

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