

# Public Document Pack

## Minutes of the meeting of the City Council

held at the Council House, Old Market Square

on 31 October 2022 from 2.00 pm - 5.10 pm

### Attendances:

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✓ Councillor Wendy Smith (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 Roger Steel
✓ Councillor Kirsty Jones	✓ Councillor Dave Trimble
✓ 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

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✓ Indicates present at meeting

### 35 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Kevin Clarke – unwell

Councillor Audrey Dinnall – leave

Councillor Sue Johnson – unwell

Councillor Rebecca Langton – personal

Councillor Dave Liversidge – unwell

Councillor Carole McCulloch – unwell

Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos – unwell  
Councillor Mohammed Saghir – unwell  
Councillor Audra Wynter - personal

### **36 Declarations of Interests**

None

### **37 Questions from Citizens**

#### **Libraries**

AM asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Planning:

How is the City Council planning to take account of the outcomes of the library consultation and the demands of the Save Nottingham Libraries campaign group, along with the new cost of living crisis that has emerged since the consultation?

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor. I would like to thank the resident who posed this question. The Council has been clear that this review of the library service would be open and transparent so that everybody could participate in the consultation, and that has been done now. The Council has yet to make a decision upon the obviously longer-term transformation of the library service and it's deliberately looking at all of the facts and feedback received from the extensive consultation exercise that was undertaken. Since commencing this work, I am also very aware of the change of circumstances that have occurred in the country as well as the city as a result of the cost of living crisis, which is why I think that it is important this is clearly referenced in our work. I think it is correct that we find ways to act on this and consider how this changes people's needs from the library service. As I said previously, the cost of living crisis impacts upon each and every one of us: individuals and communities. Similarly, it also impacts on Council spending, going forward the money we spend will buy us less, which has a direct impact on the ability of the Council to deliver services. So, whilst no announcements can be made on this point at this meeting, I can reassure the resident asking the question that the cost of living crisis will have to be an important parameter on how we arrive at our final decision. Thank you.

#### **Student housing**

JD asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and HR:

How are you going to fight back against the increased numbers of students going to be enrolled at the two universities? We are desperate for residential housing and we cannot keep up with demand for existing student numbers. When will enough be enough? We are in danger of our city centre in years to come becoming a student village.

Councillor Toby Neal replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you for the question from the citizen. This is an issue that the City Council takes seriously and one that many cities are experiencing, not just Nottingham. Indeed, cities across the country are seeing a crisis in student accommodation, with students being housed many miles from their places or studying in temporary accommodation or hotels. As a Council we have no ability to resist in the growth in student numbers which are determined by the two universities. The government lifted the cap on student numbers in 2015, allowing student universities to increase the number of students admitted each year. The funding

models for universities are based on attracting more students and we have experienced approximately a 30% increase in students requiring accommodation. So, as a result we have to manage the issues that are raised by this and have concentrated on purpose-built student accommodation over the period, but this still provides us with a shortfall of more than five-thousand beds per year. Demographic changes also mean that nationally the number of undergraduates wishing to study at university is also increasing and will continue to do so up until about 2030. We have been developing planning policies and working with residents and partners on student-only accommodation and the government gives us very clear guidance as to what we must do to meet planning requirements for student accommodation. So, seeking to prevent the provision of further student accommodation in the city by refusing planning permission would not be successful and could be subject to challenge by developers at appeal. It also means students would be turning more towards the private rented sector, creating the further shortfall of available housing for local residents and an increase in rents. As I have said, the City Council's role is in creation of purpose built student accommodation through the planning process, built by private developers and financed by private investors and we have a number of planning documents in place to help guide those developments. This guidance helps us to promote mixed and balanced communities, encourage purpose student-built accommodation (PBSA) in appropriate locations, i.e. around university campuses and on allocated sites within the city. It prevents further on-street student accommodation in the areas where students and or houses of multiple occupation exceed 10% of the population. We are looking towards how we can manage and return neighbourhoods to more residential homes, but we must also understand that students provide a huge economic impact to the city and having two world class universities only makes that more so. It equates to roughly £1.3bn in overall indirect investment into the city and approximately twenty-five thousand jobs. If considered in this combination this would be Nottinghamshire's third largest direct employer and those students who choose Nottingham as their place to study support a wide range of retail businesses and services from restaurants to shops, clubs, hairdressers, leisure to hotels when their parents visit. These are substantial indirect financial benefits for this city as the students and universities support the various businesses. The universities also pay business rates and the Council receives New Homes Bonus funding for additional public PBSA provision. It also counts towards our housing targets. In summary, development of PBSA in Nottingham is part of a carefully planned and evidenced response to growing student numbers. It looks to a long-term growth. We test it and we consider the broad range of housing needs for our citizens. There are levers in place to ensure we can control growth of the purpose built student accommodation and when the evidence shows us there is no longer the need for further provision and, importantly, that alternative uses can be found for new schemes coming forward if the PBSA was to change. So, the need to fight against student expansion I think is the wrong question. I think it is how we make sure we accommodate the different mixes of the communities across the city and make sure that areas that are needed for residential housing are returned to that primary use. So, again thank you for the question and I hope that addresses some of your points.

### **Housing Revenue Account**

EC asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and HR: Please could the Portfolio Holder explain clearly if the £15m+ has been paid back to the Housing Revenue fund to Nottingham City Homes to be spent on their tenants? This ring fenced money was wrongly used by Nottingham City Council. If so, when was it paid back and if not when exactly will it be paid back? Many Nottingham City Homes tenants live in

cold, damp and structurally unsound properties with Nottingham City Homes saying they can do nothing to help those that live in 20th century properties built with single brick walls. Will Nottingham City Homes tenants see repair and complaint procedures improve when it is brought back under the control of Nottingham City Council?

Councillor Toby Neal replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and again, thank you to the citizen for the question. The £15m was part of an overall £40m estimated figure in the CIPFA review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which was broken down into two parts: £22.87m payable by the Council and £17.8m million payable by Nottingham City Homes (NCH). The final amount due from the General Fund was calculated using the base figure of £22.87m, to which was added the opportunity costs to the HRA of not having had the funds available to it, together with other smaller differences to it between the estimated and final amounts. The result was a total figure of £27.703m. This been paid back to the HRA under the item nine credit direction granted by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 8 August. It has been accounted for in the 2021/22 final accounts. The payment was funded from the General Fund, specifically the Financial Resilience Reserve. There is a £17.256m payable by NCH which remains outstanding and work is ongoing to conclude this item.

Investment to improve the quality of our housing stock remains a key priority for the Council and Nottingham City Homes, and will continue to be prioritised as part of the transition of housing management back to the Council. On the issues of efficiency, Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City Homes are committed to the 2050 Strategy for home improvements, acknowledging that by 2050 homes will need to be low to zero carbon. The first part of this ambition is to ensure all of our homes are no lower than EPC C by 2030. This is also the target being set by the Department of Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy as part of their funding requirements. Within the next five-year HRA capital programme there is an allowance of £26m for investment in energy measures to ensure all of our homes have an energy performance certificate C by 2030 or better. We have also undertaken energy performance assessments across all of our housing stock, which identified which properties don't currently meet this target and what investment is required. This data takes into account properties built with single brick walls and non-traditional outsides. Since 2013, we have been investing in a significant number of properties across our housing stock and we have full stock condition information for 99% of our properties. This includes full stock condition, data on homes including housing, health and safety ratings, asbestos, energy performance ratings and structural works. This information has proven crucial in informing future decisions on stock retention or demolition and in identifying the need for structural investment work in the short, medium, and long term and has led to a capital investment programme of close to £240m over the next five years. With regard to housing repairs and whether complaints procedures will improve when it is brought back under the control of Nottingham City Council, the Director working with NCH is already reviewing its working practices to maximise efficiency through revenue and capital budgets. This will bring about efficiencies, better value for money and, where the capital programme supports, repairs undertaken. Service improvements and a reduction in complaints is the anticipated outcome. Specifically in relation to repairs and maintenance, NCH is also reviewing current processes to ensure repairs are properly diagnosed and are then responded via either emergency, urgent or a planned priority. Having clear definitions will reduce the volume of the current level of emergency repairs from around 45% to less than 20% in line with industry standards and will facilitate a speedier response to urgent

repairs. All investment into our housing stock is being reviewed as part of our development of the long-term housing revenue account business and as part of the transition process. We will take into account stock condition and repair requirements within the funding available. Thank you.

### **38 Petitions From councillors on behalf of citizens**

None

### **39 To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 11 July 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **40 To confirm the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 12 September 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **41 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 has won the Association for Public Service Excellence Award for Best Service Team for Street Cleansing and Street Scene Services. The Team was particularly recognised for developing innovative partnership work with Nottingham Clean Champions, Community Protection colleagues, the Community Payback Service and Nottingham City Homes, as well as developing more biodiverse neighbourhoods.

It is with sadness that I report the death of former Councillor James William Elliott Smith (known as Bill Smith) on 1 October. Bill represented the then Wollaton East and Lenton Abbey ward between 2003 and 2007. My thoughts are with his family and friends at this time.

Councillor Sally Longford spoke in former Councillor Bill Smith.

A minute's silence was held.

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

#### **Funding**

Councillor Angharad Roberts asked the following question of the Council's lead councillor on the Nottinghamshire and the City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority:

After some of the most unprecedented extreme weather conditions over the summer, when Fire Services across the country were stretched to the limit, properly funded fire services are essential to keep people safe. Continuing underfunding of the fire

service by the Government is leaving a £2m funding gap in 2023, impacting frontline services with proposed reductions to staffing, and withdrawal of 2 fire engines, including one from London Road. What will be the impact of these cuts and how will they affect the resilience of Nottinghamshire and the City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Services in the longer term?

Councillor Patience Ifediora replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Roberts for your question. Since 2010, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service has seen budget reductions of £9.6m in real cash terms. The position is likely to be significantly higher as factors such as inflation were not considered as part of the 2022/23 budget report considered by the Fire Authority in February 2022. The Treasurer based his report on planning assumptions at the time and predicted a 2023/24 deficit of £2.1m. Following a review of planning assumptions around inflation and the pay award, those figures are likely to show a budget deficit in excess of £3.3m. Clearly, this requires action by the Fire Authority to ensure it is well placed to deliver a balanced budget. The Authority receives over half of its funding from council tax. Increases to the council tax precept are currently limited to 1.95%. The impact of these financial challenges will be felt across the whole of the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, including front line support services. Support services are non-operational front-line staff, including key community engagement roles, and they will be part of a workforce review which will contribute to the overall efficiency savings in the financial year 2022/23 and beyond. The Service recognises the key contribution support services and non-operational roles have in serving our communities and will do everything possible to minimise any impact by investing in business improvement and structural design. Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service has worked with those with extensive experience of emergency services around the world to optimise results and respond in the most efficient and effective way. Given the reduced financial envelope, the best option with least impact on Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City will be: removal of second appliance from London Road, removal of second appliance from Stockhill, conversion of West Bridgford from one whole time appliance to one day shift appliance, conversion of Ashfield from one day shift and one on-call appliance to one whole time and one on call appliance. Inevitably, such a reduction in resources will have an impact on service performance. The average time for the first appliance to arrive to an incident for mobilisation will increase by seven seconds. Whilst this increase will have minimal impact on the outcome of an incident, it will mean that the management plan commitment to attend within an average of 8 minutes will be breached. Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service works hard to manage resources to meet the resilience needs of our communities. The Service has embedded procedures, which sees the Service move resources aligned to risk on a daily basis. The Service works collaboratively with other Fire and Rescue Services to manage risk and demand, particularly Derbyshire and Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services, with whom it shares emergency control capabilities, which enables mobilisations resulting in an increase in resilience over periods of high demand. Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service received a significant increase in incident numbers over a short period of time during the summer months, primarily due to the dry and hot weather. With the potential of reduced resources, it will seek to invest more time and effort to learn lessons and evolve its capabilities to ensure the continued resilience of its services. Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service is currently consulting on its plan to deal with budget pressures and it is asking communities to have their say. Councillors and members of the public can have their say by visiting

the public consultation section of the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority website. Thank you.

#### **43 Questions from councillors - to a member of Executive Board, the Chair of a committee and the Chair of any other City Council Body**

##### **Victoria Embankment Paddling Pool**

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

Can the Portfolio Holder address why, despite this being the hottest summer on record, the residents of our City had no paddling pool on Victoria Embankment to take their children to?

As Councillor Clarke was not in attendance at the meeting, the question received a written response after the meeting from Councillor Audra Wynter. That written response is attached to these minutes.

##### **Residential Parking Charges**

Councillor Maria Watson asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion:

We asked the question at the March Full Council meeting why this Council was intending to charge residents of the City to park outside their own homes. We ask again why should residents pay for this Council's financing mistakes?

Councillor Neghat Khan replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I also thank Councillor Watson for her question. This Council has subsidised the cost of administering, managing and enforcing resident parking permits for a number of years. Many councils cover the cost of these schemes through a fee for example, all neighbouring councils including Nottinghamshire County Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and Gedling Borough Council charge for first and all permits and have been doing so for many years. So does Councillor Watson think they do this because they made financial mistakes or because they too are managing the costs associated with parking schemes. Here in Nottingham, as part of the consultation, we have been consulting all affected residents on the first parking permit being free and charging £35 for the second and £50 for the third permit. This is in comparison to Sheffield City Council, which charges £46 for the first and £93 for the second permit. The charges will be required to enable the Council to recoup the ongoing cost of operating and enforcing the schemes. Any negative impacts on charging residents for parking permits will be mitigated by the increased availability of spaces across the schemes, which is anticipated will occur following the proposed charges. Residents still have localised difficulties in finding a parking space - there is an unwritten rule that people would generally tend to park outside their own home but it is important to note that no one has an automatic right to park on the road outside their own home, sometimes it is not possible and, in most instances, if you can park there without contravening the Highway Code, so can others. The positive impact is a possible reduction in private vehicles owned by residents which could result in improved access to residents parking schemes and help towards our ambition of becoming the first city to be carbon neutral by 2028. Central Government reducing our grants year on year means we have £101m less a year than we did in 2013 and 70% of our budget is being spent on statutory services like Adults and Children's Social Care so we will have to

make tough decisions to achieve a balanced budget. Having said that though, no decision to introduce a parking scheme has yet to be made and the Council will be considering that decision at the Executive Board meeting in November. Finally, whilst I always appreciate the opportunity to stand here and respond to questions from all sides of the Council, I want to make clear our commitment to delivering the best services we can right across the city. So, whilst it is convenient for the Nottingham Independents to stand here once every two months and make cheap political points, let me tell them and the residents of Clifton what this Council, under our leadership, has delivered for them: whether retrofitting energy efficient provision in housing stock or delivering obvious benefits of having the tram serving the area, providing another vital link to the city centre, the QMC, the North and West of the City, attracting fresh investment into Clifton; continuation of our commitment to improve and maintain the housing stock in Clifton with approximately £5m spent on maintenance since 2019, which includes £1.4m spent on 25,000 repairs, £1m on boiler installations, £208,000 on housing adaptations and £200,000 on sprinkler system at South Church Court; through the Decent Neighbourhood Programme throughout Clifton we have repaired footpaths on Homewell Walk, Bonford Avenue, Richmond Walk and Wilkin Gardens, with additional car parking refurbishments on Barkla Close and Flemming Gardens; the Council is also investing £4.3m in the development of 36 new homes in Keiron Hill Court. So, Lord Mayor, I am sure Members in this Chamber will forgive me for not taking any lectures from the Nottingham Independents on how best to deliver for residents of this city. They might think the odd cheap political point lodged in Full Council questions is best for the people of Clifton, whereas we know that Nottingham Labour has a track record of delivering affordable housing, energy efficient measures and investment right into the heart of Clifton and that means so much more than mere words on paper. Thank you.

### **The Place, Sherwood**

Councillor Kevin Clarke asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Communications:

As the Council claims it supports community activity, does it consider that increasing the rent of the Place Community Centre in Sherwood by 120,000% will achieve this?

As Councillor Clarke 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.

### **Housing Revenue Account**

Councillor Maria Watson asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Finance:

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm whether the £40m misspent ring-fenced money has now been paid back in full?

Councillor Adele Williams replied as follows:

Thank you Councillor Watson for your question. As referenced in a previous citizen question and Councillor Neal's answer, the £40m refers to an estimated figure in the review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is broken down into two parts. The first part payable by the Council of about £28m and then the £17m payable by Nottingham City Homes. The final amount due from the Council's General Fund was calculated using this base figure of £22.87m to which was added the opportunity cost to HRA of not having the funds available to it together with other smaller differences



between the estimated and final amounts. The result was a total figure of £27.703m, this has been paid back to the HRA under the credit direction granted by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the 8 August. It has been accounted for in our final accounts as Councillor Neal described. There is a further £17m payable by Nottingham City Homes and work is ongoing to conclude this item.

### **Firework Display**

Councillor Kirsty Jones asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Planning:

Does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that it is very sad that the annual firework and bonfire display has been cancelled? In a time when many are struggling, this public event, that has been a wonderful free event for families to attend and enjoy in the past, will now not be going ahead this year.

Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor for your question. The cancellation of the annual bonfire night event was done with a very heavy heart, particularly after the previous two events were cancelled due to the pandemic. The much-loved event is one of the events commissioned by Nottingham City Council and regularly attracts around 40,000 people. The Council's Event Team usually delivers this event with costs of around £30,000 to stage, which includes around £10,000 of income which is from the fairground and food and beverages. Raising prizes meant that the cost of the event would have significantly increased this year, whilst income would have also reduced. Like most councils around the country, the City Council is facing huge budget difficulties at the moment, exacerbated by rising inflation, energy costs and other associated pressures. This growing budget gap did not allow us to have this event this year. Other local authorities, particularly Leeds, Manchester, Glasgow, Cardiff, to mention a few, have also taken the decision to cancel the same event. Whilst I am very disappointed that it was not possible to stage this event this year, I am pleased to report that the much anticipated seasonal Christmas events will be going ahead, including the Christmas Market which will be at no cost to the local tax payer.

### **Pay Award**

Councillor Nick Raine asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and HR:

Does the Portfolio Holder agree with me that the local government pay offer should be both fully funded by central government and adequate to the scale of financial crisis hitting the household budgets of our hardworking keyworkers - and that no one should work all week serving our city to go home to empty cupboards?

Councillor Toby Neal replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you for the question. I could keep it short and say 'yes' but I am not going to because I think there are some really relevant points. I mean, I think it is a disgrace, as to be fair I think most people in this room do too, that people have to go to food banks to support themselves. In 2009, there was a total national visit to food banks of 45,000. That is a lot but we look at today's numbers: 2.1million across the entire country just for the Trussel Trust and in the East Midlands use has gone from 45,000 in 2014 to nearly 130,000 this year. So, there is an exponential growth on this, and it is pretty disgraceful. In terms of what it means for local authorities: local authorities are facing unprecedented budgetary pressures with

inflation currently running at 10.1% which is a 40-year high and we expect it to go higher. These are exceptional times and pay inflation is only one of the financial pressures that the Council is facing as a result of the cost of living crisis. Consequently, we believe, I believe, and I am sure you believe that Central Government needs to develop a package of measures to support local authorities in these unprecedented times, and funding to support the pay offer is just one of those. As it stands, the cost to implement the pay offer will be in the region of £10.9m. We allocated, in last year's budget, £3.9m, so we are looking at a £7m pressure on our budget to meet the requirements of the pay rise, which frankly people deserve, nobody is going to quibble about that. To understand what the pay offer is, it is worth noting it is a flat £1900 to all employees of local authorities. What that means is, those on the lowest pay grades will have a significant increase of 10% or higher, so it will benefit those who are on the lowest wages most. Given that the rate of inflation it is likely that the pay awards will be significantly higher over the coming years as well. The Medium Term Financial Plan that we approved in March assumed a pay award of 2% so if we say the next year is 4%, we are going to see an extra £4m on top of the £7m that we have to find here as it is raked into the bottom line. We are, though, very conscious of the impact of the cost of living crisis on staff and we have put in place a number of actions that should hopefully alleviate some of the immediate pressures. We have changed the payment process for employee expenses from monthly to weekly. This came from feedback from employees and trade unions that some colleagues were experiencing hardship as they were having to wait until the following month to receive out of pocket expenses. We have a proposal to pay mileage for the first and last journey home for home-care workers and this has been agreed with payments to be backdated to April 2022. We are actively promoting the Council's employee benefits scheme which includes a whole range of different things including public transport, bicycles and shopping vouchers that gives cost cutting to colleagues at various different retailers. In the longer term there is a significant issue with pay within local government, we are experienced both in terms of recruitment as well as retention and we are working up a new strategy in terms of pay structure. This is a longer term piece of work that will not address the immediate concerns, but it is something we are heavily engaged with, with the trade unions and we are currently working with the key stakeholders on this. We are looking at various other options and discussing these with the trade unions in addition to any other options they feel may benefit their members. So yes, people shouldn't have to rely on food banks and we are trying to do something around that. I want to finish by saying that over the last couple of years we have seen some of the best out of our colleagues in the City Council in terms of their engagement with communities, supporting communities. They have earned, and they deserve a decent pay rise.

### **Local Government Funding**

Councillor Graham Chapman asked the following question of the Leader of the Council:

Would the Leader of the Council comment on the prospect of further net reductions in local government funding as a result of the ex-Prime Minister's botched budget?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and I thank Councillor Chapman for his question. The mini budget at the beginning of this month was an unmitigated disaster. It caused the economy to crash, the pound to plummet and saw the last Prime Minister have a shorter shelf life than a lettuce. It would be funny if it wasn't scary and dangerous.

The consequence for councils like Nottingham is that it is made an already difficult budget situation, starved of resources for the last 12 years, much worse with little prospect of the needs of the services we deliver to the people of this city being properly funded. This was a mini budget for the rich, which trampled on everybody else in the country. It ignored people who are not currently working as well as those with jobs, people with mortgages to pay, people working in public services, charities and the voluntary sector, those who are teaching or learning in our schools, it came at the cost of our environmental ambitions, our goals for a more equal society and we are losing our respect in the world because of the short-sighted and factional financial plans of the Conservative Government. What will last longer than the Prime Minister's disastrous 50 days in office is the ongoing impact on the rest of the country. In fact, inflation continues to rise, the cost of food and drink is increasing, and the cost of energy bills remains out of control with no solution in sight. Although the new Chancellor has announced many of the new decisions made by his predecessor will be reversed, the budget promised to happen today, will, in common with so many promises of this Government, be subject to delay with it now being pushed back to later in November. Months were wasted whilst the Government dithered over who should be the Prime Minister, more time spent bickering than on budgets. A decision made after a summer concentrating on not on the needs of the country but on the needs of the Conservative Party. So, councils around the country are wrestling with budgets with no real hope that the inflationary pressures on our budget from the high rises in energy costs, will be reflected in the local government settlement expected in December. This is not just a Nottingham problem, in Brighton the Council Leader, Phelim Mac Cafferty has said the Council cannot take any more cuts to funding amid fears of billions of pounds of public spending cuts. He was commenting after the new Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, said that cuts to public spending cannot be ruled out as the Government tries to reassure financial markets after the disruption caused by the mini budget last month. Mr Hunt said that all Departments will need to redouble their efforts to find savings, failing to rule out cuts to welfare and cuts to local government. You may say: Opposition council leaders would say that, but what about council leaders from the same party as the Government? 'Further budget cuts from Central Government to already stretched services supporting Kent's residents are going to be extremely challenging and hit hard' says Kent County Council as Members try to secure services whilst clawing back a significant budget deficit. The Conservative led County Councils' Network, of which Kent County Council is a member, has this week written to the Treasury to say the prospect of funding reductions on top of soaring inflation would be unthinkable and devastating for services across the country and be worse than austerity. Peter Oakford, Kent County Council Deputy Leader, said 'we cannot doubt the gravity of this financial situation, there is a clear picture of the causes, above all the surge of inflation, coupled with the demand for services, especially social care.' Just down the road in Leicestershire, Tory Council Leader Nick Rushton said this before the mini budget, goodness knows what he thinks now: 'our financial situation is frightening, worse than the years of austerity, we have lost £230m a year in spending power since 2010, we pride ourselves on doing the best we can but the money we have will not be enough and we will have to make tough decisions and nothing is off the table. As the lowest funded county council under the Government's funding scheme, Leicestershire has been sensitive to financial shocks, the challenge currently being faced will put even the best funded local authorities under pressure'. So Councillor Chapman, in a situation where net increases in Local Government settlements are desperately needed all across the country, I fear that net decreases are a real threat to councils and the people that they serve.

## **Local Government Finance**

Councillor Sam Webster asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Finance:

The Conservative Chair of the Local Government Association said in a letter to the Chancellor that without additional funding there is “a serious threat to the ability of Council services to function at even the most rudimentary level”. Can the Portfolio Holder explain how the huge inflationary pressures might affect basic Council services in Nottingham if new money isn’t forthcoming?

Councillor Adele Williams replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Webster for your question. So, you’ll all remember the footage we saw in the summer of the now-Prime Minister speaking to the Party Faithful, boasting of how he has been pulling money from places like Nottingham to places like Tunbridge Wells. He said ‘I managed to start changing the funding formulas to make sure areas like Tunbridge Wells are getting the funding they deserve because we inherited a bunch of formulas from Labour that shoved all the funding into deprived urban areas and that needed to be undone. I started the work of doing that.’ Refreshingly honest, as of course he didn’t start the work did he - it has been happening since the Tories came to power in 2010. I would also like to take issue with the word ‘deprived’. In Nottingham we have got it, we have absolutely got it but we are held back, held back by Central Government, held back by Conservative Government. So whilst there is heaps of evidence to show less well healed areas have done worse out of austerity in funding for local services we know, as the question reveals, even the currently Tory shires are hurting because local services are just not a priority for Conservatives. The levelling-up promise has never been delivered and Mr Sunak’s comments make clear it was just empty promises to the ‘red wall’ areas that remember Thatcher. No new set of Conservatives is ever very different, is it? From the Towns Fund to the distribution of funding for local services, there was never any intention to level up. So now councils in cities like ours are faced with budget gaps for next year and moving forward of tens of millions of pounds. Liverpool, in the press, need to make £80m of savings, Bristol £31m and over the water I think Nottinghamshire County Council is declaring a budget gap of £24m. We will declare our budget gap in the December Executive Board meeting as part of our proper governance processes, but I can tell you that after setting a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan in March, we are now in a position like every other local authority, our budget plans are blown out of the water by double digit inflation. Like every year we don’t get our settlement from Central Government until just before Christmas but before that we need to be talking to Nottingham, putting our consultation to Nottingham on measures that we will have to face and think about to take us toward the balanced Medium Term Financial Plan. We will have to share an outline of what we might need to do to set a balanced budget in March in the event that the Chancellor provides no better news for places like Nottingham. We have got some strong transformation projects in the city that will deliver better services and improved outcomes for citizens at lower costs, but this cataclysmic budget challenge is way beyond that. Councils all over Britain are having discussions on what they can do within the financial resources that is appears they will have if the Chancellor rigidly sticks to the settlement as laid out and that is in the face of the warnings he has received from his political allies. We are here because we think Nottingham needs, and deserves the best. We will be having the same conversations as councils are

having around the country: what can we do after more than a decade of Conservative cuts to local services, with even less. We will be thinking the absolute unthinkable about our services, thinking about what is a safe and legal level of service, thinking about unthinking measures we will have to consider in order to work towards a balanced budget. As Councillor Mellen has mentioned, we have no choice on that matter. Yes, there are global head winds that have driven the price of energy but let's not forget the way Britain has been hit by this is due to home-grown choices and Conservative choices. We haven't invested in renewables, we haven't invested in installation, we haven't invested in gas storage, so we are horribly vulnerable to an international energy crisis. So it is on us and our families, and in local government to pay for a crisis which has been made and driven by the successive occupants of Downing Street. This is what is driving the inflationary pressures that are pushing up the costs that we face, whether it be what we buy and contract or the cost of the unfunded pay offer, which as my colleague has already said, is not what our workers deserve. They deserve more but it is not funded anyway so we have to find that out of council budgets. We have also had a continued disgraceful failure to fund and fix social care, another one of those areas which is still locally funded, despite the impact on council resources being so much higher in the areas that are least able to support it. So, this Government is an unmitigated disaster on every possible level for Britain: for your household finances, for our Council finances, for anyone on an NHS waiting list, for small businesses out there trying to recover from Covid. In a last chance for our future generations and the planet, isn't it time that our Opposition joined with us in asking for what we know Nottingham wants - a General Election or at least will you join with us in writing to the Chancellor to demand that Nottingham gets what it needs and deserves? Thank you.

### **Council Governance**

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Leader of the Council: The Improvement and Assurance Board has repeatedly highlighted the Council's failure to 'move at pace' and address their concerns as a 'matter of urgency' – does the Leader of the Council agree that one way this could be improved is if decision making by the political hierarchy could be streamlined, by increasing limits to the Scheme of Delegation allowing officers to take minutia away from the political leadership and speed up the decision making, as has been done in other Core Cities?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and can I thank Councillor Rule for his question. Nottingham City Council has an Improvement and Assurance Board as part of the Government's response to the Non Statutory Review carried out by Max Caller in November 2020. Progress against the Improvement Plan has been significant, but the Improvement and Assurance Board has consistently encouraged the Council to address many of the issues raised more quickly. The improvement of the Council was recognised in a change of heart by the Government to increase the powers of the Improvement Board, rather than the previously suggested imposition of commissioners. The then Secretary of State, Greg Clark, cited Nottingham's progress as one of the reasons for the change of heart. However, we are not complacent. Sir Tony Redmond, Chair of the Improvement and Assurance Board, set the Council a statement of 67 requirements against which our progress will be judged at the end of November. Officers are committed to doing what is necessary to bring about the necessary improvement to put all services and finances on a stable footing. I do not, however,

accept your description Councillor Rule, that some decisions taken by political leadership involve minutia. Deciding how best to spend £150,000 is not minutia. The public elects councillors to provide scrutiny of how public money is spent and we work closely with officers to ensure these decisions are made in a timely way. The level of delegations of decision making between officers and members is subject to review, taking into account a number of factors. I have increased the delegation limits once since I have been the Leader of the Council and will shortly be reviewing them once more with the Monitoring Officer. Good decision making is vital for an effective Council. Sometimes difficult decisions need full consideration, taking all factors into account. Whilst councillor decision making must be timely and effective, quick decision are not always good decisions. I do not accept that appropriate member involvement in decision making leads to delay rather it gives an appropriate oversight and exercises the mandate that the people of Nottingham give to those trusted enough to sit in this Chamber.

### **Ofsted Inspection**

Councillor Andrew Rule asked the following question of the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools:

Following the recent inadequate inspection finding by Ofsted, can the Portfolio Holder outline how she plans to lead improvement within the service to ensure the Council improves to a Good, if not Outstanding, rating at its next inspection, which I am sure is her aspiration for the service?

Councillor Cheryl Barnard replied as follows:

Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Rule for your question. I am clear that the areas of children's services covered in the inspection represent some of our most important Council statutory responsibilities. I am personally committed, and this Council is fully committed to providing consistently good services to children in Nottingham and to ensure children receive our help at the right time. Firstly, we have not waited for the publication of the report to make some immediate decisions, for example to increase social work and manager capacity in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and to bring forward our plans for the service. However, we are committed to delivering sustainable and whole service improvement and that means we will have a robust programme of work over time. We recognise and understand the improvements needed and we are updating our existing improvement plan to reflect the findings of the inspection. We will share this with Ofsted as we are required to do. We will also work closely with the Department for Education to ensure that our plan and the support they are providing will assist us in delivering consistently positive outcomes for children. This work will be overseen by the Children at the Heart Improvement Board and a new smaller executive group, both chaired by an independent chair. This will provide oversight, support and challenge to the improvement programme to ensure that progress is achieved. Progress will be reported to the Executive and reviewed by our Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee. We have a lot to achieve and it will be important to prioritise. This will require a considered and incremental approach to ensure changes made in the Service are systemic, well embedded and result in sustained change. This will be a whole service approach and not just limited to the eight areas highlighted in the report. Our frontline staff and managers are dedicated to their work and are ambitious for the children of our city. The inspection recognised the commitment staff have for children in Nottingham and some of the excellent direct work that they do with children. There was also recognition of commitment to children's services at all levels

of the organisation at both officer and member level. I will personally retain a clear focus on making sure that we provide the right environment for our skilled and valued staff to do their best work. Focussing on the outcomes for children and their families will ensure we are focussed on the right areas to improve our service delivery. Alongside the challenge of the report, I am pleased that within the inspection some of the areas of progress that we have made have been recognised. This provides us with a good platform to build on. The leadership team, as well as the whole work force, are committed and determined as I am to work at pace, to quicken the improvement work across the whole service. The Council will do what is needed to ensure that we have got good services for children and families in Nottingham; they deserve nothing less. Whilst inspection is a vital part of regulation, we do this because it is the right thing to do for children in our city.

#### **44 Devolution Deal - Draft proposal for an East Midlands Combined County Authority**

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, presented the report asking Council to approve a draft proposal for a devolution deal between Nottingham City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council and Government. In order to progress the devolution deal, there is a requirement to consult on the draft East Midlands Combined County Authority Proposal and Council was also asked to agree to formally consult on the proposal with the residents and other stakeholders of Nottingham and the wider area for a period of eight weeks between November 2022 and January 2023. It is anticipated that Council will be asked to consider the results of the consultation at its meeting in March 2023 and agree whether or not to formally submit the final proposal to Government. The report was seconded by Councillor Adele Williams.

#### **Resolved to:**

- (1) approve the draft Proposal attached at appendix 1 to the report to create an East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) for the areas of Nottingham City, Derbyshire County, Derby City and Nottinghamshire County;**
- (2) formally consult upon the draft Proposal with the residents and other stakeholders of Nottingham and the wider EMCCA area, in partnership with Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council;**
- (3) agree the approach to consultation as set out in appendix 2 to the report; and**
- (4) delegate authority to the Chief Executive to approve any typographical or technical amendments to the draft Proposal which the Chief Executives of the other three Councils also agree on, on behalf of Nottingham City Council prior to the commencement of consultation. This delegation is to be exercised in consultation with the Leader of the Council and is conditional upon such amendments being agreed by all four upper tier Council Leaders.**

#### **45 Statutory Intervention and the refresh of the Together for Nottingham Plan**

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, presented the report asking Council to note the Directions made by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to place the Improvement and Assurance Board on a statutory footing; and to approve a refreshed Together for Nottingham Plan in order to comply with the Directions given to the Council by the Secretary of State to amend its improvement plan to the satisfaction of the Board. The report was seconded by Councillor Adele Williams.

##### **Resolved to**

- (1) note the Directions made by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities placing the Improvement and Assurance Board upon a statutory footing with the power to direct the Council's improvement activities; and**
- (2) approve the refreshed Together for Nottingham Plan, as set out at appendix 4 to the report.**

#### **46 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report**

Councillor Georgia Power, Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, presented the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22. The Annual Report provides an overview of the activity undertaken by the scrutiny committees during 2021/22 and the outputs and outcomes from that work. It also outlines the improvement activity that was undertaken to improve the operation of the scrutiny function. The report was seconded by Councillor Maria Joannou.

##### **Resolved to accept the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22.**

#### **47 Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership - Amendment to Terms of Reference**

Councillor Adele Williams, Deputy Leader of the Council, presented the report proposing adoption of an updated terms of reference for the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership, which is a Joint Committee of the City and County Councils and the Integrated Care Board. The report was seconded by Councillor Linda Woodings.

##### **Resolved to**

- (1) approve the terms of the reference for the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership, as set out at appendix B to the report; and**
- (2) amend the Constitution to reflect the revised terms of reference.**



## 48 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 Adele Williams.

### 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
DD4668	Approval to reallocate £335,000 Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 Grant Funding	Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services	The programme of works would have been compromised affecting delivery by the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Department's deadline of 22 August 2022.
DD4706	Grant support for Energy Efficiency Upskilling Competition	Leader of the Council	The Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Department required a Memorandum of Understanding to be completed during August so that the Energy Efficiency Upskilling Competition could be launched on 5 September to ensure optimum delivery during this financial year.
DD4707	Provision for commercial lease	Leader of the Council	The Council was engaged in a time

<b>Decision Reference</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision Taker</b>	<b>Reason for Urgency</b>
	<b>negotiations</b>		<b>critical negotiation process regarding this important commercial lease. A decision putting the right level of resourcing in place to support the negotiations was required urgently so as to ensure that the Council was in the most effective position possible to achieve best value.</b>
<b>DD4725</b>	<b>Chewing Gum Task Force grant approval</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Waste Services</b>	<b>In order to comply with the funding agreement, the Task Force had to be 'live' within two weeks.</b>

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

<b>Decision reference</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Decision taker</b>	<b>Reason for Special Urgency</b>
<b>DD4667</b>	<b>Private Rental Sector Enforcement Competition – Additional Funding</b>	<b>Leader of the Council</b>	<b>In order for the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Department to release the additional funding, the Council had to ensure that it was able to start transferring the grant funding to successful local authorities from the middle of July</b>

Decision reference	Subject	Decision taker	Reason for Special Urgency
			<b>2022. The Council needed to put measures in place to start distributing funding within the required timescales.</b>

#### **49 Appointment of Honorary Recorder**

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, presented the report proposing that, following the retirement of His Honour Judge Greg Dickinson QC, Her Honour Judge Nirmal Shant KC be appointed as Honorary Recorder for the City of Nottingham. He thanked the former Honorary Recorder for his contribution to the life of the City. The report was seconded by Councillor Adele Williams.

**Resolved to appoint Her Honour Judge Nirmal Shant KC as Honorary Recorder for the City of Nottingham with immediate effect for the duration of her tenure as Senior Circuit Judge, Resident Judge.**

#### **50 Motion in the name of Councillor Adele Williams**

Councillor Adele Williams proposed the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Nick Raine:

This Council notes that:

On 17<sup>th</sup> October, the new Chancellor announced that the promised two year energy cap would be withdrawn in April, leaving energy prices for the average household set to rise again to an expected £4,347.

Alongside the rise in the cost of everyday items such as food, fuel and energy, Nottingham people, like those across the UK, now face higher interest rates for mortgages and other borrowing due to volatility following the former Chancellor's announcements on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Many are already dealing with rents elevated far beyond affordability, with housing that is within the Local Housing Allowance virtually non-existent.

The council notes that financial wellbeing is one of the four priorities of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in recognition of this being foundational to people's ability to live in good health.

Given the urgency and depth of this crisis, Nottingham City Council declares a 'Cost of Living Emergency.'

Since 2010 successive chancellors have chosen to allow local authority funding to fall way below need, so that locally delivered services are underfunded whilst demand

rises due to demographic pressures and the impact of austerity. Local authorities find it more difficult each year to balance budgets and the coming year's budget process, without a significant change of direction from the chancellor will be amongst the worst we have seen.

Nottingham City Council will prioritise its resources, in this increasingly difficult context, towards standing with and supporting our citizens through this crisis. This council commits to supporting Nottingham residents to mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis through funding services such as Welfare Rights and energy advice

We call on the Government to:

- Convene an emergency response committee to tackle the cost of living crisis with urgent measures;
- To prioritise resources to protect hard pressed families and businesses from the energy price rises and the impact of inflation – levying a windfall tax to support this;
- Immediately reduce the standard rate of VAT from 20% to 17.5% for one year, saving the average household in Nottingham a further £600 this year;
- Deliver a sustainable plan to insulate millions of homes across the country to save on energy bills now and in the future;
- Commit to the pensions triple lock to support pensioners in Nottingham;
- Ensure benefits are updated to adequately protect those most vulnerable to the cost of living crisis;
- Resource local authorities adequately so that they can support their citizens through this crisis and to fuel real levelling up of our regions.

The recently exacerbated turmoil is having a profound impact on people's livelihoods, their mental and physical wellbeing and local spending decisions, all of which will impact on our local economy and services. Fundamental change is required to address what are systemic issues. People right across the country are facing impossible choices in the face of rapidly rising prices in food and energy.

Nottingham City Council urges the Government to do everything within its power to tackle this issue now. Life is harder than ever for people across the areas that were promised real change. There is now an urgent need to deliver on those promises.

**Resolved to carry the motion.**

## **51 Committee membership changes**

It was noted that:

- a) Councillor Nayab Patel had been removed as a member of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
- b) Councillor Eunice-Campbell had been appointed to replace Councillor Nayab Patel as a member of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
- c) Council Nayab Patel had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Audit Committee
- d) Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Licensing Committee

- e) Councillor Sajid Mohammed had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Licensing Committee
- f) Councillor Cate Woodward had been appointed to a vacant seat on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

The Meeting concluded at 5.10 pm

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

**CQ1**

**Question to be asked by Councillor Kevin Clarke of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport and Parks at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 31 October 2022**

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Can the Portfolio Holder address why, despite this being the hottest summer on record, the residents of our City had no paddling pool on Victoria Embankment to take their children to?

Councillor Audra Wynter replied as follows:

Thank you and I would like to thank Councillor Clarke for his question about the paddling pool. As you will remember from my response to Councillor Jones's question about the closure of the paddling pool at Council in July, we fully recognise that the facility was a well-loved visitor attraction and also understand the concerns about its closure particularly during this summer's periods of extreme hot weather. We are fully aware of the public's support to bring back the paddling pool but significant investment is now required to fix the damaged filtration system. As the facility was no longer fit or capable of operating there was no choice but to keep the paddling pool closed this summer but we are committed sourcing the funding to bring back a new facility serving families of all abilities.

Recognising that access to safe open air water play would be in high demand this summer the parks team did put in extra effort to ensure that Bulwell Bogs water park remained open throughout the summer and whilst I appreciate that the Bulwell facility is located in the North of the City it is fully accessible via the Tram network. As outlined at Council in July, the Parks team have now carried out and recently completed a community engagement survey. The survey was originally scheduled to conclude at the end of July but, following feedback, it was felt that a further month during the summer holidays would help capture additional opinions and ensure that all the local community groups had time to engage with the survey. The survey has been carried out in order to help provide evidence of support for a replacement facility and to prioritise the type of facility that the community would prefer to see developed. Over 2,100 people have engaged with the online survey or have returned paper surveys. The Parks Team also visited 4 local primary schools to get the opinions direct from local children. The survey has resulted in an overwhelming support for a new facility and one that includes a mixture of both traditional open water and a splash pad. In addition, the school survey has also confirmed a strong interest in providing some form of water play facility.

Now that the survey is completed, the Parks Team are now starting to explore funding opportunities which will include a mixture of funding bids to external funding organisations alongside the use of new section 106 funding from local developments. In addition, the Parks Team are also working with the Nottingham Open Space Forum to deliver a Just Giving type of campaign. It is hoped that this will start in the next few weeks.

It is hoped that the funding package will be confirmed before Christmas and plans can then be put in place to implement a new water park facility later in 2023.

**Question to be asked by Councillor Kevin Clarke of the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Communications at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 31 October 2022**

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As the Council claims it supports community activity, does it consider that increasing the rent of the Place Community Centre in Sherwood by 120,000% will achieve this?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

The 'Place' is a building in Sherwood which belongs to the City Council. It houses many community activities but it is not one of the Council's community centres. The organisation that runs the Place has leased the premises from the Council and pay a nominal rent. Their lease has now expired and the organisation has requested a renewal.

One of the actions of the 'Together for Nottingham' improvement programme is to carry out a review to ensure robust agreements are in place for all of our leases. The Place is part of that review. Many existing agreements leave the Council receiving only small rents while retaining significant repairing liabilities which is not sustainable. The current agreement for the Place leaves the Council with external repairing responsibility.

Our starting point for all property transactions has to be market rent in line with our adopted Disposals Policy and emerging Community Asset Policy. We can only consider offering rent reductions for organisations that are not for profit and properly constituted and where they deliver community outputs which meet the Council's priorities, and which have to be monitored for delivery.

As the Portfolio Holder for Property, I have met with the organisation together with officers and the local ward members for Sherwood, who I commend for taking the issues raised by the Place Management Committee forward, and we have indicated that if they can demonstrate that they are a not-for-profit organisation and properly constituted they can submit a proposal for a reduced amount of rent offset by quantifiable community outputs for consideration by the Council. It is important to note that this 'social value' will have to be in line with the Council's priorities and appropriate Council officers will be asked to advise in that respect.

**Question to be asked by Councillor Andrew Rule of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and HR at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 31 October 2022 requesting a written response**

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Could the Portfolio Holder provide a breakdown by service line of the current number of advertised vacancies in the Council, split out by grade of staff?

Councillor Toby Neal replied as follows:



The below table shows the number of 'live' advertised vacancies on 2 November 2022.

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Total</b>	
People	Grade C	3	
	Grade D	8	
	Grade E	4	
	Grade F	4	
	Grade H	1	
	Grade I	1	
	<b>People Total</b>		<b>21</b>
Resident Services	Grade A	3	
	Grade B	1	
	Grade D	5	
	Grade E	2	
	Grade F	1	
	Grade G	2	
	Grade I	1	
	Grade K	1	
	<b>Resident Services Total</b>		<b>16</b>
	Growth & City Development	Grade E	1
Grade F		1	
Grade G		3	
<b>Growth &amp; City Development Total</b>		<b>5</b>	
Finance & Resources	Grade E	1	
	Grade F	2	
	Grade G	1	
	Grade H	2	
<b>Finance &amp; Resources Total</b>		<b>6</b>	
<b>NCC Total</b>		<b>48</b>	

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