library we are also working with Hockley Developments to deliver a new library for the Sherwood area where work is progressing and plans for the new building to be handed back to the Council for final fit-out later this year are on track.

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: The Leader of the Council will recall that, at the Extraordinary Council meeting last week I called for a forensic analysis into the transactions between the Council owned companies and the Council to ensure that there had been no misapplication of capital spend to supplement revenue spend, together with providing reassurance that value for money has been achieved. Can he confirm when this will be carried out?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Rule for his question. The responsibilities of the Section 151 Officer include ensuring the proper administration of the financial affairs of the Council and its controlled companies, and this is kept under ongoing review. The Annual Governance Statement confirms that the Council's affairs are in good order and partial focus will be given in the current year to ensuring that transactions are in line with legal and accounting requirements and Council

policies. The Council, at its meeting on 4 January which Councillor Rule referred to, agreed specifically that further detailed analysis into both the transactions between Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City Homes and transactions within the Nottingham City Homes group is undertaken and this work is expected to be completed by the end of next month.

### **Broadmarsh**

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: Given the scale of what is proposed for Broadmarsh and given the strains on the Council's capital budget, if sufficient external funding cannot be sourced does the Leader of the Council agree that the Council further approaches to (or indeed from) a private delivery should not be ruled out?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Rule for his second question. The redevelopment of the Broadmarsh is a complex and long-term project that will require significant investment and we, as a Council, have always been clear that we would not be able to deliver the full extent of this project and its benefits for the city without additional external funding from either the public sector or from the private sector. Following the receipt of the advice from the Advisory Group on the proposed vision and delivery strategy for the wider Broadmarsh, we are now undertaking our own due diligence on the advice received to ensure that we consider all options the Council has to deliver the vision. Primary consideration is whether the vision is viable and deliverable, and extensive work is being undertaken to develop a plan for a viable business case for the entire site. As part of this all options for delivery will be considered including sources of expertise and funding from the public sector and to decide how we should engage with the private sector on this project and when it would be best to do so. Evidence from direct conversations with other local authorities like Sheffield City Council, who have been through a very similar large scale redevelopment plan, suggests that the key lesson to learn is to ensure that the Council understands fully what it wants to deliver before contracting with a private sector delivery company. It is therefore important for the Council to undertake its own due diligence on the proposed master plan before approaching a private sector funder or the developer market at the appropriate time. We haven't ruled out any funding option and will be actively reviewing delivery options that will include funding and investment partners.

### **Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Inspection**

Councillor Jay Hayes asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People:

Would the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People like to comment on the recent SEND inspection?

Councillor Cheryl Barnard replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Hayes for asking this question. The joint Ofsted and Care Quality Commission local area inspection of Nottingham City's implementation of the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Reforms took place between 8–12 November 2021. The five day inspection involved speaking to children and young people with SEND, parents and carers, the City Council and local NHS officers. The inspection team also visited mainstream and special schools and analysed a large range of local area data. Inspectors concluded that education,

health and social care leaders and professionals share a common ambition for Nottingham to be a truly inclusive place to live. They recognised the efforts in Nottingham to improve support for people with special educational needs or disabilities. They found local leaders were quick to respond to SEND reforms, undertaking significant and timely actions when they were introduced and putting an appropriate strategy in place to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Inspectors found a coherent plan had been developed to support children and young people with SEND to prepare for adulthood, identifying what should happen at each stage of a young child or young person's school life. This includes a partnership with 'Futures' which strongly supports young people with SEND to transfer from schools into further education, employment or training. The joint inspection report also highlights that:

- Professionals work together effectively across services to identify the needs of children and young people with SEND. This effective work continued during the pandemic.
- Early years provision for children with SEND is strong.
- Children and young people with complex needs benefit from early identification of their needs.
- The 'Small Steps, Big Changes' team supports families and helps children with SEND to develop their communication skills and understand their emotions and behaviour.
- Children and young people with SEND have access to a variety of health services, including the school nurse 'Text Health' text service for 11- to 19-year-olds.
- The introduction of the 'Routes to Inclusion' initiative and the work of the Intensive Support Team is having a positive impact on supporting schools and colleges to reduce the use of exclusions.
- There is good partnership working across schools and early years.
- The Virtual School carefully oversees children and young people with SEND who are also in the care of the local authority.
- There is wide-ranging support for children and young people's social and emotional well-being and mental health needs, as well as for parents and professionals working with the family.

The inspection report also identified areas for improvement such as communicating the support services available and plans in place to parents, carers and children and young people. Inspectors also noted that some children and young people with SEND wait too long for assessments to identify possible autism spectrum disorder, and that there is no collaborative and consistent quality assurance process for education, health and care plans. They also found that social and recreational opportunities in the community are limited and there are gaps in provision for short breaks. Those issues will be addressed in a plan going forward. The inspection did not identify any significant weaknesses in Nottingham City that would require them to issue a written statement of action. In contrast, 80% of all inspections that took place in 2021 have resulted in a written statement of action so I think we need to be proud of the work we are doing in Nottingham. Leaders in the local area will take on board the areas for development and we will work with our partners to further strengthen the support in place for children and young people with SEND and their families and carers. The SEND work remains vital to maintaining an inclusive, early help City and

to the ongoing commitment to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND up to age 25.

### **Covid Vaccinations**

Councillor Angharad Roberts asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health:

Can the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health provide an update on the progress of vaccination rollout in the City (including take up of booster jabs), availability of tests, preparedness of Nottingham University Hospitals for any potential surge in hospitalisations due to Omicron and action being taken by the Council with partners in relation to these aspects of managing the continuing COVID pandemic?

Councillor Adele Williams replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you for your question Councillor Roberts, which is a really important set of questions that I am sure people will certainly want to know the answers to. It's really helpful to get this information out there because we all know that we don't just get vaccinated to protect ourselves, we get vaccinated to reduce the transmission through the community. So it's absolutely critical that people get vaccinated for themselves, for their families, for their community and for the wider city and also to protect the NHS and social care system.

I've got quite a lot of detail in this answer. We've got very high case rates nationally and locally and vaccination obviously continues to be extremely important. Current vaccination uptake data tells us that:

- 71% of adults and 40% of children have had their first dose
- 66% of adults and 25% of children have had their second dose
- 40% of all adults in the city have had their third/ booster dose – so that's 60% of those who have received a second dose and are therefore eligible to go on to that for a 3<sup>rd</sup>/booster.

Positively, we've recently seen a real uptick, from people of all ages, coming forward for their first and second vaccination doses, and that's really, really welcome. Approximately 2,000 people over the Christmas and New Year period took up that opportunity, and it's important to stress that it is never too late. You can also step into one of the walk in centres and just have a conversation if you've got concerns. They'd be really happy to talk to people, and there is no obligation to have a jab before you leave. It's a good opportunity for you to speak to someone and get some advice. However, it's really critically important that we continue to do everything that we can to increase uptake and get more people in our city protected. Vaccination is currently available to everyone over 12, and we would like to ask for everyone's help here, and I am sure everyone is willing to support this, to get the information out there about how people can get vaccinated. We have been working with the school age immunisation service to improve the offer there, and there's a new roll out in the start of this spring term to get more vaccinations out to that cohort in school. But 12-15 year olds can also attend walk in centres and book through the national booking service - there's a walk in centre at the Forest Recreation ground every Monday and Wednesday from 4.30pm-7.30pm. I really encourage people to get that information out into their communities. For 16 plus boosters, so the sort of adult service, people can still walk in, book through the national booking service, and, importantly for our citizens, there is still that 119 offer. So if people are not able to get on to the internet to book a jab, they can arrange their vaccination through the 119 phone line as well.

In terms of what support we are offering to the wider system: we are supporting with an ongoing communications campaign. We have already heard about the success of our communication teams in getting the information out there in new and innovative ways through social media and really imaginative communication campaigns that has really reached out through the community. We are going to be supporting with research on vaccine hesitancy to inform our future approach to make sure that we are really understanding what the barriers are to vaccination and how we can address those for people, so they feel confident to get their vaccination. We are liaising and working hard with schools to make sure we maximise the opportunities for parents to consent to their kids getting vaccinated, and we are developing specific programmes for different parts of our population who may need particular ways of working to enable them to access the vaccine. We are working on a comprehensive free transport offer so that this isn't a barrier to anyone getting protected, and we are also working with local communities via a Communities Vaccine Champions programme that we are developing to help us roll out further into the community and understand and address those barriers.

In terms of availability of testing, we know that there have been issues with that over Christmas. The PCR testing programme is the responsibility of the UK Health Security Agency. We have reasonable coverage across the city, but laboratory capacity has been a bit of an issue. We appreciate that it's frustrating, but public health colleagues are advising to pass on the advice that you must isolate if you have any symptoms and until you are able to access a PCR Test and it's important to keep checking throughout the day whether there is availability as slots are opened up throughout the day. We, as a City Council, have led on the provision of lateral flow testing. Over Christmas I had horrible memories of the personal protection equipment crisis but also remembered that as a local system we worked really well together to keep access to that going, and we have done that again on the lateral flow tests. There has been good availability through the City Council facilities. We know that there have been some issues with pharmacies, but we've written out to pharmacies to advise them how they can let our citizens know of other ways they can access. We got 100,000 Lateral Flow Tests out through local authority testing sites in the week commencing 27 December.

In terms of the hospitals, this is something that we work with health and care partners through the Local Resilience Forum on but obviously its primarily the responsibility of health partners. We do know that there are increasing admissions locally and nationally and we know that the system is in under significant pressure. So the key things we can do at this time include encouraging people to think about how they use health services, only visiting Accident and Emergency if they really really have to and its an emergency, calling 111 if they are unsure which service you require; getting a vaccine and a booster vaccine; wearing a face covering when required and taking all of the precautions we are used to taking to keep each other safe; and taking regular Lateral Flow Tests, especially when meeting with other people, like we are today. So, I'd like to thank everyone in the health and care system for working so hard to keep us safe and to all those people in the community that are looking after each other and doing the right thing.

### **Levelling Up**

Councillor Georgia Power asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

Given the ongoing squeeze on people's incomes and the continuing austerity in local government due to Government cuts, what is the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources' assessment of the Government's levelling up agenda?

Councillor Sam Webster replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor, it's been more than two years now since Boris Johnson first introduced us to yet another one of his soundbite straplines "Levelling Up". His Levelling Up ambition came with a promise to bridge the UK's stark geographic divide, yet it can come as no surprise to people that two years on we are still waiting for him to tell us more about exactly what levelling up means and how he plans to do it. Those of us who have been following this issue were hoping to get some answers in the much delayed Levelling Up White Paper, but we know that when it comes to funding for the UK's poorest communities they are rarely the people that matter to this Government. Let's not forget that this is the same Conservative Government that now speaks of Levelling Up that have, for the previous 9 years, instigated the biggest austerity agenda in living memory. To date, I'd argue that the most notable achievement of the undefined Levelling Up slogan has been to get itself officially attached to a Government Department title - the newish Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. A party political policy thrust into the name of a Government Department. I guess this sets a precedent which makes me wonder when other Government Departments will be re badged: the Department for Higher Energy Bills perhaps, or the Department for Private Landlords, maybe even a very busy Department for Conservative Party Donor Contracts. This politicisation sets the tone as to how the Government makes decisions: not based on evidence, the needs of particular areas or communities, or in fact, not based on whether money allocated will make a difference. Funding decisions made very much, I fear, on what suits the Conservative Party and Conservative MPs' election prospects. Let's look at the £3.6billion granted through the Towns Fund and the Community Renewal Fund. There are no published criteria funnily enough for selections, in which Ministers took a suspiciously close interest. Remarkably, of the 45 towns that received funding, 40 have Conservative MPs. Cheadle, just south of Manchester, fulfils nobody's idea of deprivation but it's on the list. And again suspiciously the local Tory MP won the seat in 2019 with a majority of just over 2,000. Richmondshire in North Yorkshire is one of the least deprived areas in the country, yet it received money through the grant. Hull however, the fourth most deprived place in the country did not. Is it just a coincidence that Richmondshire happens to be the Chancellor's constituency? It's highly concerning that Government decisions are not based on outcomes. The Head of the National Audit Office, Gareth Davis, said recently "What we have found by auditing Government work is that many of the interventions carried out are either not evaluated robustly or not evaluated at all. This means government is not learning from its successes or failures, and has little information in most policy areas on what difference is made by the billions of pounds being spent." That's the National Audit Office. I'd ask Council to note that the total levelling up funding pot of £4.8billion, is £100million less than the £4.9billion of tax payers' money that Government Ministers handed out to fraudsters by not properly checking the status of applicants for the Covid Bounce Back Loan Scheme, of which the National Audit Office said "The scheme had no credit checks on borrowers which made it vulnerable to fraud and losses." A headline I am yet to see, but one which is true: Government Ministers gave more tax payers' money away to fraudsters than they are going to invest in Levelling Up". Almost five thousand, million pounds handed out to fraudsters, one of the biggest and most expensive cock-ups in British political history. We were promised a

serious plan to meet the challenges faced and to begin to reverse a decade of Tory cuts and under investment, and nothing less will do. But scratching beneath the Levelling Up slogan after almost 12 years of Conservative Government, what are people really now faced with? Households face a combination of significantly higher taxes and higher living costs over the coming months on top of the big Universal Credit cuts that we, in Nottingham Labour, lobbied so hard against. Over £1,000 per year taken away from 46,000 Nottingham adults and 38,000 of Nottingham's poorest children. As I outlined here in November, a big National Insurance increase from April so that a low paid working person in Nottingham earning £20,000 per year will pay £130 more each year, an effective tax increase of 10% on the amount of National Insurance paid. Are real people in real places noticing a real difference? Well, yes, they are noticing a difference. But that difference is higher energy bills, higher costs at the supermarket checkout, the highest ever costs at the petrol station, and we know that many of the people we represent are faced with increased rents, having to make choices right now this winter about whether to prioritise heating or eating, and we know that food bank use is at a record high. As you say Councillor Power, austerity is still very much with us, as councils across the country are continuing to have to make significant cuts to local services and also increasing council tax at the same time. A striking contrast last year with an average 4.4% council tax increase in England and a 0% council tax increase in Scotland. The pledge to level up the UK was one of the cornerstones of the 2019 Conservative Party manifesto. It promised to unite and level up, spreading opportunity across the country. But, unsurprisingly, it was light on detail and fundamental questions remain unanswered: what measures will be used to judge success; and plans to reconcile tensions between policies focused on bolstering the performance of specific places and those focused on improving opportunities for disadvantaged people wherever they live? Nothing in the two years since we were flashed a shiny new slogan has moved us any closer to answering those questions, in fact my belief is that Conservative policies are having the opposite effect: on wealth, opportunity, health, even life expectancy in this country inequality is rising. Slogans won't deliver for people, only political policies, progressive Labour policies, in my opinion, backed up by a plan will deliver for people. Thank you.

### **Covid communication and messaging**

Councillor Sam Gardiner asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Health:

How does the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health feel about the Government holding a Christmas Party at Number 10 Downing Street when the rest of the country was told to stay at home, protect the NHS and Save Lives and what can we do as a city to strengthen the public messaging when the government has undermined itself? Is the Government's internal investigation satisfactory when other residents got taken to court, prosecuted and order to pay £10,000?

Councillor Adele Williams replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Gardiner. It's difficult to respond, I mean there's almost no words, but they partied, all this time they've partied, whilst our kids, our parents have had to stand in line for food banks to feed their children. They have overseen an historic drop in living standards, and wages of a magnitude not seen since the Napoleonic era. I can't believe that anyone sees the Prime Minister as a role model but undoubtedly that mixed messaging is extremely

unhelpful and it will leave people with the impression, not unreasonably, that there is one rule for them and one rule for us, as though if the wine is fine then it really can't be a party. I don't think that people in our city will be comfortable with that. The third part of question: is the internal investigation satisfactory? It's in a sense outside my remit, but as all of us would say, representing people in Nottingham, what would people in Nottingham say to us? Well, I don't know how many people have mentioned this to me over the period since it got into the news and I can say very clearly from those voxpops that people think the way the investigation is being approach is very much not acceptable. It is absolutely the case that many people made huge sacrifices, people who worked in our key services put themselves out there to support vulnerable people, risking their own health and wellbeing, working tremendously hard to keep each other safe. We know that families missed out on really crucial time with loved ones at really terrible moments, and I don't need to tell people how many lives were lost over that time period we are talking about and the number of people that were finding themselves in hospitals on ventilators and so on. It's absolutely appalling behaviour from the prime minister. I don't think there will be many people in Nottingham that will see him as a role model but I think the mixed messaging is extremely unhelpful. So what can we do as a City Council, as councillors and linking up with people in our communities? I think it's very important that we are all sharing accurate information about the public health measures we need to take to keep each other safe. We, as a City Council, will continue to work, as I mentioned in my previous answer, on the sorts of programmes that are encouraging new people to get vaccinated, and it is down to us to be doing the right thing ourselves as sadly members of the Government appear not have done. I don't think, given what we have seen, and we have seen significant hypocrisy from the current Government, it's not out of character, is it? It is almost difficult to do justice to the level of hypocrisy that has been show by this Government. Thank you.

### **63 Refresh of the Nottingham City Council Recovery and Improvement Plan**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Mellen, presented the report proposing approval of a refresh of the Council's Recovery and Improvement Plan, to be known going forward as the Together for Nottingham Plan, and incorporation of the Plan into the Council's Policy Framework. The report was seconded by Councillor Sally Longford.

#### **Resolved to:**

- (1) approve the refreshed Together for Nottingham Plan (formerly the Recovery and Improvement Plan) as set out as Appendix 1 to the report; and**
- (2) include the Together for Nottingham Plan as part of the Council's Policy Framework.**



## 64 Decisions taken under Urgency Procedures

The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Mellen, 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 Sally Longford.

**Resolved to note the following decisions taken under the Call-in and Urgency provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules:**

<b>Decision Reference</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision Taker</b>	<b>Reason for Urgency</b>
<b>DD4428</b>	<b>Disposal of Sneinton Hermitage Community Centre</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion</b>	<b>To enable market preparations to be completed in time to enter the property into the December 2021 auction, rather than be delayed until the next auction in February 2022. A delay would have incurred additional costs for maintenance and security and the property would have remained unoccupied with potential risks from anti-social behaviour or vandalism, which could give rise to additional costs for repairs and/or affect the sale price.</b>
<b>Minute Ref: 69</b>	<b>Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26</b>	<b>Executive Board</b>	<b>To enable public consultation to commence immediately and enable as long a consultation period as possible.</b>

## 65 Retender of External Audit for 2023/24 to 2027/28

The Chair of the Audit Committee, Councillor Audra Wynter, presented proposals for appointing the external auditor to the Council for the accounts for the five year period from 2023/24, as recommended by the Audit Committee. The report was seconded by Councillor Michael Edwards.

**Resolved to accept Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for the five financial years from 1 April 2023.**

## **66 Motion in the name of Councillor Graham Chapman**

Councillor Graham Chapman proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Adele Williams:

This Council expresses its deep disappointment at the Government's response to the social care crisis in that:

- the amount of additional funding, both in the short and long term, will not 'fix the problem';
- a number of care homes risk closure and there is nothing in the recent announcement to recognise the problem;
- the Government will continue to rely on regressive council tax increases to plug gaps;
- there is no long-term strategy for training, recruiting, sustainable wage growth, and professionalising the sector; and
- the increase in National Insurance contributions, which was introduced as a solution, will actually make the problem worse.

It calls on the Government to:

- provide a properly funded comprehensive approach, if necessary via a levy on wealth; and
- ensure that there is no further call on the council tax to fund increases in social care funding

**Resolved to carry the motion.**

## **67 Committee membership**

The following committee membership changes were noted:

- (1) Councillor Ethan Radford has been removed as a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- (2) Councillor Ethan Radford has been appointed to a vacant seat on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
- (3) Councillor Nayab Patel has been appointed to a vacant seat on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
- (4) Councillor Nayab Patel has been appointed to a vacant seat on the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
- (5) Councillor Corall Jenkins has been appointed to a vacant seat on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- (6) Councillor Corall Jenkins has been appointed to a vacant seat on the Regulatory and Appeals Committee

The Meeting concluded at 4.55 pm

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**Response to questions from Councillors requiring a written response**

**WQ1**

**Question asked by Councillor Maria Watson of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion at the meeting of the City Council held on 10 January 2022**

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Can the Portfolio Holder clarify whether already approved and committed funds from Ward Budgets are able to be spent or if the Council's current situation means that they are unable to be accessed despite existing approval?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Already approved and committed expenditure from ward budgets can be spent within the existing enhanced financial control regime.

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